Environmental Statement: Chapter 7 – Landscape & Visual Effects

ES 07

Development of National Significance

Alaw Môn Solar Farm

Land west of the B5112, 415m south of Llyn Alaw, 500m east of Llantrisant and 1.5km west of Llannerch-y-Medd, Anglesey

February 2024

7.0 Landscape and Visual Effects

Introduction

7.1 This chapter of the ES assesses the likely significant effects of the Development on the environment in respect of landscape and visual effects.

7.2 The chapter has been prepared by Stantec. Stantec is a registered practice of the UK Landscape and an Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ('IEMA') EIS Quality Mark Registrant. This Chapter has been collaboratively prepared by several experienced chartered landscape professionals, with a final quality assurance review undertaken by Greg Mahon CMLI PIEMA and Associate Director at Stantec and Matthew Chard CMLI and Director at Stantec.

7.3 The following changes and amendments have been added to the ES Chapter following Pre-Application Consultation (PAC), which are shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Amendments Following PAC Comments

PAC Consultee	Comment	Response within the ES Chapter
The Council requests an update on the methodology not being applied correctly throughout the LVIA, please can you ensure the effects are using the methodology correctly	Methodology has changed and been applied throughout the Chapter.	Refer to Appendix 7.1 for the detailed methodology.
The Council requests further information on the mitigation and the rationale for the mitigation following the mitigation plan and addressed in the ES. Additionally, further information on the type and other landscape elements that will be removed is to be included.	Detail is provided with Figures 13-17 Landscape Strategy Plan and the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).	Contained in Figures 13-17 Landscape Strategy Plan and the LEMP.
Outline LEMP to be included.	A LEMP has been provided.	See the separate LEMP.

Policy Context

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales

7.4 Planning Policy Wales[i] ('PPW') sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government and is supported by a series of Technical Advice Notes ('TAN') Welsh Government Circulars and policy clarification letters.

7.5 With respect to Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development, set out under Theme 5: Productive and Enterprising Places, paragraph 5.9.14 states that planning authorities should use evidence to establish spatial policies for their development plan which identify the most appropriate locations for development of energy development below 10MW (not relevant to DNS schemes) and that *'there should be a presumption in favour of development in identified areas, including an acceptance of landscape change'*.

7.6 Theme 6 of PPW addresses Distinctive and Natural Placemaking and Well-being, and includes protecting and enhancing landscapes, habitats, biodiversity, geodiversity and the historic environment

in their own right as well as other components of the natural world. PPW recognises the fundamental role played by Green Infrastructure in shaping places and our sense of well-being.

7.7 With respect to Landscapes, paragraph 6.3.1 defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. Paragraph 6.3.3 states that 'all the landscapes of Wales are valued for their intrinsic contribution to a sense of place'. Local authorities should protect and enhance the special characteristics of their landscapes, whilst paying due regard to the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits they provide.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

7.8 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 was adopted in February 2021 and recognises that Wales can become a world leader in renewable energy technologies. The Welsh Government recognises Wales's potential for solar generation and supports both large and community scaled projects and commits to ensuring the planning system in Wales provides a strong lead for renewable energy development.

7.9 Policy 17 sets out that the Welsh Government strongly supports the principle of renewable and low carbon energy development from all technologies and at all scales to meet our future energy needs.

7.10 Policy 18 provides the criteria for assessing large scale proposals for renewable and low carbon energy and is required to be considered with Policy 17. The criteria set out in Policy 18 require that proposed development:

- does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding landscape, with particular reference to the setting of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- has no unacceptable adverse visual impacts on nearby communities and individual dwellings;
- has no unacceptable adverse impacts on national statutory designated sites for nature conservation, protected habitats and species; and
- includes biodiversity enhancement measures to provide a net benefit for biodiversity.

7.11 Policy 18 also states that the 'cumulative impacts of existing and consented renewable energy schemes should also be considered'.

Local Planning Policy

Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan

7.12 The Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan[ii] was adopted in 2017. National and international environmental designations within the joint plan area are generally focussed on the coast and mountain, with heritage assets more widely spread as human influence on the landscape dates back to prehistoric times.

7.13 Theme 5 of the Strategic Objectives is to *'protect and enhance the natural and built environment'* and includes the following:

> *'Protect, enhance and manage the natural and heritage assets of the Plan area, including its natural resources, wildlife habitats, and its landscape character and historic environment.'*

7.14 Strategic Policy PS 5: Sustainable Development supports development that is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, and sets out the criteria for development proposals, including the following:

> *'Protect and improve the quality of the natural environment, its landscapes and biodiversity assets, including understanding and appreciating them for the social and economic contribution they make in accordance with Strategic Policy PS 19'.*

7.15 Policy PCYFF 3: Design and Place Shaping establishes the expectation for proposals to demonstrate high quality design 'which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places'. Criteria for high quality design include:

> *'It respects the context of the site and its place within the local landscape, including its impact on important principal gateways into Gwynedd or into Anglesey, its effects on townscape and the local historic and cultural heritage and it takes account of the site topography and prominent skylines or ridges.'*

7.16 Supporting text in paragraph 6.2.9 states that:

> *'Good design helps to provide a sense of place, creates or reinforces local distinctiveness, promotes community cohesiveness and social well being. The layout and design of new developments must be based on a thorough understanding of the site itself and its wider context and seek to maximise the benefits of the sites characteristics. This will require careful consideration of the site layout. No two sites share the same landscapes, contours, relationship with surrounding buildings, street pattern, and features. The proximity of poor quality or indistinct development is not a justification for standard or poor design solutions. New development should integrate into its surroundings whilst seeking to enhance the overall character of the locality.'*

7.17 Policy PCYFF 4: Design and Landscape requires that proposals integrate into their surroundings and sets out the following criteria for landscape schemes:

1) *'Demonstrate how the proposed development has given due consideration to the Landscape Character Area Assessment or Seascape Character Area Assessment;*
2) *Demonstrate how the proposed development respects the natural contours of the landscape;*
3) *Demonstrate how the proposed development respects and protects local and strategic views;*
4) *Respect, retain and complement any existing positive natural features, landscapes, or other features on site;*
5) *Identify trees, hedgerows, water courses and topographical features to be retained;*
6) *Provide justification for circumstances where the removal/loss of existing trees, hedgerows, water courses and topographical features cannot be avoided and provides details of replacements;*
7) *Provide details of any proposed new landscaping together with a phased programme of planting;*
8) *Demonstrate that any proposed new planting includes plants and trees of mainly native species of local provenance and does not include any non-native invasive species;*
9) *Ensure that selection of species and planting position of any trees allows for them to grow to their mature height without detriment to nearby buildings, services and other planting; and*
10) *Provide permeable hard surface landscaping. '*

7.18 With respect to Renewable Energy Technology, Strategy Policy PS 7 requires that 'installations in areas covered by international or national landscape designations and visible beyond their boundaries, or areas of local landscape value, in accordance with Strategic Policy PS 19 do not individually or cumulatively compromise the objectives of the designations especially with regard to landscape character, and visual impact' and that installations outside designated areas will be supported provided that 'installation would not cause significant demonstrable harm to landscape character, biodiversity, or amenity of residential or holiday accommodation, either individually or cumulatively'. New overhead lines associated with these installations should be placed underground unless this causes significant harm to other acknowledged interests or the viability of the scheme.

7.19 Policy AND 2: PV Solar Energy directs proposals for solar photovoltaic ('PV') farms of 5MW or more to the potential search areas shown on the Proposals Map and identifies the following criteria for proposals:

1) *'All impacts on landscape character, heritage assets and natural resources have been adequately mitigated, ensuring that the special qualities of all locally, nationally and internationally important landscape, biodiversity and heritage designations, including, where appropriate, their settings are conserved or enhanced;*
2) *The proposal will not result in significant harm to the safety or amenity of sensitive receptors including effect from glint and glare and will not have an unacceptable impact on roads, rail or aviation safety;*
3) *The proposal will not result in significant harm to the residential visual amenities of nearby residents;*
4) *The proposal will not have unacceptable cumulative impacts in relation to existing solar PV farms and those which have permission and other prominent landscape features;*
5) *The panels and associated infrastructure will, at the end of the operational life of the facility, be removed in accordance with a restoration and aftercare scheme submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority.*
6) *That a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is provided to demonstrate that any potential negative effects arising during construction and decommissioning phases are avoided.'*

7.20 The Site is not located within a potential search area, as shown on the 2017 Proposals Map.[1]

7.21 The Constraints Maps for West Anglesey and East Anglesey, Maps 1[2] and 2[3] respectively, illustrate that the Site is not constrained by landscape and visual considerations in terms of landscape designations. The Nantanog geological Site of Special Scientific Interest ('SSSI') is located partially within the Site and the Site is located within 400m of Llyn Alaw SSSI and Local Wildlife Sites.

Legislative Context

7.22 There is no legislation specific to the assessment of a proposed development's landscape and visual impacts.

Assessment Methodology

Consultation

7.23 Table 7.2 below describes the consultation that has been undertaken with respect to the assessment of the Development's likely significant landscape and visual effects.

Table 7.2: Key Correspondence with Statutory Consultees

Consultee	Comments	Applicant's Response
Planning Inspectorate Wales (now Planning and Environment	ID.17 (paragraph 3.19 in the EIA Scoping Report) Approach – Glint and Glare *'It is noted that the SR does not address the issue of glint and glare. It is assumed that this issue will be addressed in the relevant section of*	A Glint and Glare Assessment is included in section 7.14 entitled 'Likely Significant Effects under subheading 'Glint and Glare'. A full assessment of Glint and Glare is

[1] Available at: https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Environment-and-planning/Planning-policy/J.L.D.P-ANGLESEY-11-2017/1.-Map-cynigion-Ynys-Môn.pdf

[2] Available at: https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Environment-and-planning/Planning-policy/J.L.D.P-ANGLESEY-11-2017/8.-Cyfyngiadau-Dwyrain-Môn.pdf

[3] Available at: https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Environment-and-planning/Planning-policy/J.L.D.P-ANGLESEY-11-2017/7.-Cyfyngiadau-Dwyrain-Môn.pdf

Consultee	Comments	Applicant's Response
Decisions Wales ('PEDW') EIA Scoping Direction	*the ES as appropriate and that if scoped out during the course of assessment, a robust justification will be provided'* Need to address the issue of glint and glare, either by including an assessment or robust justification for scoping out.	provided in the Glint and Glare assessment prepared by Neo Environmental Limited at Appendix 7.7
	ID.18 (paragraph 3.26 in the EIA Scoping Report) Viewpoints Approach to establishing relevant viewpoints is considered largely appropriate; however, final list of viewpoints should be agreed in consultation with relevant consultees, including IACC.	Further consultation was carried out with IACC to agree the viewpoints, as detailed below and contained in Appendix 7.9
	ID.19 (paragraph 3.25 in the EIA Scoping Report) LVIA Search and Study Area The approach to refining the study area, as set out at paragraph 3.25 of the Scoping Report, is considered appropriate.	Noted.
	ID.20 (paragraph 3.27 in the EIA Scoping Report) Schemes for cumulative assessment The applicant should continue to liaise with IACC, with a view to agreeing an up-to-date list of cumulative schemes for inclusion in the final ES.	Engagement with IACC regarding cumulative schemes has been undertaken. Chapter 15 considers cumulative effects.
	ID.21 Ynys Môn AONB Planning Inspectorate Wales agrees with National Resources Wales ('NRW') (Appendix 1 of EIA Scoping Direction) that effects on the Ynys Môn AONB can be scoped out of the ES.	Noted.
	ID.22 (paragraph 3.26 / Table 2 in the EIA Scoping Report) Residential Receptors Planning Inspectorate Wales does not agree with IACC (Appendix 1 of EIA Scoping Direction) that a separate assessment of visual impact on residential receptors is required, provided the appropriate residential receptors are captured in the main LVIA.	A RVAA has been prepared as requested by IACC, with the scope and methodology agreed with IACC.
EIA Scoping Direction Response Isle of Anglesey County Council ('IACC')	4. '*The scope of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will need to be agreed with the Council including agreement in relation to the study area, baseline, potential cumulative schemes to be included, assessment methodology and viewpoints to be used as part of the Assessment*.'	Noted, consultation with IACC has been undertaken to agree these aspects of the assessment of likely significant landscape and visual effects from the Development, as detailed below and contained in Appendix 7.4 and 7.5
	4. '*There is no detail on the project components beyond the initial description. This will influence the type and content of visualisations. The approach (photomontages, annotated photographs etc.) will need to be agreed along with details to be included e.g. panels, fencing, substation, energy storage facility, access tracks etc.'*	Noted, additional details have been provided and the type and content of visualisations agreed with IACC, as detailed below and contained in Appendix 7.8
	4. '*In addition to the LVIA a standalone Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) is also required which is an assessment of potential effects on private amenity*.'	A RVAA has been prepared as requested by IACC, with the scope and methodology agreed with IACC and contained in Appendix 7.6
	4. '*The LVIA should comply with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA 3rd Ed.) and the RVAA should comply with the Landscape Institute up to date guidelines*.'	Noted.
	4. '*In relation to the reference to the viewpoint assessment in paragraph 3.25, this assessment*	Noted, consultation with IACC has been undertaken to agree the

