



Candwr Solar Farm

Pre-Application Consultation

Design and Access Statement

14 July 2026



Document Management

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
Purpose of this Statement	4
Application Site	5
2. THE APPLICANT AND DWR CYMRU WELSH WATER	6
3. REGULATORY BACKGROUND	7
EIA Requirements	7
4. SITE ASSESSMENT	8
Land Parcel Context	8
Ecology & Biodiversity	15
Landscape	16
Heritage	16
Air Quality	17
Ground Conditions	17
Agricultural Land	18
Flood Risk	20
Transport	22
5. DESIGN PARAMETERS AND DESIGN SOLUTION	23
Design Solution	23
Development Constraints	24
Development Opportunities	25
Design Flexibility	26
Buffer Zones	26
6. DESIGN EVOLUTION	35
7. CONSTRUCTION	41



8. CRIME AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT	45
9. CONCLUSIONS	47

Appendices Contents

APPENDIX 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN.....	49
APPENDIX 2 – LAND PARCEL PLAN.....	50
APPENDIX 3 – INDICATIVE LAYOUT	51

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1. INTRODUCTION

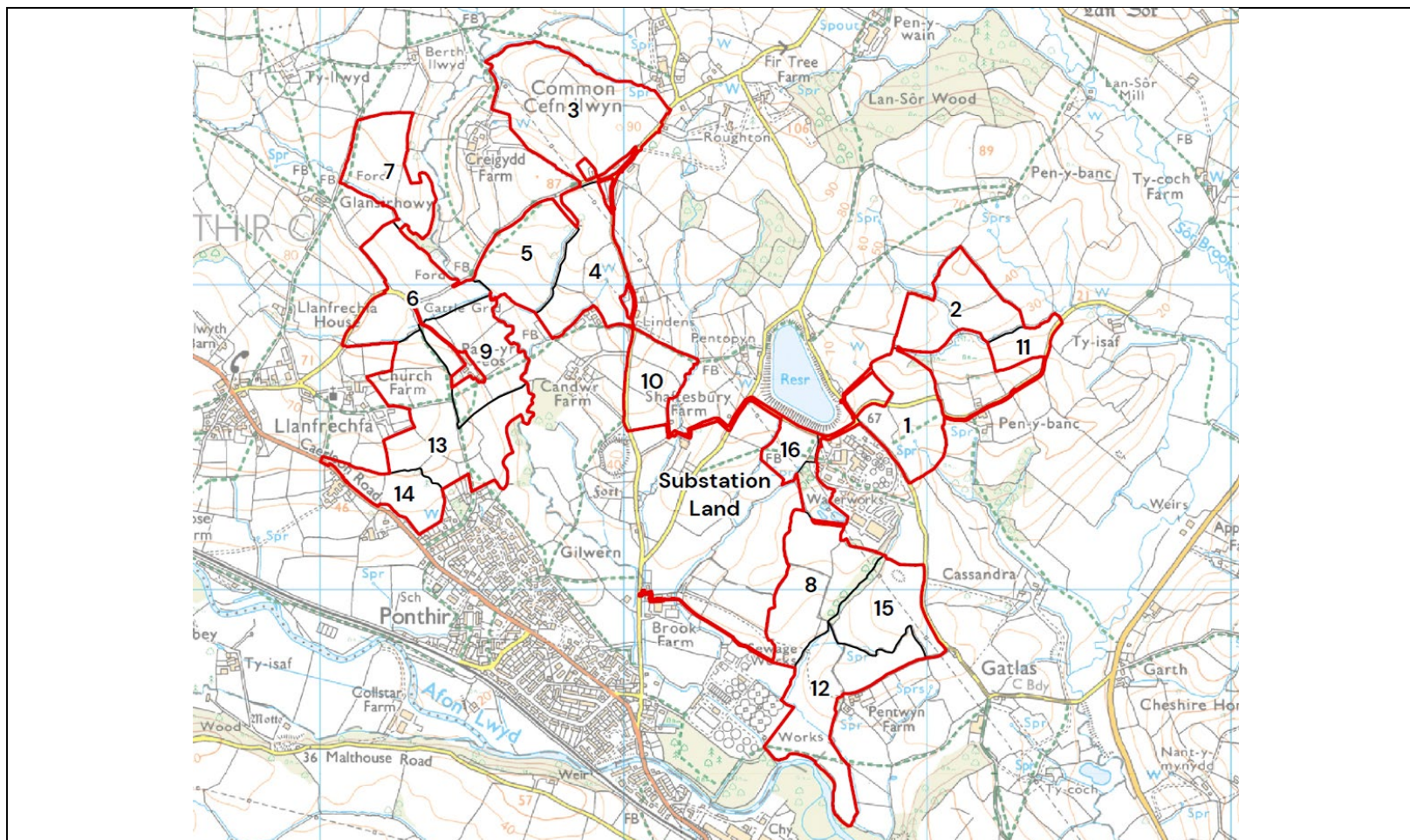
- 1.1. Candwr Solar Farm Ltd ("the Applicant") are proposing a renewable energy scheme comprising ground mounted solar arrays and associated works on land near the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works, Court Farm, Ponthir, Caerleon. The proposed development is called Candwr Solar Farm. A Site Location Plan is provided at Appendix 1.
- 1.2. By virtue of its potential generating capacity, which stands at circa 46MWac [Megawatts], the proposed development constitutes a Development of National Significance ("DNS"). Therefore, instead of applying to the Local Planning Authority, the application will be made to the Planning and Environment Decision Wales (PEDW). The application process is managed by PEDW on behalf of the Welsh Minister.
- 1.3. This draft Design & Access Statement is being published to accompany a statutory pre-application consultation carried out under Articles 8 and 9 of the Development of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016. The pre-application consultation is a collaborative process between the applicant and the community consultees, specialist consultees, relevant persons and owners or occupiers of land adjoining the development site. Following the end of the consultation period, a Consultation Report must be prepared by the Applicant. This will be submitted with the final planning application and will provide details of the consultation process, the representations received and the applicant's response to them.
- 1.4. The statutory pre-application consultation runs from Thursday 2 July 2026 to Thursday 20 August 2026. This version of the Design and Access Statement was published on 14 July 2026 and made a typographical correction to Paragraph 5.27. The paragraph now correctly states that the proposed substation would be located on land adjacent to and not within the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Treatment Works. Paragraph 5.27 is now consistent with other text within the document, such as paragraph 5.25, which already correctly stated that the substation was located on land adjacent to the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Treatment Works.
- 1.5. Following the statutory consultation, the Applicant expects to submit a formal planning application to PEDW in Autumn 2026.