Consultee	Comments	Applicant's Response
	may need to consider areas outside the initial study for the purpose of cumulative assessments.'	viewpoints and visualisation requirements for the cumulative assessment.
	4. '*Views from fixed residential visual receptors referred to in paragraph 3.26 should be considered under the RVAA*.'	Noted, the residential visual receptors for the RVAA have been agreed with IACC, as detailed below and contained in Appendix 7.6
	4. '*The Council confirms that the baseline for these Assessments should include the following; Local Landscape Character Areas NRW LANDMAP Aspect Areas Local and national cycle routes National Cycle and PRoW network*.'	Noted.
	4. '*In terms of the list of cumulative schemes provided in table 7, the Council would welcome the opportunity to agree a list of cumulative schemes that are to be included in the assessment with the applicant.'*	Engagement with IACC regarding cumulative schemes has been ongoing, and two additional schemes have been included in the ES.
	4. 'Consideration needs to the given to the loss of any landscape features such as trees, hedges or landscape form through any levelling of the site. The level of change on the site should be minimised with consideration being given to mitigation measures such as replanting for screening etc.'	Noted, a Landscape Strategy Plan with Planting Schedules and Notes has been included in the application, setting out how existing features are retained and the proposed planting and management of landscape features.
	4. 'In addition, the impact of losing field patterns if the panels are higher than the existing boundaries especially if placed close to existing boundaries need to be considered within the assessment.'	Noted, a Landscape Strategy Plan establishes the setbacks from existing boundaries and details the proposed management and planting of field boundary vegetation.
EIA Scoping Direction – Appendix 1 Natural Resources Wales	We conclude the assessment of development effects on the Ynys Môn AONB do not need to be scoped into the EIA.	Noted.
IACC Landscape Officer Consultation	10th June 2021 Comments received in response to 20th May 2021 e-mail setting out the proposed viewpoint locations and type of visualisations, for discussion and approval. Comments received included general approval of proposed viewpoints, including identifying viewpoints for the assessment of cumulative effects with some viewpoints to be repositioned.	LVIA viewpoints and photography amended in response to IACC comments (Rev B). Number of photomontages increased to 10. (24th June 2021)
	12th and 19th July 2021 (e-mail and Teams meeting) Discussion of final viewpoint selection Viewpoints should be omitted / added where they are no longer appropriate / are required due to changes to the red line boundary. A visualisation should be provided that identifies the site location and extents easily within the image, including Cumulative Schemes where appropriate. Satisfied that a RVAA will be prepared and discussed the methodology and approach to scoping in / out residential properties.	Revised schedule of viewpoints provided (Rev C), as discussed at the meeting. Confirmed provision of visualisations to aid identification of the site when in the field and that LVIA will consider impact of associated equipment and infrastructure. Shared draft Landscape Mitigation Strategy and reduced red line boundary for comment. Type 1 visualisations of the cumulative schemes can be found in Appendix 7.3 Site Context Photographs.

Consultee	Comments	Applicant's Response
	LVIA should consider the impact of gates, signage, cameras, transformers, substations, fences and roads. List of cumulative schemes still to be agreed.	Provided initial selection of receptors for RVAA with updated ZTV. (30th July 2021)
	2nd August 2021 Viewpoint selection approved, based on current red line boundary. Queried whether battery storage would be visible in any visualisations. Approach to RVAA agreed and confirmed identification of properties to be included in RVAA.	Issued updated viewpoint spreadsheet (Rev D) reflecting revised numbering for approved viewpoints. Confirmed battery storage would be picked up in visualisations 10, 17 and 18. Revised red line boundary slightly reduced number of residential properties scoped into RVAA based on agreed approach. (9th August 2021) Forwarded schedule of responses from residents for RVAA site visits. (2nd September 2021)
	3rd September 2021 Updated viewpoints, visualisations and RVAA methodology and scope were accepted.	Noted.

7.24 A detailed LVIA methodology is set out in Appendix 7.1: LVIA Methodology.

7.25 The LVIA methodology has been drawn from best practice guidelines, including the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment,* Third Edition ('GLVIA3')[iii]. The aim of these guidelines is to set high standards for the scope and content of landscape and visual impact assessment and to establish certain principles that will help to achieve consistency, credibility, transparency and effectiveness throughout the assessment.

7.26 The assessment of landscape and visual effects, in common with the assessment of many environmental effects, includes a combination of objective and subjective judgements, and it is therefore important that a structured and consistent approach is adopted to ensure that the assessment undertaken is as objective as possible.

7.27 A landscape assessment is the systematic description and analysis of the features within the landscape, such as landform; vegetation cover; settlement pattern; building forms; transport patterns; and land uses; which together create a particular sense of place. A visual assessment considers visual receptors, which are the viewers of and within the landscape, and include those at locations such as residential and business properties; public buildings; transport routes; Public Rights of Way ('PRoW'); National Cycle Routes ('NCR'); public open space; and recognised scenic routes.

7.28 The term 'landscape' in this chapter adopts the definition as provided in the European Landscape Convention ('ELC')[iv] and refers equally to areas of rural countryside and urban built-up areas.

Assessment of Effects

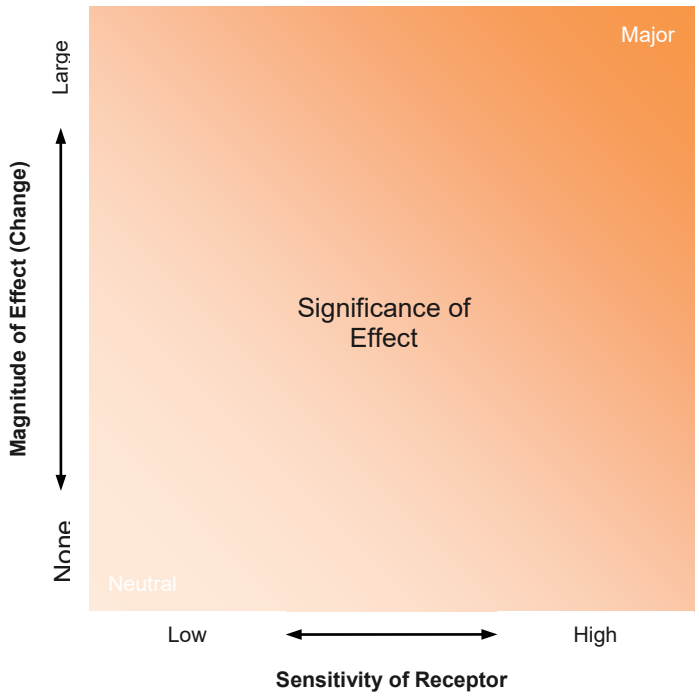
7.29 The sensitivity of landscape receptors is a combination of the value of the landscape receptor (high, medium, low or very low) and the susceptibility of the landscape receptor to the type of change proposed (high, medium or low), using professional judgement. The landscape magnitude of effect (change) is a product of the scale of the effect, the scale over which that effect is experienced, the permanence of the effect and its reversibility (large, medium, small, very small or none).

7.30 The sensitivity of visual receptors is a combination of the value of the views (high, medium or low) and the susceptibility of the visual receptor to the type of change proposed (high, medium or low), using professional judgement. The visual magnitude of effect (change) experienced is determined with

reference to the scale of change in the view; whether the view is fixed or transient; and the duration of the change (large, medium, small, very small or none).

7.31 The significance of landscape and visual effects is derived from a combination of assessing the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of effect experienced as a result of the Development (major, moderate, minor, negligible or neutral). Assessment of significance of effects is subject to professional judgement, although Plate 7.1: Significance of Effects illustrates the general correlation between sensitivity and magnitude of effect.

Plate 7.1: Significance of Effects



Significance Criteria

7.32 The significance of effect thresholds for landscape and visual effects has been determined by considering the sensitivity of the receptor concerned alongside the magnitude of effect that will be experienced. Effects that have been graded as being 'Major' or 'Moderate' are considered to be significant with respect to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017[v]. Effects that have been graded as 'Minor' to 'Neutral' constitute effects that are not considered to be significant.

Limitations and Assumptions

7.33 Limitations to the assessment include:

- The baseline assessment has been based on information readily available at the time of undertaking the assessment;
- During visits to the Site and surrounding area, weather conditions, the time of day and seasonal factors may affect the assessment and record of the environment.

7.34 The following assumptions have been made in the assessment:

- The construction phase will follow the indicative programme set out in Chapter 5: Construction Methodology & Phasing of the ES. However, this has been assessed as a 'worst-case' scenario for the purpose of this assessment, where all construction comes forward simultaneously;
- Tall plant and machinery will be in place for the minimum practicable period of time;
- With respect to judgements on landscape and visual susceptibility, the 'nature/form of the type of development proposed' has been considered to predominantly comprise solar PV panels, as well as battery storage. To ensure the avoidance of double-counting, when making judgements on susceptibility the 'nature/form of the type of development proposed' does not infer the degree of proximity to a particular receptor, nor an indication of the duration or reversibility of an effect; these aspects are instead considered when determining the magnitude of effects;
- The assessment of likely landscape and visual effects and identification of likely significant effects at Year 1 of the completed Development is based on the following material:
    - Proposed Site Plan;
    - Plans and elevations illustrating the design of proposed PV panels, surfacing, fencing, battery storage infrastructure and ancillary equipment;
    - 132kv Substation Plans;
    - Landscape Strategy Plans; and
    - Photomontages (Year 1) – Appendix 7.8.
- The assessment of likely residual landscape and visual effects of the Development after mitigation, at Year 15 of the completed Development, and identification of likely significant residual effects is based on the successful establishment of proposed planting specified in Landscape Strategy Plans (Ref: LN-LP-114 – LN-LP-118) and illustrated in Appendix 7.8: Photomontages (Year 15). Proposed planting is assumed to grow by approximately 1m every 3 years; and
- The assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the Development when decommissioned is based on the description set out in Chapter 5.

Study Area

7.35 The Study Area for the Development was determined based on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility ('ZTV') mapping and field surveys and was agreed in consultation with the Local Planning Authority ('LPA').

7.36 As illustrated on Figure 7.1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility, a ZTV has been prepared based on the Development's height of 3m above existing ground level including the photovoltaics. Site visits were carried out on 31st March, 1st April, 6th and 7th September 2021, and most recently on the 15th August 2023. The site visits included viewpoints from potential high sensitivity visual receptors of up to 5km from the Site, within the locations identified by the ZTV, due to the large scale of the Site. This confirmed that a study area of 2km from the Site is appropriate, given the scale and nature of the Development and the character and context of the Site.

Baseline Conditions

Location and Context

7.37 As illustrated on Figure 7.2: Site Context Plan, the Site is located to the south of Llyn Alaw, between Llanddeusant and Llanerchymedd on the Isle of Anglesey. The Site comprises 62 fields that extend either side of three unnamed local roads to the north-west of the B5112, including a section of National Cycle Route 5 ('NCR 5'). The Site comprises land in agricultural use, predominantly grazed by sheep, with some cattle.

Landform and Drainage

7.38 In relation to topography, the landscape within the Study Area is rolling, with a north-east south-west grain, as illustrated on Figure 7.3: Topographical Features Plan. To the south-east of the Site, a local ridgeline rising up to approximately 110m Above Ordnance Datum ('AOD') physically and visually contains the Site. The landform rises up to the north of the Site and Llyn Alaw, with a ridgeline at approximately 95m AOD defining the south-eastern edge of the Afon Alaw valley. The drumlin or "basket of eggs" landform is a feature throughout the study area, becoming more distinct to the west.

7.39 The Site extends over a local ridgeline, onto the side slopes of a valley and within a valley bowl, including the valley floor. As such, it ranges between 198m AOD at its highest point in the south-east, down to 40m AOD at its lowest point in the north-west.

7.40 The drainage pattern generally follows the north-east, south-west grain of the landscape, and Llyn Alaw reservoir is a large waterbody approximately 500m north of the Site (designated as Llyn Alaw SSSI), with the rivers Afon Alaw and Cors-y-bol flowing south-west towards the coast. There are a number of smaller watercourses and drains through and between the Site, including a tributary of the Cors-y-bol; a pond within the Site, drainage ditches, and a number of ponds in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

Vegetation

7.41 The vegetation pattern within the Site and the context is generally simple and sparse, and predominantly comprises hedgerow boundaries, although these are gappy and fragmented in places. Trees, tree groups and woodland are generally infrequent, and tend to be associated with settlements and farmsteads. Woodland is found within and adjacent to the Site to the north-west, including mixed and broadleaf woodland planting along the Cors-y-bol watercourse in the vicinity of the Site. Hedgerows and cloddiau define the fields to the north-east of the Site.

National Landscape Character

NLCA 2: Central Anglesey

7.42 As illustrated on Figure 7.4: Landscape Character Plan, the Site is located within National Landscape Character Area 2: Central Anglesey. Key characteristics of the area that are of relevance to the Site's context include:

- A distinctive geological grain follows a north-east to south-west 'grain';
- A classic 'basket of eggs' rolling drumlin landscape, especially in the north-west;
- Lowland pastoral grazing land bounded by a strongly geometric pattern of medium to large scale and, more occasionally, small scale fields;
- A number of minor rivers and streams cross the landscape, whose alignment is influenced by the north-east to south-west trend. There are many shallow hollows and fens with wetland features including rush pasture and valley mires;
- This is a generally rolling, open landscape with a well-established pattern of field boundaries, predominantly of hedgerows but with cloddiau in some areas;
- Woodlands larger than a small copse are an exception and other than in sheltered areas, individual trees are few;
- The only urban settlement is the county town of Llangefni. There are only a few villages, but numerous scattered hamlets and farms;
- Ritual and funerary monuments including cairns and round barrows, Iron Age hill forts and Early Christian churches, burial grounds and inscribed stones;

- Historic windmill towers;
- Modern wind farms; and
- The large reservoir, Llyn Alaw, is nearly 3 miles long and a notable visual feature.