Purpose of this Statement

- 1.6. The statutory requirement for a Design and Access Statement to accompany an application for a DNS is set out in article 14 of the Developments of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016. This document has been prepared in line with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and the Design and Access Statements in Wales: Why, What and How (Welsh Government 2017). These documents set out the requirements regarding the contents of a Design and Access Statement and reflect the objectives of good design as championed by Future Wales, Planning Policy Wales (PPW), and Technical Advice Note 12: Design (TAN 12). This draft Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the other draft documents that support the pre-application consultation. Notwithstanding the above, this Design and Access Statement is designed to be read as a standalone document if required.

Application Site

- 1.7. The Site occupies land surrounding Court Farm, Ponthir, Monmouthshire and extends to approximately 131.62 hectares ("ha"), including cable routes. The Site is comprised of agricultural land across sixteen land parcels which are spread across three Local Authority boundaries comprising Monmouthshire Council, Torfaen County Borough Council and Newport City Council. For ease of referencing and reporting, the sixteen land parcels are individually numbered, as shown at Appendix 2, and repeated below: –



2. THE APPLICANT AND DWR CYMRU WELSH WATER

- 2.1. Candwr Solar Farm Ltd ('the Applicant') is a part of TotalEnergies.
- 2.2. TotalEnergies are a global integrated energy company that produces and markets energies. TotalEnergies has been present in the UK for more than 60 years. TotalEnergies have reinvented and diversified their energy offering to promote renewable and decarbonised energies, as well as sparing, well considered use of fossil energies.
- 2.3. TotalEnergies are making major investments in solar and are developing projects across England and Wales, amounting to around 1GW of power. TotalEnergies have invested in several offshore wind developments in the UK which will have the capacity to deliver about 5GW of renewable power, including Seagreen (1.1GW) which became fully operational in 2023, West of Orkney (2GW) and Outer Dowsing (1.5GW).
- 2.4. TotalEnergies are one of the UK's largest suppliers of gas and electricity to businesses and the public sector. We also offer electric vehicle charging solutions and market petroleum products including lubricants, aviation fuel, bitumen, and specialty fluids.
- 2.5. TotalEnergies is working in partnership with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water to decarbonise its operations through the delivery of this Proposed Development. Dwr Cymru Welsh Water will purchase and consume 100% of the energy generated by Candwr Solar Farm, a proportion will be consumed directly at Court Farm Water Treatment Works, with the rest of the generated energy 'sleeved' to other Dwr Cymru Welsh Water sites around Wales via the National Grid. Dwr Cymru Welsh Water are not the Applicant for the proposed development.
- 2.6. Reducing Dwr Cymru Welsh Water's reliance on the National Grid also gives more control over operational costs. This would protect from fluctuating energy prices and helps manage customer bills at a time of rising costs thereby generating additional local benefits.
- 2.7. Dwr Cymru Welsh Water has committed to 90% carbon emission reduction by 2030 and 'Net-Zero' by 2040. This project would make a valuable contribution towards meeting these targets.
- 2.8. Reducing Welsh Water's reliance on the National Grid also gives more control over operational costs. This would protect Welsh Water from fluctuating energy prices and helps manage customer bills at a time of rising costs thereby generating additional local benefits.

3. REGULATORY BACKGROUND

- 3.1. By virtue of its potential generating capacity, which stands at circa 46MWac [Megawatts], the proposed development constitutes a Development of National Significance (“DNS”). Therefore, instead of applying to the Local Planning Authority for Planning Permission, the application will be made to PEDW. The application process is managed by PEDW on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.
- 3.2. The process for applying for a Development of National Significance is set out by the Development of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016 and subsequent Regulations.
- 3.3. Decisions are made in the context of the Welsh Government’s national planning policy, for renewable energy development this specifically includes Policies 17 and 18 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and Planning Policy Wales. In the context of the proposed development and given its location the relevant policies of the Local Development Plans will also be a material consideration. An assessment of the Future Wales Policies is presented in the Planning Statement, which also accompanies the statutory pre-application consultation.
- 3.4. The purpose of the DNS process is to ensure timely decisions are made on development proposals that are of the greatest significance to Wales because of their potential benefits and impacts. Prior to submitting the application to PEDW, the applicant must publicise and consult on the proposed application for a period of at least six weeks.
- 3.5. Following the statutory pre-application consultation, the application would then be finalised and submitted to PEDW for consideration by an appointed Planning Inspector. The appointed Inspector will then consider evidence from the applicant, local communities, the local planning authorities and other statutory consultees and interested parties, submitted both in writing and at targeted hearing or inquiry sessions, which are held in public. Following their consideration of the evidence, the Inspector will write a report making a recommendation as to whether or not the application should be granted planning permission.

EIA Requirements

- 3.6. In August 2025, the Applicant submitted to PEDW a request, made under regulation 31(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (“the Regulations”), for the Welsh Ministers to make a screening direction as to whether or not the proposed development is “EIA Development” within the meaning of the Regulations. On 3 October 2025, a Screening Direction was adopted by PEDW, on behalf of the Welsh Ministers, confirming the proposal was EIA Development.
- 3.7. Accordingly, a draft Environmental Statement has been prepared to support the statutory pre-application consultation.

4. SITE ASSESSMENT

- 4.1. The Application Site is located adjacent to the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works and would supply Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works with renewable energy via a direct private wire connection. Any surplus electricity generated would be exported via an existing overhead power line connection to the wider electricity network and subsequently sleeved to Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water sites across Wales. The Site is comprised of agricultural land across sixteen land parcels which are spread across three Local Authority boundaries including Monmouthshire Council, Torfaen County Borough Council and Newport City Council. The planning application boundary extends to circa 131.62 hectares.
- 4.2. The agricultural land parcels which form the Site comprise a mixture of arable and pastoral fields bordered by hedgerow vegetation and trees. The Application Site is located c.5.2km north-east of the City of Newport, c.1km east of the village of Ponthir and c.2.4km north of the town of Caerleon at the closest point (Land Parcel 12).
- 4.3. The Application Site is within an area of open countryside characterised by undulating ridges and valleys. The proposed development is proposed to be situated on relatively high ground utilising the south facing slopes of the valley landscape.
- 4.4. Sections of roads are included in the red line boundary for cable works including a section of an unnamed road between Land Parcel 10 and Land Parcel 1, and a section of Candwr Road between Land Parcel 10 and Land Parcel 3.

Land Parcel Context

- 4.5. A site description of the sixteen Land Parcels comprising the Application Site are detailed below.

Land Parcel	Description
1	- Located north-east of the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works in Monmouthshire Council administrative area, covering an area of c.7.68 ha. - A road runs through the centre of the Land Parcel from west to east and a public right of way ("PRoW") Footpath 367 40/1 runs through the southern section of the Land Parcel in a south-west to north-east direction. A number of unnamed drains bisect through the Land Parcel. The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the two fields within the Land Parcel. - The Land Parcel is bounded to the west/south-west by an access track with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works and a reservoir beyond; to the north, east and south the Land Parcel is bounded by further agricultural fields with an individual farm property located to the east. - The topography of this Land Parcel is sloping falling from 70m AOD in the northwestern corner to 60m AOD along the eastern boundary.

Land Parcel	Description
	- According to Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, the Land Parcel is located within Flood Zone 1 which is considered to be of little risk of fluvial or coastal flooding. - The Agricultural Land Use and Soil Policy Advisor for the Welsh Government did not recommend a detailed ALC field survey is undertaken for Land Parcel one and can be considered ALC subgrade 3b (non-BMV) at best. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 1. An area of Ancient Woodland is located immediately southeast of the Land Parcel 1.
2	- Located north of Land Parcel one within Monmouthshire Council administrative area, covering an area of c.7.69ha. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 2. The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the three fields within the Land Parcel. There is an unnamed drain located within the centre of the Land Parcel running in a east to west direction. The Land Parcel is bounded by agricultural fields to the north, east, south and west. Footpath 367 is approximately 100m at its closest point north of Land Parcel 2, running in a broadly southwest to northeast direction. - The topography slopes from north to south from 50m AOD along the northern boundary to 30m AOD along the southern boundary. - The Land Parcel is located within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1. - The Agricultural Land Use and Soil Policy Advisor for the Welsh Government did not recommend a detailed ALC field survey is undertaken for Land Parcel two and can be considered ALC subgrade 3b (non-BMV) at best.
3	- This is the most northern of the Land Parcels and is within Monmouthshire Council administrative area, covering an area of c.16.61 ha. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 3. Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation) lies adjacent to the western boundary of this Land Parcel. - It is bounded to the east/south by Candwr Road, and to the north and west the Land Parcel is bounded by agricultural fields with individual farm properties beyond. The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the four fields within the Land Parcel. - Immediately north-west of this parcel is a Grade II Listed Building (Little Creiggydd). - Overhead powerlines runs through the western section of the Land Parcel. - Adjacent to the northern and western boundaries of this Land Parcel are two footpaths, Footpath 366 115/1 to the north and Footpath 367 46/1 to the west. - The topography of this Land Parcel slopes downwards from the south-eastern boundary from 80m AOD to 50m AOD along the northern boundary. - The Land Parcel is located within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding. - The Agricultural Land Use and Soil Policy Advisor for the Welsh Government did not recommend a detailed ALC field survey is undertaken for Land Parcel three and can be considered ALC subgrade 3b (non-BMV) at best.