7.43 With respect to the visual and sensory profile of NLCA02, the assessment notes that it is a landscape of *'large skies, which often reinforce the exposed nature of the island'.* Open views across the landscape are afforded from the nearby mountains. The assessment states that *'typically the area is seen as enclosed farmland, rural in character, tranquil in feel, with scattered farms throughout'.*

7.44 The value of NLCA02 is varied. Nationally designated features within the NLCA include Open Access Areas and a Sustrans national cycle route; however, it lies adjacent to the Anglesey AONB and therefore parts of the NLCA contribute to the setting of the AONB. Parciau Estatelands, Maltraeth Marsh & Surrounds and Southern Anglesey Estatelands Special Landscape Areas extend into the NLCA. Overall, the NLCA is considered to be of Medium-Low value.

7.45 The susceptibility of NLCA02 to the type of development proposed is considered to be Medium-Low as the key characteristic features would have some scope to accommodate the type of development proposed without undue consequences on its overall integrity.

7.46 NLCA02 is therefore assessed as being of Medium-Low sensitivity to the type of development proposed.

County Landscape Character

7.47 The Anglesey Landscape Strategy[vi] identifies the Site as falling within two County Landscape Character Areas (LCA): LCA 5: North West Anglesey and LCA 17: West Central Anglesey, as illustrated on Figure 7.4: Landscape Character Plan.

7.48 The Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment[vii] was commissioned by Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd and Snowdonia (now Eryri) National Park in response to the growing pressure on the landscape for development within the landscapes of the Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd and Snowdonia National Park, including renewable energy developments for wind energy and field-scale solar PV energy, as well as transmission infrastructure and tourism. This is a strategic study and is not prescriptive at an individual site level.

LCA 5: North West Anglesey

7.49 County LCA 5: North West Anglesey comprises the north west of Anglesey from Cemaes down to the A5/A55 corridor between Valley and Caergeiliog, including Llyn Alaw, but excluding the coastline. The key feature of the North West Anglesey LCA is the extensive drumlin field. The hillocks are described as trending in a south-west to north-east direction and the majority of the landscape is characterised by improved grassland, although there are a number of marshy grasslands amongst the drumlins. There are also areas of scattered rocky outcrops. The LCA also contains the largest water body on the island: Llyn Alaw reservoir. The Afon Alaw is associated with the Mabinogion, a legend central to Welsh culture. The western edge of the LCA is formed by the A5 corridor. Another distinctive feature is the development of windfarms, particularly to the north of Llyn Alaw, which continues the established relationship of windmills and wind energy on Anglesey.

7.50 The Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment identifies LCA 5: North West Anglesey as being of Medium sensitivity to field scale solar PV energy. Medium sensitivity is defined by the Assessment as *'some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of development being assessed'.*

7.51 Key characteristics of the LCA are defined as:

- *'Medium scale, open landscape*
- *Extensive drumlin fields with scattered rocky outcrops*

- *Historic association with wind energy development from windmills to more recent wind turbine developments'.*

7.52 The overall sensitivity description with respect to field-scale solar PV energy developments for LCA 5: North West Anglesey states:

> *'This medium scale landscape is influenced in many places by modern day developments such as wind farms, 400 kV and 132 kV overhead lines and major transport corridors; the presence of which reduces sensitivity to field-scale solar PV energy development. A typically regular pattern of medium to large scale fields with a mixture of field boundaries introduces the possibility of increasing vegetation height to provide localised screening of such developments thus reducing sensitivity further.*
>
> *In counterbalance, localised areas of less regular and more complex field patterns to the north, together with scenic areas designated within the Anglesey AONB, are considered more highly sensitive to field-scale solar PV energy development. The distinctive wild landscape of Mynedd Mechell & Surrounds SLA is also particularly sensitive and sensitivity is further enhanced by the cultural heritage value of the landscape.'*

7.53 The indicative overall capacity of LCA 5 is described as:

> *'Within the AONB and SLA (and all areas that contribute to their setting), there is typically no capacity for field-scale solar PV energy developments.*
>
> *Outside the AONB and SLA it is considered there may be some capacity for micro to small scale developments, in particular where these would relate well to the existing built environment/urban landcover. There may also be limited capacity for very infrequent sensitively sited small to medium scale development towards the south of the LCA.'*

7.54 Guidance notes on siting for LCA 5 include conserving and protecting the settings of the Anglesey AONB and Mynedd Mechell & Surrounds SLA, and other designated and important cultural heritage features, including Registered Parks and Gardens and key views to and from these features; ensuring access tracks do not damage historic field patterns; avoiding cumulative effects on popular routes, including NCR5; and considering cumulative effects of existing and proposed developments.

7.55 The value of LCA 5 varies, with some nationally designated features present and the central northern extent designated as an SLA. Overall, the value of LCA 5 is Medium.

7.56 With respect to susceptibility to the type of development proposed, the LCA is considered to have Medium-Low susceptibility, as there is potential to retain many of the relevant features of the landscape and the LCA is influenced by existing energy infrastructure; however, there would be a change within the open fields themselves.

7.57 Overall, LCA 5 is considered to be of Medium sensitivity to the type of development proposed.

LCA 17: West Central Anglesey

7.58 LCA 17: West Central Anglesey is a large area of the rural heartland of Anglesey and includes the settlements of Gwalchmai and Llangefni as well as a small section of coastal landscape at Rhosneigr. The topography is described as generally undulating, with a number of rocky outcrops that typify the landscape of this part of the island. Small areas of semi-natural habitats (hedges, trees, mires) are scattered through the area within a matrix of improved agricultural grassland. The A5 and A55 roads pass through the area, with the main railway along its southern edge.

7.59 The Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment identifies LCA 17: North West Anglesey as being of Low-Medium sensitivity to field scale solar PV energy. Low-Medium sensitivity is defined by the Assessment as *'few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of the development being assessed'.*

7.60 Key characteristics of the LCA are defined as:

- *'Medium scale, open landscape*
- *Rolling and undulating [l]and form*
- *Expansive agricultural heartland of the Isle of Anglesey'*

7.61 The overall sensitivity description with respect to field-scale solar PV energy developments for LCA 17: West Central Anglesey states:

> *'This medium scale, low lying landscape comprises large areas of mixed farmland. Field systems are typically regular with medium to large scale fields bounded by a mixture of stone walls and hedgerows which is indicative of a lower sensitivity and introduces the possibility of increasing vegetation height to provide further localised screening. The Mona airfield and A5/A55 corridor detract from the tranquillity of the landscape, further reducing sensitivity. This lowered sensitivity is counterbalanced slightly by the cultural heritage value of the landscape. The most westerly tip of the LCA falls within Anglesey AONB, increasing the sensitivity in this area.'*

7.62 The indicative overall capacity of LCA 17 is described as:

> *'Within the AONB and SLAs (and all areas that contribute to their setting), there is typically no capacity for field-scale solar PV energy (with the exception of very infrequent micro scale, development) Outside the AONB and SLAs it is considered there may be some capacity for micro to small scale developments. There may also be limited capacity for larger scale developments, in particular towards the south west where the landscape is already influenced by modern infrastructure; however, any new development should be carefully sited to avoid cumulative effects with other developments.'*

7.63 Guidance notes on siting for LCA 17 include conserving and protecting the settings of the Anglesey AONB and Malltraeth Marsh & Surrounds and Parciau Estatelands SLAs, and other designated and important cultural heritage features and key views to and from these features; ensuring access tracks do not damage historic field patterns; avoiding cumulative effects on popular routes, including NCR5; and considering cumulative effects of existing and proposed developments.

7.64 The value of LCA 17 varies, although it does include a small part of Anglesey AONB along the west coast, and small parts of locally designated SLAs, where sensitivity would be higher. The majority of the LCA 17 is of medium or low value. Overall, the value is considered to be Medium-Low.

7.65 The susceptibility of LCA 17 to the type of development proposed is considered to be Medium-Low, as there is some scope to accommodate the type of development without undue consequences on its overall integrity and there is potential for characteristic mitigation.

7.66 Overall, LCA 17 is considered to be of Medium-Low sensitivity to the type of development proposed.

7.67 The Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment assessed 18 LCAs within Anglesey. No LCAs were categorised as being of 'Low' sensitivity; one was categorised as of 'Low-Medium' (LCA 17); and six of the 18 Anglesey LCAs were categorised as of 'Medium' sensitivity, including LCA 5.

Table 7.3: Sensitivity of Landscape Character Receptors Summary

Landscape Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
National LCA 2: Central Anglesey	Medium	Medium	Medium
County LCA 5: North West Anglesey	Medium	Medium	Medium

County LCA 17: West Central Anglesey	Medium	Medium	Medium

Local Landscape Character: LANDMAP Aspect Areas

7.68 LANDMAP maps and classifies landscapes, dividing Wales into discrete geographical areas known as Aspect Areas ('AAs'), each of which is identified by its own landscape characteristics and qualities. There are five LANDMAP spatial datasets:

- Geological Landscape;
- Landscape Habitats;
- Visual & Sensory;
- Historic Landscape; and
- Cultural Landscape.

7.69 Evaluation levels provided within LANDMAP have been reviewed and aligned as appropriate to the criteria as set out within Appendix 7.1: LVIA Methodology, as depicted in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4: AA Evaluation Criteria for LANDMAP and ES Chapter equivalent

Level	Criteria	ES Chapter Value
Outstanding	Of international or national importance to the Aspect Area	High
High	Of regional or county importance to the Aspect Area	High - Medium
Moderate	Of sub-regional importance to the Aspect Area	Medium - Low
Local	Of little or no importance to the Aspect Area	Low

7.70 The assessment process set out in LANDMAP GN46: *Using LANDMAP in Landscape and Visual Assessments* was undertaken in order to filter the AAs and identify those that should be scoped into the assessment, as illustrated by Figure 7.5a: LANDMAP Geological, Figure 7.5b LANDMAP Landscape Habitats and Figure 7.5c LANDMAP Cultural Landscape Services.

7.71 With respect to Geological Landscape and Landscape Habitats, step 3 of the filter process described in GN46 uses a ZTV, where available, to *'retain all filtered aspect areas that are visible [sic] with the development'*. This is interpreted as applying only to the Geological Landscape and Landscape Habitat AAs that overlap fully or partially or are adjacent to the development site boundary (Filter 1) or have a special relationship with AAs identified in Filter 1 (Filter 2). This is supported by professional judgement, as landscape effects on the geological landscape and landscape habitat are unlikely to arise purely as a result of intervisibility in the absence of direct effects on the characteristics and features of these AAs.

Geological Landscape

7.72 As shown on Figure 7.7: Landscape Character Aspect Areas and Figure 7.8: Landscape Character Evaluation, LANDMAP defines almost all of the Site as located within AA: Llanerchymedd (YNSMNGL020), a lowland hills and valley landscape with a broadly south-west, north-east gently rolling topography. The AA does not have a special or functional link with an adjacent area.

7.73 A very small area of the eastern edge of the Site and parts of the north-western boundary extend into AA: Afon Alaw (YNSMNGL018), a lowland river and drainage system of the River Alaw and its main tributaries. The AA does not have a special or functional link with an adjacent area. The AA has moderate overall value and low rarity / uniqueness, therefore, in line with GN46 Filter 4, it has been scoped out of further assessment.

7.74 AA: Llanfechel (YNSMNGL2) to the north of the Site is evaluated as being of high overall value and high rarity / uniqueness but is not adjacent to or within the Site and does not have a special or functional link with the AAs identified in Filter 1 and 2 of GN46. Therefore, AA: Lllanfechel has been scoped out of further assessment.

Table 7.5: Sensitivity of Geological AAs

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Llanerchymedd (YNSMNGL020)	Within LANDMAP, the AA is evaluated as being of high overall value (of regional or county importance), with high rarity / uniqueness. The condition is considered to be good, comprising a predominantly rural area with limited significant development. Nantanog Ravine Geological Conservation Review site and SSSI lies adjacent to and partially within the Site boundary. The value of the AA is determined to be Medium, recognising the regional and local value of the characteristic features, based on the LVIA methodology.	The type of development proposed would likely follow the existing terrain and therefore would have a negligible effect on the geological qualities of the AA. Therefore, it is considered to be of **Low** susceptibility.	Medium

Habitats

7.75 With respect to habitats, LANDMAP defines the Site and the majority of its wider context as being within AA: West Anglesey Farmland (YNSMNLH006), comprising improved grassland dominated farmland, which is ubiquitous in lowland Wales.

7.76 The Site is immediately adjacent to AA: Cors-y-bol (YNSMNLH028), a relatively small AA of 57ha comprising wet terrestrial habitat. The AA is evaluated as being of moderate (bordering on high) value overall, being rated high for habitats and unassessed for key species. The area is considered to have low connectivity / cohesion, being a small area that is isolated within the wider improved grassland dominated landscape. Therefore, in line with GN46 Filter 4, it has been scoped out of further assessment.

Table 7.6: Sensitivity of Habitat Aspect Areas

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
West Anglesey Farmland (YNSMNLH006)	Within LANDMAP the overall value of the AA is considered to be moderate (of sub-regional importance), predominantly comprising improved grassland, which is generally quite a low ecological value habitat, but with a scattering of proposed sites of nature conservation sites throughout. The network of hedges and pockets of more valuable habitat adds value. However, the AA is evaluated as being very low value on the moderate scale; and therefore, is considered to be of Low value in this assessment.	The Site is able to accommodate the type of development proposed with little consequence upon its overall integrity. Majority of the landscape features/habitats will be retained, few trees and hedgerows will likely be removed for access. Furthermore, the existing hedgerows are a mix of low and high quality. The development will likely retain most of the networks of hedges and pockets of more valuable habitat with improved grassland common within the wider landscape. The	Low

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
		AA is considered to be of Low susceptibility.	