Land Parcel	Description
4	• Located adjacent to the southern boundary of Land Parcel 3, within Monmouthshire Council administrative area, covering an area of c. 8.86ha. • No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 4. The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation. • To the north the parcel is bounded by an access track, with individual farm properties located adjacent to both the north-western and north-eastern corners, to the east it is bordered by Candwr Road, to the south and south-east by individual farm properties with agricultural fields beyond and to the west by further agricultural fields. • Adjacent to the southern boundary of this Land Parcel is Footpath 367 49/1. At the northern section of the Land Parcel Footpath 367 47/1 bisects the northwestern corner of the Land Parcel • Two unnamed tributaries of Candwr Brook run through the southern section of the Land Parcel aligned with the field boundaries in a south-west to north-east direction. • Overhead powerlines run through the northern section of the parcel from the northern to the north-eastern boundary. • The Land Parcel is located within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding. • The topography of this Land Parcel slopes from north to south from 80m AOD to 40m AOD. • The Agricultural Land Use and Soil Policy Advisor for the Welsh Government did not recommend a detailed ALC field survey is undertaken for Land Parcel four and can be considered ALC subgrade 3b (non-BMV) at best.
5	• Located adjacent to Land Parcel 4 to its west, within Monmouthshire Council administrative area, covering an area of c7.34 ha. • This Land Parcel is bordered to the north, east, and west by agricultural fields with a small, wooded area bordering the south-western boundary, an access track in the north-eastern corner and Candwr Brook borders the southern boundary. The eastern boundary is defined by an unnamed tributary and vegetation, separating Land Parcel 4 and 5. • No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 5. Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation) lies adjacent to the southwestern boundary of this Land Parcel. • Footpath 367 47/1 bisects through the parcel along the north-western boundary of Land Parcel 5. • The topography of this parcel slopes from north to south from 80m AOD to 30m AOD. • The majority of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding; the south-western boundary is located in Flood Zone 2/ 3. • The Agricultural Land Use and Soil Policy Advisor for the Welsh Government did not recommend a detailed ALC field survey is undertaken for Land Parcel five and can be considered ALC subgrade 3b (non-BMV) at best.
6	• Located to the west of land parcel five, to the north of Candwr Road, within Torfaen County Borough Council administrative area. The parcel covers an area of c.8.89 ha. • No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 6. This parcel is located within Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation).

Land Parcel	Description
	• In the surrounding area are a number of Listed Buildings to the south and west, including Grade II Listed (Glansirhowy Farm) and Grade II* Listed (Church of All Saints). • An unnamed road wraps around fields within the Land Parcel leading to individual farm properties beyond to the southeast. The Land Parcel to the west, north and south is bordered by further agricultural fields and to the east by small woodland designated an Ancient Woodland. Candwr Brook runs adjacent in part to the eastern boundary of the parcel. The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the four fields within the Land Parcel. A gas pipeline bisects in part the southern section of the Land Parcel. • Footpath 424 24/1 bisects through part of the southern section of the parcel, joining an unnamed north. Footpath 424 29/1 is c. 200m west of Land Parcel 6 running in a broadly north to south direction. • The topography is relatively flat at around 30m AOD across this parcel. • The majority of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 2 for flooding; the south-western boundary is located in Flood Zone 2/3. • Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel six to be a mixture of subgrade 2 and 3b land (i.e. a mix of BMV and non-BMV land).
7	• Located to the north of parcel six within Torfaen County Borough Council administrative area, covering an area of c. 7.17 ha. • No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 7. This parcel is located within Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation). • Grade II Listed Glansirhowy Farm is in close proximity, south-west of this parcel. • The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the two fields within the Land Parcel. The area surrounding the parcel is comprised of further agricultural land with individual farm properties located to the north, south and east. There is an area of Ancient Woodland located adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the parcel. The Candwr Brook runs adjacent to the south-western boundary of the parcel. Running along the western boundary of this parcel is an unnamed road running in a north to south direction. • A PRoW (Footpath 424 34/1) runs through the parcel in a north-south direction, located adjacent to the western boundary of the parcel. Footpath 367 46/ 2 and 367 46/1 is c.300m west of this Land Parcel running in a broadly north-south direction. • The topography is undulating ranging from 50m AOD is the north-western corner to 40m AOD in the south-eastern corner of the parcel. • The majority of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding with a small section in the south-eastern corner within Zone 2. • Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel seven to be a mixture of subgrade 2 and 3b land (i.e. a mix of BMV and non-BMV land).