Cultural Landscapes

7.77 As shown on Figure 7.7: Landscape Character Aspect Areas and Figure 7.8: Landscape Character Evaluation, the Site straddles two Cultural Landscape AAs, broadly separated by the local ridgeline that runs through the Site. The north-western part of the Site falls within AA: North-West Drumlins (YNSMNCLS010) and the south-eastern part of the Site falls within AA: Central Smooth Belt (YNSMNCLS016). There are no other AAs that overlap fully or partially or are adjacent to the Site boundary.

7.78 Table 7.7 below sets out the sensitivity of the final filtered Cultural Landscape AAs to the type of development proposed.

Table 7.7: Sensitivity of Cultural Landscape AAs

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
North-west drumlins (YNSMNCLS010)	As set out within LANDMAP, the AA is tranquil with attractive views both in and out. The visual and sensory landscape evaluation is moderate (of sub-regional importance), with a moderate sense of place / local distinctiveness, moderate scenic quality and moderate character. The historic landscape evaluation is outstanding and the geological landscape is a mosaic of outstanding, high and moderate. Overall, the AA is considered to be of predominantly local value particularly in the vicinity of the Site, with areas of higher value along the coast, and therefore Medium value.	The type of development proposed would likely have some localised effects on the visual and sensory landscape elements of the AA but is likely to have limited effect on the geological and historic landscape elements. Overall, the AA is considered to have **Medium** susceptibility.	Medium
Central smooth belt (YNSMNCLS016)	The south-eastern part of the Site falls within the periphery of the Central smooth belt Aspect Area. The Central smooth belt AA is considered tranquil and to have attractive views in and out. Sense of place / local distinctiveness is described as weak and visual and sensory landscape evaluation is mainly moderate within LANDMAP, due to moderate scenic quality and low character. The historic landscape evaluation is high or outstanding and geological landscape is high or outstanding. The majority of the AA is considered to be of local value, albeit with some areas of greater value, and therefore Medium value.	The type of development proposed would likely have some localised effects on the visual and sensory landscape elements of the AA but is likely to have limited effect on the geological and historic landscape elements. Overall, the AA is considered to have Low susceptibility and sensitivity to the type of development proposed.	Low

Visual and Sensory

7.79 Figure 7.6: LANDMAP Visual, Sensory and Historic Landscapes shows that there are 5 Visual and Sensory AAs that fall within the 2km Study Area and 3km Search Area and are overlain by the ZTV, in accordance with Filters 1 and 2 of GN46.

7.80 As illustrated on Figure 7.9: Visual and Sensory Aspect Area and Figure 7.10: Visual and Sensory Evaluation, the Site straddles two visual and sensory AAs, broadly separated by the local ridgeline that runs through the Site. The north-western part of the Site falls within the North-West Drumlins AA (YNSMNVS008) and the south-western part of the Site falls within the Central Smooth Belt AA (YNSMNVS012). Despite not being evaluated as outstanding or high, either overall or with respect to scenic quality and/or character, these AAs are included in the assessment as the Site is located within them, in accordance with Filter 3 of GN46.

7.81 To the north of the Site Drumlins with Windfarms (YNSMNVS010) and Llyn Alaw (YNSMNVS056) AAs have intervisibility with the Site. Llynerchymedd (YNSMNVS070) to the east has some intervisibility as shown by the bare earth ZTV. Drumlins with Windfarms AA has an overall evaluation of moderate, and a low scenic quality. However, it is scoped into the assessment as its character is evaluated as high. Llyn Alaw AA is evaluated as moderate overall and with respect to scenic quality and character, and therefore has been scoped out of further assessment in line with Filter 3 of GN46. Llynerchymedd AA is evaluated as moderate overall and with respect to scenic quality and low with respect to character. Therefore, Llynerchymedd AA has also been scoped out of further assessment.

7.82 The North-West Drumlins AA is described as *'covering most of eastern part of north Anglesey, stretches from Cemaes and Llyn Alaw in the east to the north-west coast and the A55 in the west. The basket of eggs glacial landscape of smooth oval hillocks and damp hollows is typically covered with regular medium-sized fields with hedges, mainly pasture for sheep and cattle, with some arable land. There are numerous small villages, hamlets and scattered farms, linked with small roads, giving a settled character to this quiet, unremarkable but pleasant landscape, seen from the busy A55.'* Overall, the AA is considered to be moderate, being *'generally quiet pleasant rural landscape but no distinct landmarks. Clear 'basket-of-eggs' landform in parts. Intrusive elements – pylons and power station'.* The AA is assessed as being of moderate scenic quality and character.

7.83 The Central Smooth Belt AA is described as *'a very extensive area, stretching from Moelfre on the east coast, to Aberffraw on the west coast. It appears fairly flat in the west, but more undulating and higher in the east. It is primarily pasture, with some arable land, and medium to large sized fields with hedges, some hedgebanks and stone walls. It is criss-crossed by a network of mainly small roads, with many scattered houses and farms, hamlets and small villages. Generally it feels settled and prosperous, with a quiet rural character. It is pleasant but unremarkable, with some long views to the higher parts of Anglesey, and distant views to Snowdonia, but not usually to the coast. Only in the far west can the coast be seen. The part west of the A55 suffers from disturbance from jets from RAF Valley on weekdays.'* Overall, the AA is considered to be moderate, being *'generally quiet pleasant rural landscape but no distinctive landmarks'.* The AA is assessed as being of moderate scenic quality and low character.

7.84 The Drumlins with Windfarms AA to the north of the Site is described as *'groups of wind turbines dominate the landscape in the north part of Anglesey, south of the A5025 and Amlwch, to Llyn Alaw, and west to around Mynydd Mechell. The basket of eggs glacial landscape of smooth oval hillocks and damp hollows is typically covered with regular large fields with hedges, mainly pasture for sheep and cattle, with some arable land. There are scattered farms, linked with small roads, all within close sight of wind turbines which appear incongruous on this lowland farmland'.* Overall, the AA is considered to be moderate, with low scenic quality and high character.

7.85 Although Llyn Alaw AA has been scoped out of further assessment, it is a prominent feature within the Study Area and therefore it is worth noting the visual and sensory qualities of the AA, which is described as *'a shallow reservoir among the hillocks in the north central part of Anglesey. It was formed in 1966 and is the largest stretch of inland water on Anglesey. From the visitor centre at the southern end the dam* [no longer open] *can be reached and the ugly pumping station on a knoll is prominent. Pasture fields slope gently down to the water's edge and the view is generally not very interesting and limited to the nearby hillocks. The northern end is more varied, with some marshy areas and a hide for watching the wildfowl. It is also used for fishing, but there are no paths around it'.*

Table 7.8: Sensitivity of Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
North-West Drumlins (YNSMNVS008)	The LANDMAP resource identifies the AA as having a moderate sense of place / local distinctiveness and is considered to be a *'pleasant rural landscape but generally unremarkable',* although the drumlins / basket-of-eggs landform is distinct. The north-western part of the Site is located on the periphery of the North-west drumlins Aspect Area, where the "basket of eggs glacial landscape" is less pronounced. The AA is considered to have high integrity, being generally unspoilt except for high voltage overhead lines. The character is moderate, and rarity is low. Overall, the AA is considered to be of predominantly local value particularly in the vicinity of the Site, with areas of higher value along the coast, and therefore **Medium-Low** value.	The AA has a settled character and medium scale fields over a rolling landform. Some intrusive elements are present, including the A55 and overhead power lines. Therefore, the AA is considered to have **Low** susceptibility.	Low
Central Smooth Belt (YNSMNVS012)	The south-eastern part of the Site is located on the periphery of the Central smooth belt Aspect Area, a predominantly rural but unremarkable landscape with no distinctive landmarks. The AA is described as having a weak sense of place, with no distinct landmarks and is described as *'generally quiet pleasant rural landscape'.* Quietness is identified as a key quality to be conserved. The AA is considered to have high integrity, being generally unspoilt. The character is Medium due to a lack of distinctive features and rarity is low as it is similar to much of Anglesey. Overall, the AA is considered to be moderate (of sub-regional importance), being mainly moderate and low within LANDMAP. Overall, the majority of the AA is considered to be of local value, albeit with some areas of greater value, and therefore **Medium** value.	The AA settlement pattern comprises scattered rural and farmsteads and medium scale fields over rolling and undulating landform. There are no visual intrusions present. The AA is considered to have **Low** susceptibility to the type of development proposed.	Medium-Low
Drumlins with Windfarms (YNSMNVS010)	The AA is described as having a strong sense of place due to the groups of wind turbines, although these landmarks are also identified as creating detractive views. Quietness is identified as a key quality to be conserved.	The AA settlement pattern comprises scattered rural and farmsteads and medium scale fields over a rolling and undulating landform. The windfarms introduce prominent features that strongly influence the perception of human influence on the landscape.	Low

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
	The AA is considered to have low integrity as the rural landscape is diminished by the presence of wind turbines. The character is high, being made distinct by the turbines, and rarity is high as it is the only area with so many wind turbines on rolling lowland. Overall, the AA is considered to be moderate (of sub-regional importance) within LANDMAP. On balance, the AA is considered to be of local value, with no designated landscapes present, and therefore **Low** value.	The AA is considered to have **Low** susceptibility to the type of development proposed.	

Historic Landscape

7.86 Figure 7.6a: LANDMAP Visual and Sensory and Figure 6b: Historic Landscapes shows that there are 4 Historic Landscape AAs that fall within the 2km Study Area and 3km Search Area and are overlain by the ZTV, in accordance with Filters 1 and 2 of GN46.

7.87 As illustrated on Figure 7.7: Landscape Character Aspect Areas and Figure 7.8: Landscape Character Evaluation, the Site is located within Fieldscape, Central Easter Môn AA (YNSMNHL016). The Site is located within the AA, which is evaluated as outstanding overall, and is therefore included in the assessment in accordance with GN46.

7.88 Two built environment / settlement AAs extend into the Study Area and have some intervisibility with the Site: Llanddeusant (YNSMNHL035) to the west and Llanerchymedd (YNSMNHL0236) to the east. To the south-west, Presaddfed (YNSMNHL034) is an area of estate parkland. All 3 AAs are evaluated as high, and therefore are included in the assessment in accordance with Filter 3 of GN46.

7.89 Fieldscape, Central Easter Môn AA (YNSMNHL016), within which the Site and the majority of the Study Area is located, is the prevailing historic landscape classification within inland Anglesey. It is considered to be of outstanding value, being of national value, on the whole, as a broad landscape which contains many disparate patterns which illustrate and exemplify Anglesey's evolution as a primarily rural area. The condition is described as 'fair', as the area is subject to the pressures of any rural landscape, including depopulation and the redundance of historic farm buildings. The trend is declining, reflecting the challenges faced by Ynys Môn in particular and the agricultural sector generally.

7.90 To the west of the Site, Llanddeusant AA (YNSMNHL035) comprises a non-nucleated settlement, including an early medieval chapel that is now in ruins and a settlement known for its mills, particularly Llynnon Mill which is now a visitor attraction. Overall, the AA is evaluated as high for its early medieval chapel and mills, particularly Llynnon Mill. A small part of the AA extends into the Study Area and there is intervisibility between the Site and the AA within the Search Area. Although Grade II* listed building Llynnon Mill is referred to in the AA description Llynnon Mill, and the view of the windmill over fields *'should remain uninterrupted by development'*, it is located outside AA boundary, and the 3km Search Area and therefore scoped out of the assessment.

7.91 On the eastern edge of the Study Area, Llanerchymedd AA (YNSMNHL036) is a settlement situated on Anglesey central railway and was originally a medieval settlement and an important market town. The AA is evaluated as high for its historic market, which is visible in the wide main street, and for an attractive cluster of mainly 19th century buildings.

7.92 The ZTV illustrates that there is limited intervisibility between the AA and the Site, in particular from the main street and centre of the village. Potential views of the Site are predominantly from the rising ground

to the east of Llanerchymedd, although actual views of the Site are screened by existing vegetation and built form, which are not reflected by the bare-earth ZTV.

7.93 To the south-west of the Study Area, Presaddfed area AA (YNSMNHL034) is described as an *'area of, essentially, estate parkland'* although the area has a long history of activity and occupation from Prehistoric times. Post-medieval features in the area *'include domestic and farm buildings, including Presaddfed (possibly now a hotel/ self-catering accommodation), built in 1686 and reconstructed in 1821, with its 20th century garden, and Hen-Dy farm building which appears on the 1890 OS map. Presaddfed house and garden is associated with the famous garden designer Gertrude Jekyll.'* The AA is evaluated as being of high value, of county value as a multi-period landscape including Prehistoric sites, the Romano-British period, the Middle Ages and later estate parkland. The condition is generally good and the trend constant. The AA has high rarity, being a comparatively uncommon landscape.

7.94 The ZTV demonstrates that there is no potential intervisibility with Grade II* listed building Presaddfed House, which is located within the 3km Search Area but outside the 2km Study Area. Although there is theoretical intervisibility between a small part of the AA and the Site, the Site visits verified that, on the ground, there is no intervisibility between the AA and the Site due to layers of existing vegetation. Therefore, the AA has been scoped out of further assessment.

Table 7.9: Sensitivity of Historic Landscape Aspect Areas

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Fieldscape, Central Easter Môn (YNSMNHL016)	The AA is considered to be of outstanding value in LANDMAP, being of national value (on the whole) as *'a broad landscape in which it is difficult to differentiate but which contains many disparate patterns which illustrate and exemplify Anglesey's evolution as a primarily rural area'.* The condition is described as moderate, and the trend declining. Existing management is generally inappropriate. There are scheduled monuments and listed buildings within 1km of the Site. Overall, the AA is considered as **High** value.	The AA has a diverse settlement pattern and field pattern. The rural character of the AA is a key quality of the historic landscape, which is considered to be of **Medium** susceptibility to the type of development proposed.	Medium
Llanddeusant (YNSMNHL035)	The AA is considered to be of high value in LANDMAP, being of regional value for its early medieval chapel and for its mills. The condition is described as good and the trend is constant. Existing management is generally appropriate. There are 7 listed buildings within the AA, including Grade II* Melyn Hywel, although Llynnon Mill lies outwith the AA boundary. Overall, the AA is considered to be of Medium-Low value.	The AA has a non-nucleated settlement pattern and irregular field pattern. The AA is particularly valued for the rebuilding of the mill and survival of other historic landscape features of the Anglesey working landscape. Overall, the AA is considered to be of Medium susceptibility to the type of development proposed.	Medium-Low
LLanerchymedd (YNSMNHL036)	The AA is considered to be of high value in LANDMAP for its historic market and attractive cluster of mainly 19th century buildings. The	The AA comprises the historic market town and associated 19th century buildings within Llanerchymedd village.	Medium

Aspect Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
	AA has high integrity and rarity, and the condition is moderate. The village is not designated as a conservation area, and there are 3 Grade II listed buildings within the AA. Overall, AA is considered to be of Low value.	Therefore, the AA is considered to have High susceptibility to the type of development proposed.	

Landscape Designations

7.95 As illustrated on Figure 7.11: Site Appraisal Plan, there are no landscape designations or designated features within the Site.

7.96 There are six PRoW that run through or adjacent to the Site:

- PRoW 25/024/3;
- PRoW 25/023/1;
- PRoW 25/027/1;
- PRoW 47/039/1;
- PRoW 47/038/1; and
- PRoW 25/028/1.

7.97 NCR5 runs adjacent to the Site boundary.

7.98 Nantanog SSSI, comprising a geological exposure of Orovician sedimentary rocks in a small, incised stream of farmland, runs along the Cors-y-bol tributary and is located within the north-western part of the Site. Llyn Alaw SSSI lies approximately 400m to the north of the Site.

7.99 Cors y Bol Local Wildlife Site is a low-lying area adjacent to and partially within the north-western part of the Site boundary. A Local Wildlife Site is located to the north-east of the Site at Traian.

7.100 The Scheduled Monument of Cors y Bol bronze age burial mound abuts the Site to the north-west and comprises faint earthworks and surface stones. The Scheduled Monument Y Werthyr Hillfort is located to the west of the Site, set within a landscape that is modern in character.

Site Appraisal

7.101 The existing landscape features present within the Site are illustrated on Figure 7.11: Site Appraisal Plan and in Appendix 7.2: Site Appraisal Photographs. The Site comprises 62 fields, the majority of which comprise improved grassland for sheep grazing, with some cattle present. There are some areas of marshy grassland and standing water, as well as ditches and water courses. Occasional trees are present, and belts of woodland occur in the north-eastern part of the Site.

7.102 Chapter 8 Biodiversity describes the habitats and vegetation present within the Site and Arboricultural Survey submitted in support of the DNS application describes the hedgerows, trees, tree groups and woodland in greater detail.

7.103 The north-western part of the Site straddles a local ridgeline that rises up to between 85 and 90m AOD, as illustrated on Site Appraisal Photographs A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Fields 1 to 26 are located on the north-west facing slopes that enclose the Alaw and Cors-y-bol valley, dropping down to approximately 40m AOD at its lowest point.

7.104 Fields 27 to 62 are physically and visually enclosed by local ridgelines that follow the north-east south-west grain of the wider landscape. The local ridgeline to the south of the Site rises up to approximately 115m AOD at the hamlet of Carmel. The Site rises up to its highest point in the south-east, at approximately 98m AOD, in the vicinity of Carmel and Tan 'Rallt, as illustrated on Site Appraisal Photograph O. In the north-eastern part of the Site, Fields 52 to 56 extend over a drumlin, with a high point of approximately 85m AOD (Site Appraisal Photographs H and I).

7.105 A tributary of the Cors-y-bol runs along the valley floor of the Site. As shown on Site Appraisal Photograph N, the watercourse is not prominent within the landscape. The tributary flows between the Site to the north-west, between Fields 4 and 10, within the Nantanog SSSI. There is a pond between Fields 28 and 29 (Site Appraisal Photograph L). A number of ditches are present across the Site.

7.106 Three unnamed minor roads provide access to the Site, one of which is NCR 5. Six PRoW traverse the Site or run immediately adjacent to the Site boundary, two of which are fragmented routes that lead to fields without connections to the wider network.

7.107 A total of 221 trees, groups of trees and hedgerows and woodlands were surveyed within the Site[viii]. There are few individual trees within the Site, but many tree groups and hedgerows. Most individual trees are of moderate quality (Category B). There are two high quality (Category A) trees in the vicinity of the derelict farmstead to the north-west of Nantanog, one of which has been assigned Veteran status. Tree groups are a mix of moderate and low quality (Category B and C).

7.108 Six woodlands were identified within the Site, all located in the north-western part of the Site enclosing the fields adjacent to Chwaen-Goch (Fields 23 to 27). A single, high-quality woodland was identified adjacent to the north-west corner of the Site, as illustrated by Site Appraisal Photographs F and G.

7.109 There are a significant number of hedgerows across the Site, most of which are of low quality (Category C) due to their impaired condition, absence of recent management and gappy appearance. Many of the trees on the Site are mature in age and have a stunted and windswept form consistent with their location. There are few younger trees present within the Site and therefore limited future, successional tree stock.

7.110 Field boundaries within the Site are predominantly hedgerows, although many been replaced by post and wire fences. Cloddiau and earth banks are also present along field boundaries, although they are particularly run-down to the south-east of the Site and more intact to the north-east.

7.111 There are no residential properties or farmsteads within the Site itself, but a number of properties are immediately adjacent to the Site or excluded from the Site boundary. These include Glan-y-gors, Ty-Newydd, Nantanog, Hen Nantanog, Chwaen-Goch, Pen-Llidiard, Ty Newydd Penbryn, Chwaen Bach, Pennant and Tan 'Rallt.

7.112 The sense of enclosure within the Site is varied, with long elevated views afforded across the landscape from the elevated ridgeline within the north-west of the Site and from high points within the Site to the south-east and north-east. Fields 26 to 50 lie within the well enclosed valley of the Cors-y-bol tributary and have a stronger sense of enclosure than Fields 1 to 25 that edge the more expansive Alaw valley; and Fields 51 to 55 that drape over a low drumlin within a slightly larger valley that falls towards the north-east, draining into the Afon Alaw.

Table 7.10: Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Fields	The Site and wider area comprise Medium to Large sized agricultural drumlin/rolling fields through which there are public footpaths and national cycle	Fields by their nature are generally vulnerable to development, however, the type of development proposed offers the potential to retain the existing field	Medium

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
	route 5. The fields are considered to be a characteristic part of the landscape however, they are not designated features. As a result of this and the size of the Site, they are considered to have a High value.	structure and is temporary and readily reversible. This landscape feature has some potential to accommodate development of the type proposed without fundamental or permanent alterations to the feature as a whole. On this basis the susceptibility of the feature is considered to be Medium	
Hedgerows	Although a characteristic feature in the Site and wider area, hedgerows are not designated features. The condition of hedgerows across the Site varies, with areas of decline and loss. On this basis, they are considered to have Medium value.	The hedgerows have the potential to be retained as part of development of the type proposed and would likely be reinstated as part of the landscape strategy although limited removal for access will likely be necessary. They are therefore considered to have Low susceptibility.	Low
Cloddiau & earth banks	Cloddiau and earth banks field boundaries are characteristic features of the Site and wider agricultural landscape. They are in varied condition within the Site, frequently in a state of decline. They are therefore considered to have Medium value.	Cloddiau and earth banks are considered to be of Low susceptibility to the type of development proposed as they are likely to be able to be accommodated within the type of development proposed without undue consequences on their existing state. They are therefore considered to have Low susceptibility	Low
Watercourses & Ponds	There are a series of small ponds within the Site, although they are not highly legible as they are typically set within intensively grazed fields. Part of the Cors-y-bol tributary is a designated SSSI. There is also a series	The existing waterbodies within the Site have the potential to be retained/ accommodated as part of the Development and so will not affect the overall integrity of the feature. This	Medium

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
	of minor ponds, lakes and the Llyn Alaw SSSI which all contribute positively to landscape character. The feature is therefore considered to have **High** value.	results a **Low** susceptibility.	
Trees & Woodland	Individual trees and woodlands are characteristic features in the Site and the wider areas but are not designated features. They are therefore considered to have **Medium** value.	Trees and woodland are considered to have some capacity to be retained as part of the type of development proposed, but where removed they cannot be replaced in the medium term and are therefore considered to be of **High** susceptibility.	High
The Site and its Immediate Context	The Site and its immediate context predominantly comprise of improved drumlin/rolling grassland fields which are characteristic features of the immediate and local area used for grazing. Fields are typically bound by hedgerows, cloddiau, earth banks and woodland. Llyn Alaw SSSI also lies in the local context (ca.400m) north of the Site but agricultural setting and tranquillity is disrupted by the presence of the water treatment works adjacent to Llyn Alaw along with wind farms, overhead lines and transport infrastructure (B5112). On balance, it is considered that the Site and Immediate Context are of **Medium** value.	The type of development proposed would result in a change of landcover, with scope to retain the landscape pattern and composition without undue effects on the overall integrity of the fields. There is potential for the appropriate mitigation associated for the type of development proposed with opportunity to reinforce and strengthen the existing landscape character in line with policy guidelines. On this basis, the Site is considered to be of **Medium** susceptibility.	Medium

Visual Appraisal

7.113 A visual appraisal was undertaken to determine the relationship of the Site with its wider surroundings, its intervisibility within the wider landscape, and the visual receptors likely to be affected by the Development. The visibility of the Site within the wider landscape provides a basis for consideration of the likely significant effects that the Development will have on views, and the landscape and visual characteristics of the area.

7.114 The visual appraisal was undertaken from publicly accessible viewpoints within the surrounding landscape, primarily roads and footpaths, to determine the approximate extent of the area from which the Site is visible from the eye level of a person standing on the ground. A separate Residential Visual Amenity Assessment ('RVAA') was undertaken to address potential effects on the visual amenity of residents within 250m of the Site (Appendix 7.6). The visibility of any Site is predominantly influenced by landform and the extent and type of vegetation cover and built elements within the Site and the surrounding landscape.

7.115 In order to represent the nature of identified views, Site Context Photographs 1 to 19 were selected from those taken during the visual appraisal fieldwork, including near distance views in and adjacent to the Site and long-distance views from up to 3km from the Site. Fieldwork was undertaken in March 2021 and again in August 2023. Views taken in March 2021 represent a 'worst case' scenario, illustrating views before leaves are visible when vegetation is more open. Annotated representative photographs are included in Appendix 7.3: Site Context Photographs, with additional photographs illustrating the character of the Site in Appendix 7.2: Site Appraisal Photographs. The locations from which the Site Context Photographs were taken are illustrated on Figure 7.12: Visual Appraisal Plan. The following visual receptors are represented by the Site Context Photographs:

Table 7.11: Representative Visual Receptors

Visual Receptors	Approx. distance from the Site	SCP
Within the Site and Immediate Context		
Users of PRoW 25/028/1	Within the Site	13
Users of PRoW 22/027/1 Residents at Penllidiard	Within the Site	11
Users of minor road and NCR5	on south-east boundary of area of Site to the south west of Nantanog	2
Users of minor road and NCR5 Residents at Ty Newydd and Gorsgoch	on south-east boundary of area of Site to the south west of Nantanog	3
Users of minor road and NCR5 Residents at Nantanog Farmstead	on south-east boundary of area of Site to the south of Nantanog	4
Users of minor road and NCR5 Residents at Hen Nantanog	on boundary north east of Nantanog	5
Users of minor road and NCR5	on boundary north east of Nantanog	6
Users of minor road	on boundary south east of Nantanog	15
Users of minor road Residents at Pennant	10m south	14
Short Range Views		
Users of PRoW 47/038/1	115m south-west	16
Users of PRoW 25/028/1 Residents at Chwaen Bach Farmstead	130m south	12
Mid-Range Views		
Users of minor road and NCR5 Residents at Ty Newydd Penbryn	185m north-east	7
Users of B5112	385m south-east	1
Users of PRoW 25/023/2	365m north	9
Users of PRoW 25/024/3, 25/024/2 and 25/026/1	410m north-east	8

Users of PRoW 47/037/1	590m north-west	10
Long Distance Views		
Users of PRoW 47/009/2 Residents of Elim hamlet	1.9km west	17
Users of minor road Residents at Llwyn-yr-arth St Pabo's Church	1.99km north	18
Users of minor road	2.27km north	19

7.116 The Site is located within a landscape that is predominantly open, with limited vegetation screening views. However, it is a rolling landscape, which limits views of the Site, as illustrated on Figure 7.1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Bare Earth. The ZTV clearly shows the screening effect of landform from the lower lying areas of the landscape, with more open views of the Site afforded from the localised ridgelines and hillocks within the surrounding landscape. Views of the Site from the south and east are almost entirely curtailed by the localised ridgeline to the immediate south-east of the Site.