Land Parcel	Description
8	- Located to south of the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works and lies within all administrative areas of Monmouthshire Council and Torfaen Council, covering an area of c.10.33 ha. - The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the two fields within the Land Parcel. Ponthir Waste Water Treatment Works lies adjacent to the southern/south-western boundary, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works adjacent to the northern boundary and agricultural fields to the west and east. An area of Ancient Woodland lies close by. Land Parcel 8 is located adjacent to Land Parcel 12 (which is located adjacent to the southern boundary). A gas pipeline bisects the southern section of the Land Parcel running in a northwest – south east direction and a water mains line bisects the Land Parcel running in a north – south direction. - A Grade II Listed Building is located in close proximity to the south-east of the parcel, Barn at Pen-Twyn Farm. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 8. The western and southern section of this parcel is located within the Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation). - Topography is gently undulating from 50m AOD along the northern boundary to 20m AOD in the southern section of the parcel. - The majority of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding; the southern boundary is Located adjacent to Flood Zone 2/3. - Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel eight to be a mixture of subgrade 2, 3a and non-agricultural land (i.e. a mixture of BMV an non-BMV land).
9	- Located to south of Land Parcel 6 and lies within Torfaen County Borough Council, covering an area of c.7.69 ha. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 9. This parcel is located within Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation). - The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the five fields within the Land Parcel. The area surrounding the parcel is comprised of further agricultural land with individual farm properties located to the south, east and west. Candwr Brook defines the eastern boundary. Pant-yr-eos Farm is adjacent to the south-western corner of the parcel. - The Grade II* Listed (Church of All Saints) is within close proximity to the south-western boundary of the parcel. - The majority of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding; the eastern boundary is located in Flood Zone 2/3. - Footpath 367 50/1 is immediately south of the parcel running in a south-west to north-eastern direction parallel to the southern boundary, Footpath 424 24/1 bisects through the north-western section of the parcel in a north-south direction. - Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel nine to be a mixture of subgrade 3b and 4 land (i.e. non-BMV land).
10	Located to the east of Candwr Road within the administrative area of Monmouthshire Council, covering an area of c.5.12 ha. An overhead power line bisects in a north-south direction through the centre of the parcel of land.

Land Parcel	Description
	- The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the three fields within the Land Parcel. The area surrounding the parcel is comprised of further agricultural land with individual farm properties located in all directions. Shaftesbury Farm is immediately south-east of the parcel. An unnamed tributary defines the eastern boundary of the parcel of land. Candwr Road defines the length of the western boundary. Court Farm Reservoir is c.200m east of this parcel of land. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 10. - Immediately south-west is a Schedule Monument, Candwr Camp, separated from the parcel of land by Candwr Road. - Footpath 367 29/1 runs the length of the northern boundary of this parcel in an east-west direction. - The entirety of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding. - Topography is relatively flat, steadily increasing from 40m to 50m AOD from the south – north of the parcel of land. - Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel ten to be subgrade 3b land (i.e. non-BMV land).
11	- Located to the south-east of Land Parcel 2, within the administrative area of Monmouthshire Council, covering an area of c. 2.54ha. - This Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation The parcel is bounded by agricultural fields to the north, east, south and west. Residential property, Ty-Isaf, is c.160m east. An unnamed track bounds the eastern boundary of the parcel of land. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 11. - The entirety of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales, Flood Zone 1 for flooding. - The topography steadily increases from 10m to 30m AOD from the south – north across this parcel of land. - Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel eleven to be subgrade 2 land (i.e. BMV land).
12	- Located adjacent to parcel eight and to the south of the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works and lies within all administrative areas of Monmouthshire Council, Torfaen Council, and Newport City Council, covering an area of c. 10.99ha. - The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the three fields within the Land Parcel. Ponthir Waste Water Treatment Works lies adjacent to the southern/south-western boundary with some dense vegetation adjacent noted as Ancient Woodland. Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works is adjacent to the northern boundary and agricultural fields to the west and east. An area of Ancient Woodland is adjacent to the eastern boundary - A Grade II Listed Building is adjacent to the south-east corner of the parcel, Barn at Pen-Twyn Farm.