7.117 Views of the Site are predominantly curtailed to the south-east and east due to the localised ridgeline that physically and visually contains the Site. Site Context Photograph 1 illustrates a transient and localised view into the Site from the B5112, adjacent to Tafarn-y-botel. Views of the Site are limited to the north-eastern portion of the Site, around Chwaen Bach Farmstead (Fields 53 to 55).

7.118 Site Context Photographs 2 to 7 illustrate the sequence of transient views afforded from a minor road and NCR 5 in the immediate vicinity of the Site. Views of the Site from NCR 5 are more localised than illustrated in the ZTV due to the additional screening effect of existing buildings and vegetation. As illustrated by the sequence of views, in the vicinity of the Site the minor road and NCR 5 rises up and runs along a local ridgeline, with elevated open views afforded across the surrounding landscape from the higher ground.

7.119 The minor road and NCR 5 traverses the local ridgeline that divides the Site, and as illustrated in Site Context Photographs 2 to 7, elevated, long-distance views are afforded across the Alaw Valley and wider landscape to the north-west. To the south-east, views are afforded into and across a localised valley of a tributary of the Cors-y-bol, enclosed by the local ridgeline to the south-east of the Site. As illustrated in the views, residential properties and farmsteads are typically located on high ground: the rounded tops of drumlins and along the north-east south-west ridgelines. Trees and tree groups tend to be associated with farmsteads and residential properties, with predominantly coniferous tree belts and woodland in the vicinity of Chwaen-Gogh to the north of the Site providing some visual enclosure in a predominantly open landscape.

7.120 Views of the Site and Llyn Alaw are afforded from NCR 5 to the north of Nantanog, as illustrated by Site Context Photographs 6 and 7, and from the PRoWs in and around the Site, as illustrated by Site Context Photographs 8, 9 and 11. The single wind turbine adjacent to the Site, and the windfarms to the north of Llyn Alaw, are features of these open, elevated views.

7.121 Site Context Photographs 12 to 15 illustrate views from PRoW and minor roads from the enclosed valley within and immediately adjacent to the Site. Open views are generally afforded of the surrounding fields but are contained by the localised ridgelines to the north-west and south-east. The mix of field boundaries and their varied condition are apparent in the views. Where the traditional field boundaries are intact and field sizes are smaller, the rolling landform is more legible. The landscape becomes more enclosed and wooded in character to the south-east of the Site, as illustrated in Site Context Photography 14 where the southern side of the minor road is tree lined and hedgerows are generally managed to a height of approximately 2m.

7.122 Site Context Photograph 16 illustrates an elevated view from PRoW 47/038/1 looking across the most elevated part of the Site. Open views are afforded across a large part of the Site that lies within the local valley, surrounded by farmsteads and residential properties on the enclosing ridgelines. Whilst views of the north-western part of the Site and Llyn Alaw are curtailed by the intervening landform, views across the valley towards the Drumlin fields and windfarms are afforded due to the elevated nature of the viewpoint. To the north, the profile of Parys Mountain is visible against the skyline. The gappy and unmanaged nature of the field boundary hedgerows and cloddiau is apparent in this part of the Site.

7.123 Site Context Photograph 17 illustrates the view from PRoW 47/009/2 in the vicinity of Elim. Partial views of the Site are afforded, including the south-eastern part of the Site in the vicinity of Carmel and the north-western part of the Site, including woodland within the Site which can be seen on the skyline. Views of the Site are at a distance of just under 2km, and the Site is seen between intervening landform and in the context of existing farmsteads and houses that are dispersed throughout the view.

7.124 Site Context Photograph 18 shows the nature of views of the Site from the north-western edge of the Llyn Alaw valley, taken from a minor road in the vicinity of Llwyn-yr-arth and St Pabo's Church (Grade II* listed building). Open views of the north-western part of the Site are afforded across Llyn Alaw, with the rest of the Site screened by the local ridgeline. The Site is seen in the context of a single wind turbine and the large buildings at the water treatment works on the southern edge of the reservoir.

7.125 Moving further north-east, Site Context Photograph 19 illustrates the view from a minor road near Penbol Uchaf. A small part of the Site is visible in a long distance, slightly oblique view, seen in the vicinity of the single wind turbine on the edge of Llyn Alaw.

Table 7.12: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Users of the B5112	Low	Medium	Medium
Users of the minor road	Low	Medium	Medium - Low
Users of National Cycle Route 5 (NCR5)	Medium	High	High - Medium
Users of PRoW 25/024/3, 25/026/1 and 25/023/2	Medium	High	Medium
Receptors using PRoW 47/037/1	Low	Medium	Medium - Low
Users of PRoW 22/027/1	Low	High	Medium
Users of PRoW 25/028/1	Low	High	Medium
Users of PRoW 47/038/1	Low	High	Medium
Users of PRoW 47/009/2	Low	High	Medium
Users of minor roads near Llywn-yr-Arth and near Penbol Uchaf	Low	Medium	Medium - Low

Future Baseline

7.126 With respect to the future baseline for the Site and its immediate context, it is assumed that sheep and cattle grazing would continue. It is likely that the trend of decline evidenced by generally unmanaged hedgerows and derelict cloddiau, and the replacement by post and wire fencing, would persist. The existing trees and woodland within the Site comprise mature trees, with few successional trees to replace the existing vegetation. Therefore, in the long term (circa 10 to 20 years) the landscape could become more open as woodland and tree groups climax.

7.127 The Site and its wider context comprise a rural area that is unlikely to be subject to any notable development pressure, which is generally concentrated on the coast in Anglesey, other than for renewable energy. Were the Development not to proceed, it is likely that the Site would remain in agricultural use, with little change to the landscape baseline other than the general trend of decline and climax described above.

7.128 However, should renewable energy development in general not proceed, the growing threats to the landscape resulting from current and predicted climate change are well understood. These include more extreme weather events, greater impact from pests and diseases, native species decline and threat from non-native species leading to the long term and chronic decline of biodiversity and habitat loss. Whilst the Development does not by itself prevent or reverse the changes resulting from climate change, the Welsh Government has declared a climate emergency, and renewable energy projects make a valuable contribution to the legal target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Likely Significant Effects

7.129 The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on the description of the Development included within Chapter 3 Site and Development Description, including the proposed landscape and ecological mitigation measures as set out on the Landscape Strategy Plans and Planting Schedule and Notes (Figures 7.13 to 7.17). A summary of the effects identified is set out below, with receptors identified that are likely to experience effects that are considered significant (Moderate or Major) during the construction phase. The assessment of likely landscape and visual effects are described in detail in Appendix 7.4: Landscape Effects Table, Appendix 7.5 Visual Effects Table and Appendix 7.6: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.

Construction Phase

7.130 As a result of the construction activities associated with the Development, there will be a direct change in land use of the Site, albeit in general, the existing grassland and vegetation will remain. Construction activities will introduce movement and activities associated with vehicles, machinery and stockpiling of materials across the Site over the construction phase, anticipated to span approximately 12 months.

Construction Phase Landscape Effects

7.131 The construction activities include the erection of solar panels, installation of a battery energy storage system facility and substation and the associated infrastructure, as well as movement of plant, machinery and people, and introduction of construction compounds and temporary HGV access tracks required for construction. It is considered that a Medium magnitude of effect is likely to be experienced by the Site as a whole, which is of Medium sensitivity, resulting in a Moderate adverse significance of effect during construction. Although the construction period is short term and expected to span over the course of 12 months, the scale of Site (approximately 258 ha) and overall extent of the opaque built elements associated with the Development that create a solid appearance in the landscape will result in the partial loss of a valued characteristic of the Site and its character - the open nature of the drumlin/rolling agricultural landscape.

7.132 With respect to the landscape character areas and landscape AAs, whilst some adverse effects will be experienced, as described in Appendix 7.4: Landscape Effects Table, these will not constitute significant effects. An exception relates the Site Character and Its Immediate Context, whereby as a result of the construction activities a Medium magnitude of effect will arise, resulting in a Moderate Adverse significance of effect.

Construction Phase Visual Effects

7.133 Visual effects that are likely to occur during the construction phase include the movement of machinery and equipment within the Site, installation of the framework and solar panels, groundworks, material storage, removal of existing vegetation for permanent and temporary access tracks, site compounds and welfare facilities, fencing, hoarding and signage. The most visually prominent construction work is associated with the battery energy storage system facility and substation, where more extensive earthworks and retention are required.

7.134 The effects on visual receptors were assessed on the basis of 19 viewpoints, representing a range of receptors including users of minor roads, NCR5 and PRoW. A summary of the effects identified is set out below, with two visual receptors identified that are likely to experience effects that are considered significant (Moderate or Major) during the construction phase. Detailed descriptions supporting the visual assessment are provided in Appendix 7.5: Visual Effects Tables. Residential receptors have been assessed in an RVAA, provided in Appendix 7.6: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.

7.135 PRoW 22/027/1 passes through the Site to the west of field parcel 28 (see Appendix 7.9). Users travelling along the public footpath will experience oblique views of construction activity due to the lack of structural vegetation along field boundaries. Views of construction activity will dominate part of the view as illustrated in SCP 11 (Appendix 7.3) which will overall cause a noticeable change to existing views. As a result, the magnitude of effect is Medium with a Moderate adverse significance of effect.

7.136 PRoW 47/038/1 is a relatively short public footpath which leads to field parcel 44 at the south-western edge of the Site as illustrated in SCP 16. Users travelling towards the Development along public footpath 47/038/1 will experience partial to open views of Fields 28 to 34, and 40 to 48 in the mid-distance and long-distance. The Development sits within a local valley, bound by the local ridgeline along which Nantanog and Hen Nantanog and low-lying hedgerow network along field boundaries. As a result, it is considered that users of the public footpath are likely to experience a Medium magnitude of effect and a Moderate adverse significance of effect.

Completed Development

7.137 The Development is considered to be temporary and reversible due to the limited operational lifespan of the Development (40 years), without any permanent adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity resulting from the Development. That said, significant effects will arise during the operational phase. With respect to visual amenity, it is recognised that although the Development is temporary, it is also long-term.

7.138 The majority of the Development comprises a low, uniform height that is ground mounted and fits within existing field boundaries, albeit over a large area of approximately 258 ha. This will result in a change in land use within the existing field pattern, temporarily introducing structures into agricultural fields, but with limited proposed removal of existing landscape features such as hedgerows, trees and woodland, to accommodate access.

7.139 The more prominent elements of the Development include the battery energy storage system facility, with 40 2.9m high containers located within a levelled and secure enclosure, which requires cut and fill earthworks and retaining walls; a substation with 6m high overhead lines; inverter and transformer stations within 2.4m high containers; and control rooms of 3.9m high. The Development will also include CCTV, fencing and gates and weather stations.

7.140 Primary or inherent mitigation measures that have been embedded into the design of the Development include the reduction of the Site extents and the creation of setbacks to reduce the likely adverse effects on sensitive receptors, in particular users of the NCR 5 and PRoW; residents within 250m of the Site; and existing landscape features, including water courses, hedgerows, trees and woodland.

7.141 The landscape and visual appraisal informed the location of the battery energy storage system facility and substation, and the design was amended to reduce the extent of cut and fill required (with the facility extending across 3 levels to integrate it better into the surrounding landform. A seeded retaining wall and slope stabilisation system and recessive colours for equipment and containers have been specified to further assimilate the Development into views. Security fencing is limited to around the battery energy storage system facility and substation, with stock proof fencing and gates used throughout the majority of the Site.

7.142 A Landscape Strategy has been prepared that incorporates landscape and ecological mitigation measures into the Development and has been informed by the strategy and guidelines of the landscape as set out by the LANDMAP assessment and local planning policy and by ecology and tree surveys and recommendations, as illustrated by Figures 7.13 to 7.17: Landscape Strategy Plans and Planting Schedule.

7.143 The Landscape Strategy seeks to retain, reinforce and replace landscape features that are characteristic of the local landscape.

7.144 With respect to the built elements and infrastructure, where practicable fencing will comprise timber posts and wire mesh stock proof fencing which is in keeping with the rural location, with palisade fencing only specified where required for security, enclosing the battery energy storage system facility and substation, typically located away from public viewpoints.

7.145 The siting of more visually prominent elements, such as the substation and battery energy storage system facility has been carefully considered to reduce the landscape and visual effects of this larger infrastructure, particularly in relation to higher sensitivity receptors.

Landscape Strategy

7.146 As illustrated on the Landscape Strategy Plans and Planting Schedule (Figures 7.13 to 7.17), the Development includes the following mitigation measures:

- Existing hedgerows surrounding and within the Site will be retained and enhanced (through gapping up and enhanced management). Internal field boundary hedgerows will be encouraged to fill out and maintained at a minimum height of 2.5 – 3m. Over 4,000 linear m of proposed native hedgerow will be planted to gap up and reinstate field boundaries and enhance habitat connectivity within the Site;

- 6.21ha of native woodland planting is proposed, including sessile oak *Quercus petraea*, downy birch *Betula pubescens* and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* in line with the Ecologist's recommendations. Woodland is located where it will enhance the existing landscape character and provide some visual screening of the Development;

- 1.69ha of native scrub planting has been incorporated into the Development to enhance biodiversity;

- A greater range of grassland types are proposed, with the fencing associated with the Development enabling changes in management regimes for different parts of the Site that would benefit from less intense grazing to encourage greater species diversity. The Landscape Strategy includes the preparation and seeding of existing grassland and changes in management regimes to achieve less agriculturally improved areas; hay meadow; rough tussocky grassland and marshy grassland; and

- The Landscape Strategy includes 4 Specific Landscape Management Areas: Nantanog SSSI (5.95ha), a 50m buffer to Pond 11 (3.5ha); Hedgerow Buffer Corridors (2.52ha); and Scheduled Monument Buffer (0.48ha) as well as 46.64ha of grassland outside the proposed perimeter fences and 6.59ha of grassland seeding that will be cut no more than once annually to allow for a tall grass sward to develop.