Land Parcel	Description
	- No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 12. The southern section of this parcel is located within the Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation). - An overhead line bisects through the southern corner in an east-west direction. A gas pipeline bisects through the Land Parcel running in a northwest – south east direction and a water mains line bisects the Land Parcel near the western boundary running in a north – south direction. - Footpath 424 50/1 bisects through the southern section of the parcel of land in an east to west direction, and Footpath 389 24/1 runs along part of the eastern boundary of the Land Parcel. - The majority of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales Flood Zone 1 for flooding; the southern section is located in Flood Zone 2/3. - The topography steadily increases from 20m to 45m AOD from the south – north across the parcel of land. - Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel twelve to be a mixture of subgrade 2, 3a, 3b and non-agricultural land (i.e. a mix of BMV and non-BMV land).
13	- Located to south of Land Parcel nine and lies within Torfaen County Borough Council, covering an area of c. 13.98ha. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 13. This Land Parcel is located within Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation). - The Land Parcel is bounded generally by mature vegetation separating the seven fields within the Land Parcel. Pant-yr-eos Farm is adjacent to the north-eastern corner of the parcel. Grade II* Listed (Church of All Saints) is within close proximity, south-west of the parcel. An Ancient Woodland is located immediately outside of the eastern boundary of this parcel. The southern boundary of the Parcel is approx. 60m from the northern boundary of Ponthir. - A number of Footpaths bisect through this Land Parcel. Footpath 367 50/1 bisects through the centre of the parcel running in a south-west to north-eastern direction and Footpath 424 24/1 bisects through the north-western section of the parcel in a north-south direction. A short section of Footpath 424 22/1 connects Footpath 424 24/1 and 367 50/1. - An overhead line bisects through the centre of the Land Parcel in a broadly east to west direction. A gas pipeline bisects through the eastern section of the Land Parcel running in a broadly northwest – south east direction and a water mains line bisects the Land Parcel near the southern boundary running in a broadly east-west direction. - Candwr Brook sits within established tree belt on part of the eastern boundary of the parcel. The majority of the parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales Flood Zone 1 for flooding; the eastern boundary is located in Flood Zone 2/3. - The topography steadily decreases from 60m to 35m AOD from the west –east across the parcel of land. - Agricultural Land Classification Survey for the Site determined Land Parcel thirteen to be a mixture of subgrade 3b and 4 land (i.e. non-BMV land).
14	Located to south of Land Parcel 13 and lies within Torfaen County Borough Council, covering an area of c. 4.27ha.

Land Parcel	Description
	- No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 14. This Land Parcel is located within Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation). - The Land Parcel is bound the south by Caerleon Road. To the east rear gardens of residential properties in Ponthir abut the eastern boundary. The northern boundary is line in part with mature vegetation with Land Parcel 13 to the north and Grade II* Listed (Church of All Saints) c.200m north. The end of Footpath 424 27/1 as it meets Caerleon Road is adjacent to the northern corner of the Land Parcel. - The Land Parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales Flood Zone 1 for flooding. - The topography steadily decreases from 50m to 35m AOD from north- south across the parcel of land.
15	- Located to east of Land Parcel 8 and north of Land Parcel 12 and lies within Monmouthshire Council, covering an area of c. 7.36ha. - No statutory designations are located at Land Parcel 15. This Land Parcel is located adjacent to Torfaen Special Landscape Area (local, non-statutory designation). - The Land Parcel is bound the east by an unnamed road with further agricultural fields to the east. The northern, western and southern boundaries of the Site are lined with mature vegetation. To the northwest is Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works. To the west is further agricultural fields. A section of Ancient Woodland is adjacent to the western boundary. A Grade II Listed Building is c.160m south of the Land Parcel. - The Land Parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales Flood Zone 1 for flooding. - The topography steadily decreases from 45m to 30m AOD from northeast- southwest across the parcel of land.
16	- Located to north of Land Parcel 8 and lies within Monmouthshire Council, covering an area of c. 5.10ha. - No statutory designations are located at this Land Parcel. - The Land Parcel is bound to the north by an unnamed road with Court Farm Reservoir beyond. To the east is Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Court Farm Water Treatment Works and a residential property. To the south and east is agricultural fields. The Land Parcel is bounded by mature vegetation. - Schedule Monument, Candwr Camp, is c.415m to the west of this Land Parcel at its closest point. - Footpath 367 37/1 bisects through the centre of this Land Parcel, running in a broadly west- east direction. - The Land Parcel is within Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales Flood Zone 1 for flooding. - The topography steadily decreases from 65m to 45m AOD from northeast- southwest across the parcel of land.