Glint and Glare

7.147 A Glint and Glare Assessment (GGA) has been prepared by Neo Environmental, see Appendix 7.7, to assess the potential effects arising from the Development on surrounding receptors including road users, residents and aviation.

7.148 The study uses the US Federal Aviation Administration ('FAA') definition of glint, *'a momentary flash of bright light'* and glare *'a continuous source of bright light'*. It notes that photovoltaic solar panels are not highly reflective surfaces, being designed to absorb sunlight and not to reflect it. However, as a flat, polished surface glint and glare is possible. Glint is mostly likely to impact ground-based receptors close to dusk and dawn, when the sun is at its lowest in the sky. The study notes that studies have shown that photovoltaic panels *'have similar reflectance characteristics to water, which is much lower than the likes of glass, steel, snow and white concrete'*.

7.149 For ground-based receptors, a 750m study area was deemed appropriate as this contained a good spread of residential and road receptors in most directions from the Development. The study recognised that *'the further distance a receptors is from a solar farm, the less chance it has of being affected by glint and glare due to scattering of the reflected beam and atmospheric attenuation, in addition to obstructions from ground sources, such as any intervening vegetation or buildings'*. The study identified all aerodromes within 30km of the Development.

7.150 52 residential receptors were identified within 750m of the Development, although three were within a no-reflection zone and were scoped out of the assessment.

7.151 Six roads were identified within the 750m study area which required assessment, consisting of the B5112 and five unnamed roads surrounding the Site.

7.152 With respect to aviation receptors, three aerodromes were identified within 30km of the Development, comprising RAF Mona, RAF Valley and Caernarfon Airfield. RAF Mona and RAF Valley required detailed assessments due to those airfields being within their respective safeguarding buffer zone.

7.153 The initial assessment found that solar reflections are possible at 49 residential receptors within the 750m study area. Initial impacts were High at 44, Medium at 4 and Low at 1 receptor. Upon a more detailed review of actual visibility of the receptors, glint and glare impacts reduce to Low at four receptors and None at all remaining receptors.

7.154 Solar reflections are possible at all the road receptors within the 750m study area (represented by 58 points at 200m intervals along the roads). Initial impacts were High at all 58 receptors. Upon a more detailed review of actual visibility of the receptors, glint and glare impacts remain High at 10 receptors (Road Receptors 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 39, 40, 41, 42) and Low at 1 receptor (Road Receptor 12). Residual impacts after mitigation are Low at 1 (Road Receptor 12) and None at all remaining receptors. Mitigation measures to address glint and glare impacts on road users are to infill existing roadside hedgerows and manage to a height of 2.5-3m which forms part of the Landscape Strategy Plan. Once mitigation measures were considered, impacts remain Low at 1 receptor but reduced to None for all other receptors.

7.155 No impact was found at all the runways and air traffic control towers. Therefore, impacts on aviation receptors are None.

7.156 Whilst the study concludes that there is predicted to be no impacts for Road and Aviation Receptors, with only having Low impacts for Residential Receptors, and therefore, no significant effects, it is acknowledged that any reflectivity perceived by visual receptors has the potential to make the Development more noticeable at certain times of day. On this basis, the potential for solar reflections has been taken into account in the assessment of visual effects for the following receptors, where relevant:

- Residents of Pennant (Residential Receptor 25 in the GGA) – described in Appendix 7.6: RVAA;
- Residents of Hen Nantanog (Residential Receptor 46 in the GGA) – described in Appendix 7.6: RVAA;
- Residents of Gorsgoch (Residential Receptor 49 in the GGA) – described in Appendix 7.6: RVAA;
- Users of Minor Road and NCR5 (Road Receptors 10 – 11 and 14, 16 – 17)– described in Appendix 7.5: Visual Effects Table, Viewpoints 2 to 5; and
- Users of Minor Road (Road Receptors 13 and 39 - 42 in the GGA) – described in Appendix 7.5: Visual Effects Table, Viewpoints 14 and 15A & 15B.

7.157 Residential Receptor 4, Rhyd-y-coed, lies beyond the 250m study area for effects on residential visual amenity and therefore was scoped out of the RVAA. Viewpoints 18 and 19, illustrate views from the Minor Road to the west of the Site, albeit they are not from the same location as Road Receptor 1 and fall within the non-reflective zone. In line with the findings of the GGA, the remaining visual receptors are considered highly unlikely to experience visual effects as a result of solar reflectivity.

7.158 The perception of solar reflection is not anticipated to cause an appreciable change to the landscape effects resulting from the Development.

Landscape Effects of the Completed Development (Year 1)

7.159 The completion of the Development will introduce solar panels into the majority of the Site, as well as a battery energy storage system facility and substation, and the associated infrastructure. The Development will also introduce extensive new planting and a change in management regimes of the existing vegetation. It is considered that two landscape receptors will experience effects that are considered significant.

7.160 The arable character and open nature of the Fields will be lost as a result of Development extending across the rolling/drumlin landscape pattern. The Development will introduce solar panels and associated infrastructure, including a battery storage facility and substation. The landscape strategy includes the introduction of, gapping up, positive management and replanting of hedgerows which will

in turn reinforce and reinstate the existing landscape structure. With consideration to the overall massing of the Development and as the proposed structural planting will not have established by Year 1, it considered that the nature of change will result in a Medium magnitude and a Moderate Adverse significance of effect.

7.161 The Development will introduce solar panels and associated infrastructure, including a battery storage facility and substation into existing open fields. The battery storage facility, substation and access tracks will require earthworks including limited cut and fill operations and areas of hardstanding, but the rest of the Development will be ground mounted over the existing grassland fields, retaining some of the existing character of the fields, and potentially continuing to be used for grazing. There will be very limited and localised removal of landscape features (hedgerows and trees) that define field boundaries to accommodate access and construction, the majority of which has been located to avoid existing landscape features.

7.162 The proposed landscape and ecology strategy will establish 6.21ha of native woodland, reinstate mixed native hedgerows and create new areas of scrub, wet meadow and habitat ponds, with changes in grassland management to improve biodiversity and habitat connectivity within the Site. Approximately 4000 linear metres of mixed native hedgerows will be planted and managed within grassland / ruderal vegetation margins which will in turn reinforce historic field boundaries and reinforce the local landscape pattern. The landscape strategy also proposes the introduction and conservation of landscape features that currently contribute to the landscape character including wetlands, hedges, hedge banks, stone walls, small lanes and ancient monuments as part of the Development. However, structural planting will not have fully established by Year 1 and due to the scale of the Site and opaque nature of the built elements of the Development alongside new planting measures there will be a loss of open nature of the fields along with a change in land use of approximately 73% of the Site, resulting in a Medium magnitude and a Moderate Adverse significance of effect on the Site Character and Its Immediate Context.

7.163 The following landscape receptors will be subject to beneficial effects that are of minor or negligible significance including:

7.164 With respect to watercourses and water features, the Development will be set back from existing watercourses, which will be planted and managed to promote biodiversity, reduce pressure on grazing and buffer Nantanog SSSI and around Pond 11 near to Hen Nantanog. Furthermore, Special Landscape Management Areas will ensure that watercourses and ponds are managed for the benefit of flora and fauna. A series of new habitat ponds will be created across the Site. As a result, there will be a Small magnitude and Minor Beneficial significance of effect.

7.165 The Development will retain and restore Cloddiau & earth bank boundary features. Therefore, it is considered there will be a Small magnitude and Minor Beneficial significance of effect.

7.166 With respect to Trees and Woodland, the landscape strategy for the Development includes buffers for the existing woodland and tree belts. Access through the woodland utilises an existing break in the woodland to the north-east of Nantanog. Furthermore, proposed planting includes 6.21 ha of native woodland planting and existing and proposed woodland will be positively managed for their landscape and habitat value. As structural planting will not have fully established by Year 1, it is considered that there will be a Small magnitude and Negligible Beneficial significance of effects.

7.167 With respect to hedgerows, the Development will re-instate over 4000m of mixed native hedgerows and manage hedgerows within grassland / ruderal vegetation margins which will in turn reinforce and reinstate the existing landscape structure. In consideration of the overall massing of the Development and as the proposed structural planting will not have established by Year 1, it considered that the nature of change would result in a Very Small magnitude and a Negligible Beneficial significance of effect.

7.168 With respect to the published landscape character areas and landscape AAs, whilst some adverse effects will be experienced, as described in Appendix 7.4: Landscape Effects Table, these will not constitute significant effects.

Visual Effects of the Completed Development

7.169 Visual effects that are likely to occur as a result of the completed Development at Year 1 include the introduction of solar panels into open fields and the associated infrastructure, including fencing, access tracks and CCTV; the structures associated with the battery energy storage system facility and sub-station; and planting and changes in maintenance regimes.

7.170 As described in greater detail in Appendix 7.5: Visual Effects Tables and Appendix 7.6: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment, the following significant visual effects were identified.

7.171 It is considered that users of National Cycle Route 5 will experience transient oblique views of the Development. The Development is set back from the road by a minimum of 10m to approximately 100m from the Site with a majority of the development set behind an existing or proposed hedgerows. Structural planting proposed as part of the landscape strategy will not have fully established to contribute towards screening of the Development by Year 1. Furthermore, the proposals are set in a rolling landform, which in combination with the limited structural vegetation in and around the Site. Therefore, the experience of users of the national cycle route who would have some experience of the landscape would be disrupted by the presence of the Development. As a result, it is considered that there will be a Medium magnitude of effect and a Moderate Adverse significance of effect (SCPs 2,3, 4A, 4B, 5, 6, 7, 14 and 15). Also see Photomontage Viewpoints 4a, 4b, 6, 15a and 15b.

7.172 Users of public footpath 47/037/1 will experience filtered and oblique views of the development. The landscape strategy maintains and enhances the existing roadside hedgerow network. The existing grassland within the landscape buffer will be enhanced through less intensive management to create a meadow grassland that provides a taller sward within which gorse will be planted to provide a greater level of screening. Furthermore, the development is set back approximately 20m (with tall sward grassland planting) from the existing hedgerow behind the Site boundary which will be gapped up to provide screening and strengthen existing landscape features. However, proposed structural planting such as the woodland and hedgerows will not have fully established by Year 1 so, there will be filtered/partial views. Therefore, it is considered that there will be a Medium magnitude of effect and a Moderate - Minor Adverse significance of effect.

7.173 Users of public footpath 25/028/1 will experience close-range oblique views of the Development. Wider views of the Site to the north-east will be screened by the presence of the farmstead. A road is proposed in Field Parcels 56 to 58 which will alter the character of the local and immediate context along with the views experience across the public footpath. It is important to note that the footpath ends near SCP 13 by Field 58 therefore, it is considered that this is not a highly used footpath (low value). As illustrated by SCP 12 and 13 and Photomontages 12A and 12B, are likely to experience a Medium magnitude of effect and a Moderate Adverse significance of effect.

7.174 Users of public footpath 47/038/1 will experience open mid-range views of the Development. There will be a change in the composition of an agricultural undulating landscape to one that is largely composite of solar panels and associated infrastructure that is prominent in the view. The landscape strategy includes the restoration and reinstatement of hedgerow field boundaries which once established will strengthen the local landscape character and legibility of the rolling landform. As illustrated by SCP 16 and Photomontages 16A and 16B, receptors are likely to experience a Medium magnitude and a Moderate Adverse significance of effect.

Mitigation Measures

Construction Phase

7.175 Means employed to reduce the adverse effects of construction will be included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP'). Specific measures to reduce the temporary landscape and visual effects of construction comprise:

- Controlling the lighting of construction compounds and machinery to minimise upward and outward light pollution through lantern design, direction and baffling and, in addition, ensuring that the minimum area only is lit, for the minimum period;

- Locating compounds and stockpiles in the least visible locations within the Site, particularly with respect to higher sensitivity receptors; and

- Limiting movement of material between stockpiles so that these do not shift over time, thereby adding to the sense of fragmentation of the landscape structure.

7.176 Whilst the above measures will assist in reducing the perceived adverse effects of the construction of the Development, the primary cause of adverse effects is considered to be the loss of openness as a result of changes to the physical fabric of the landscape. As such the secondary mitigation measures set out above will not alter the overarching significance of the landscape and visual effects.

Completed Development

7.177 Additional mitigation measures to reduce the adverse effects of the Development comprise:

- Continued use of the fields for grazing to maintain the pastoral use and character of the Site.

7.178 In terms of operational effects, the establishment and growth of planting proposals and their ongoing maintenance and the management of existing landscape features are considered as further mitigation measures (secondary mitigation) and form the basis of the assessment of residual landscape and visual effects of the Development during the operational phase at Year 15. The Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) outlines maintenance and management of existing and proposed landscape features.

Residual Effects

Construction Phase

7.179 Whilst the additional mitigation measures identified will assist in reducing the perceived adverse effects of the construction of the Development, the primary cause of adverse effects is considered to be the loss of openness and changes to the physical fabric of the landscape. As such the additional mitigation measures will not alter the overarching significance of the previously identified landscape and visual effects and the significant effects reported will remain.

Completed Development

7.180 In most cases adverse significant effects will reduce over time as the embedded planting establishes itself and reaches its designed intention through on-going management. As such, the mitigation measures proposed will make a limited contribution to reducing adverse effects at Year 1. In this regard, the assessment of the residual effects of the Development is considered for Year 15 of the Operational Phase.

Completed Development/Operational Phase (Year 15)

7.181 An assessment of the likely significant residual landscape and visual effects resulting from the Development at year 15 of the operational phase has been carried out taking into account the growth and establishment of proposed planting.

7.182 A full explanation and commentary on the magnitude and significance of effects for the receptors is set out in Appendix 7.4 Landscape Effects Table and Appendix 7.5. Visual Effects Table

Residual Landscape Effects

7.183 Over time, the proposed planting as described and illustrated in the Landscape Strategy will become established and mature. The management and maintenance regimes of existing vegetation, will reinforce the existing landscape pattern and framework within which the Development is located. However, it is considered that the Development will result in significant adverse effects on one landscape receptors by Year 15.

7.184 With respect Fields, it is considered that at Year 15, the arable character and open nature of the Fields will remain absent as a result of the Development extending across the rolling/drumlin landscape pattern. Nonetheless, the proposed landscape enhancements will reinforce the historic field boundaries

that enclose and define the fields. Additional mitigation measures include the continued grazing of the fields to maintain the pastoral use of the fields. Ultimately, characteristic features of the Fields (openness and tranquillity) will be lost leading to a Medium magnitude and a Moderate Adverse significance of effect.

7.185 The following beneficial significant residual effects are likely to occur:

7.186 A Moderate Beneficial residual effect on Watercourses and Water Features as proposed planting as part of the landscape strategy will have established to create a comprehensive green and blue infrastructure network.

7.187 A Moderate Beneficial residual effect on Trees and Woodland as the proposed trees and woodland will have established to reinforce and strengthen the existing vegetation network.

Residual Visual Effects

7.188 The proposed planting and management regimes for existing and proposed planting will enhance the screening of the built elements within the Site and restore traditional field boundaries that contribute to the scenic qualities of the landscape, helping to offset the changes within the fields themselves. As structural planting will have fully established, it is considered that the Development will not result in significant adverse effects on landscape receptors by Year 15.

Cumulative Effects

7.189 An assessment of cumulative effects on landscape and views is provided in Chapter 15.

Decommissioning

7.190 The Development has a modelled operational lifespan of 40 years, at the end of which it will be dismantled and removed, and the Site will be reinstated to previous conditions. The landscape and visual effects of decommissioning are likely to be very similar to those during construction. They key differences will be that:

- Decommissioning may be more intense, happening over a more condensed period of time than construction; and
- Decommissioning will benefit from the screening provided by the enhanced landscape framework of woodland and hedgerows that have established and matured over 40 years.

Decommissioning Landscape Effects

7.191 Overall, decommissioning landscape effects are likely to be the same or less than the construction effects. Significant effects on landscape include:

- a Moderate Adverse significance of effect on Fields; and
- a Moderate Adverse significance of effect on the Site Character and its Immediate Context.

Decommissioning Visual Effects

7.192 Significant visual effects that are likely to occur during decommissioning are generally similar to those during construction, except where proposed planting will screen views and reduce these effects. Significant visual effects include:

- a Moderate Adverse significance of effect on users of PRoW 22/027/1; and
- a Moderate Adverse significance of effect on users of PRoW 47/038/1.

7.193 Mitigation measures for decommissioning will include:

- Decommissioning the battery energy storage system facility and substation enclosures, with all disturbed and excavated areas reinstated following completion of the decommissioning activities. Any concrete foundations (if used) will be broken up and removed or left in situ and covered to make up levels;

- Existing vegetation will be protected during decommissioning works to prevent vegetation loss; and

- Existing entrances, tracks and access points will be used for access wherever practicable.

Summary

7.194 This ES Chapter has been prepared in accordance with best practice guidelines, including the GLVIA3. In summary, a landscape assessment is the systematic description and analysis of the features within the landscape, such as landform; vegetation cover; settlement pattern; building forms; transport patterns; and land uses; which together create a particular sense of place. A visual assessment considers visual receptors, which are the viewers of and within the landscape, and include those at locations such as residential and business properties; public buildings; transport routes; PRoW; public open space; and recognised scenic routes. A detailed LVIA methodology is set out in Appendix 7.1.

7.195 The significance of effect thresholds for landscape and visual effects is determined by considering the sensitivity of the receptor concerned alongside the magnitude of effect that will be experienced. Effects that have been graded as being 'Major' or 'Moderate' are considered to be significant with respect to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017[ix]. Effects that have been graded as 'Minor' to 'Neutral' constitute effects that are not considered to be significant.

7.196 The Site is located to the south of Llyn Alaw reservoir, between Llanddeusant and Llanerchymedd on the Isle of Anglesey. The Site comprises 62 fields that extend either side of three unnamed local roads to the north-west of the B5112, including a section of NCR5. The Site comprises land in agricultural use, predominantly grazed by sheep, with some cattle. There are some areas of marshy grassland and standing water, as well as ditches and water courses. Occasional trees are present, and belts of woodland occur in the north-eastern part of the Site.

7.197 There are no landscape designations within the Site. There are six PRoW that run through or adjacent to the Site and NCR5 runs adjacent to the Site. The Nantanog SSSI runs along the Cors-y-bol tributary, through the Site to the north-west. The scheduled Monument of Cors y Bol bronze age burial mound abuts the Site to the north-west.

7.198 The Site is located within NLCA 2: Central Anglesey and the north-western part of the Site lies within LCA 5: North Western Anglesey and the south-eastern part of the Site lies within LCA 17: West Central Anglesey. The Site is located within Geological AA Llanerchymedd, Habitat AA West Anglesey Farmland and Historic Landscape AA Fieldscape, Central Eastern Môn. The north-western part of the Site falls within Cultural Landscape AA North-West Drumlins and Visual and Sensory AA North-West Drumlins. The south-eastern part of the Site falls within Cultural Landscape AA Central Smooth Belt and Visual and Sensory AA Central Smooth Belt.

7.199 19 representative viewpoints were identified through desktop analysis and site visits, and agreed with the Local Authority, and these formed the basis for the assessment of the potential impact of the Development on views and visual amenity from publicly accessible locations. An RVAA was also carried out of likely effects on the visual amenity of 14 residential properties.

7.200 As a result of the construction activities associated with the Development there will be a direct change in land use of the Site, albeit in general the existing grassland and vegetation will remain. Construction activities will introduce movement and activities associated with vehicles, machinery and stockpiling of materials as construction activity progresses across the Site over the period of approximately 12 months.

7.201 Means employed to reduce the adverse effects of construction will be included in a CEMP, including the controlling of lighting, location of compounds and stockpiles away from higher sensitivity receptors, and limiting movement of material between stockpiles.

7.202 A Medium magnitude of effect is likely to be experienced with respect to the Site Character and Immediate Context (Medium sensitivity), resulting in a Moderate Adverse significance of effect during construction. This is likely to remain Moderate Adverse after mitigation.

7.203 Of the 19 representative viewpoints that have been assessed, significant visual effects are anticipated for the following visual receptors:

- Users of PRoW 22/027/1 are likely to experience a Moderate Adverse significance of effect; and
- Users of PRoW 47/038/1 are likely to experience a Moderate Adverse significance of effect.

7.204 The significant visual effects identified during construction are unlikely to change as a result of mitigation measures.

7.205 The completion of the Development will result in a change in land use within the majority of the Site. The Development is considered to be temporary and reversible due to the limited lifespan of the Development (40 years) and the ease of decommissioning the Site without any permanent adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity resulting from the Development. With respect to visual amenity, it is recognised that although the Development is temporary, it is also long-term.

7.206 The majority of the Development is of low, uniform height that is ground mounted and fits within existing field boundaries, albeit over a large area of approximately 258 ha. This would result in a change in land use within the existing field pattern, temporarily introducing structures into the open fields, but with limited removal of existing landscape features such as hedgerows, trees and woodland, to accommodate access, is proposed.

7.207 The more prominent elements of the Development include the battery energy storage system facility, with 40 2.9m high containers located within a levelled and secure enclosure, which requires cut and fill earthworks and retaining walls; a substation with 6m high overhead lines; inverter and transformer stations within 2.4m high containers; and control rooms of 3.9m high. The Development will also include CCTV, fencing and gates and weather stations.

7.208 A Landscape Strategy has been prepared that incorporates landscape and ecological mitigation and enhancement measures into the Development and has been informed by the strategy and guidelines of the landscape as set out by the LANDMAP assessment and local planning policy (Welsh Government's Approach to Net Benefits for Biodiversity and the DECCA Framework, 2022)[x] along with ecology and tree surveys and recommendations.

7.209 Therefore, a Medium magnitude of effect is likely to be experienced with respect to the Fields and the Site Character, which are of Medium sensitivity, resulting in a Moderate Adverse significance of effect at Year 1 of completion.

7.210 With respect to watercourses and water features, which are of Medium sensitivity, a Small magnitude of effect is likely to occur, resulting in a Minor Beneficial significance of effect. This is due to the creation of wide landscape buffers to these features, reducing pressure of grazing as well as the proposed planting and creation of new habitat ponds with wet meadow grassland. A Small magnitude of effect on trees and woodland, which are of High sensitivity, is likely to occur, resulting in a Negligible Beneficial significance of effect at Year 1.

7.211 Significant visual effects at Year 1 are anticipated in relation to the following visual receptors:

- Users of NCR5 are likely to experience a Moderate Adverse significance of effect;
- Users of PRoW 25/028/1 are likely to experience a Moderate Adverse significance of effect; and
- Users of PRoW 47/038/1 are likely to experience a Moderate Adverse significance of effect.

7.212 Over time, the proposed planting as described in the Landscape Strategy will become established and, together with the management and maintenance regimes of existing vegetation, will reinforce the existing landscape pattern and framework within which the Development is located and substantially increase the screening provided by roadside hedgerows.

7.213 As a result, the following significant residual landscape and visual effects are likely to occur:

- A Moderate Adverse residual effect on Fields;
- A Moderate Beneficial residual effect on Watercourses and Water Features; and
- A Moderate Beneficial residual effect on Trees and Woodland.

7.214 With respect to decommissioning, the landscape and visual effects of decommissioning are likely to be very similar to those during construction. They key differences will be that:

- Decommissioning may be more intense, happening over a more condensed period of time than construction; and
- Decommissioning will benefit from the screening provided by the enhanced landscape framework of woodland and hedgerows that have established and matured over 40 years.

7.215 Appendix 7.4: Landscape Effects Table, Appendix 7.5: Visual Effects Table and Appendix 7.6: RVAA describe the judgements that have been made and the likely effects that have been assessed. Table 7.13 contains a summary of the likely significant effects of the Development.

Table 7.13: Table of Significance – Landscape and Visual Effects

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent/Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/Adverse/Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures	Geographical Importance*							Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/Adverse/Negligible)
				I	UK	W	R	C	B	L	
Construction Phase											
Landscape Features	Temporary	Moderate Adverse - Neutral	Implementation of CEMP							X	Moderate Adverse - Neutral
Landscape Character	Temporary	Moderate Adverse - Neutral								X	Moderate Adverse - Neutral
Visual Amenity	Temporary	Moderate Adverse - Neutral								X	Moderate Adverse - Neutral
Operational Phase											
Landscape Features	Temporary	Moderate Adverse – Minor Beneficial	Planting and management / maintenance of vegetation and features as appropriate.							X	Moderate Adverse – Moderate Beneficial
Landscape Character	Temporary	Major-Moderate Adverse								X	Minor Adverse – Minor Beneficial
Visual Amenity	Temporary	Moderate Adverse - Neutral								X	Minor Adverse - Neutral
Cumulative Effects											
No likely significant cumulative landscape and visual effects identified.											
Decommissioning Effects											
Landscape Features	Temporary	Moderate Adverse - Neutral	Ensure ground disturbance and re-seeding of grassed areas where necessary, with any features reinstated.							X	Moderate Adverse - Neutral
Landscape Character	Temporary	Moderate Adverse - Neutral								X	Moderate Adverse - Neutral
Visual Amenity	Temporary	Moderate Adverse - Neutral								X	Moderate Adverse - Neutral

* Geographical Level of Importance

I = International; UK = United Kingdom; W = Wales; R = Regional; C = County; B = Borough; L = Local

REFERENCES

[i] Welsh Government (2024) *Planning Policy Wales*

[ii] The Isle of Anglesey County Council and Gwynedd Council (2017) *Local Development Plan 2011 - 2026*

[iii] Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition

[iv] Council of Europe (2000) European Landscape Convention 'Florence Convention', Council of Europe Treaty Series No. 176

[v] Welsh Government (2017) The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (No. 567 (W.136) as amended by S.I. 2019/245)

[vi] The Isle of Anglesey County Council (2011) *Anglesey Landscape Strategy*

[vii] Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd & Snowdonia National Park (2014) *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment*

[viii] Barton Hyett (2021) *Tree Survey*

[ix] Welsh Government (2017) *The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (No. 567 (W.136) as amended by S.I. 2019/245)*

x Welsh Government (2022) *Welsh Government's Approach to Net Benefits for Biodiversity and the DECCA Framework 2022.*