Ecology & Biodiversity

- 4.6. There are no statutory or non-statutory sites designated for nature conservation located within any of the Land Parcels. Within the area surrounding the Site there are the following designations:

- The River Usk which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (European designation) and a Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI) (national designation) located c. 1.4km south at the closest point (land parcel 12). The watercourse is designated as a SAC for the presence of sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), European river lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*), Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), Allis shad (*Alosa alosa*), Twait shad (*Alosa fallax*), Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), European bullhead (*Cottus gobio*) and Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*); and
- Brook Cottage SSSI c. 2.5km north-east of Land Parcel 3.

Landscape

- 4.7. The Site is not subject to any statutory landscape designations. Land Parcels 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12 are located within the Torfaen Special Landscape Area within Landscape Unit (LAU) 59, Countryside East of Cwmbran as defined by the 2021 Sensitivity Capacity Study for Renewable Energy Development , a non-statutory designation. The remainder of the parcels are not located within a designated landscape area.
- 4.8. The Site is within the following landscape character areas:
- National Landscape Character Area 31 – Central Monmouthshire, and
 - National Landscape Character Area 35 – Cardiff, Barry and Newport
- 4.9. Further details of landscape and visual baseline information, site visits, methodologies, assessment and conclusions can be found in draft Chapter 5 Landscape and Visual of the ES.

Heritage

- 4.10. The baseline comprises a predominantly agricultural landscape containing limited recorded archaeological remains within the Site, but with potential for buried features of prehistoric, Roman and post-medieval origin. There is one known asset of the presumed alignment of a Roman road (Candwr Road) within the Site.
- 4.11. There are no designated heritage assets located within the Site, within the 3km study area surrounding the Site there are the following Scheduled Monuments:
- Scheduled Monument Candwr Camp immediately south of Land Parcel 10 (reference: MM135);
 - Penrhos Camp (civil war earthworks) Scheduled Monument (reference: MM011) c. 500m south-east of Land Parcel 12;
 - Lodge Wood Camp Scheduled Monument (reference: MM023) is 1.3km south-west of Land Parcel 12; and
 - Cae Camp Scheduled Monument (reference: MM079) c. 1.3km east Land Parcel 2.

- 4.12. Several Listed Buildings are located within the wider area, largely associated with the following settlements Ponthir, Llantarnam, Llanfrehfa, Llandegveth and Llanddewi Fach. However, the following Listed Buildings have been identified within 1km of the Application Site boundary:
- Grade II Listed Barn at Pen-Twyn Farm (reference: 26129) adjacent to the southeastern boundary of parcel 12;
 - Grade II Listed Little Creiggydd (reference: 2674) c. 35m north-east of Land Parcel 3; and
 - Grade II Listed Glansirhowy Farm (reference: 3141) c. 140m south of Land Parcel 7.
 - There are two Registered Historic Parks and Gardens within a 3km radius of the Site:
 - Grade II Llantarnam Abbey, c.915m south-west of Land Parcel 3 at its closest point (PGW(Gt)25(TOR)); and
 - Grade II Glen Usk, c.2.1km east of Land Parcel 11 of the Site at its closest point (PGW(Gt)36(MON)).
- 4.13. Baseline conditions have been established through a desk-based assessment drawing on historic environment datasets (Cadw, HER and NMRW), historic mapping and archival sources, aerial imagery and LiDAR data, supported by site walkover surveys undertaken in April and June 2025. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with ClfA guidance and relevant Welsh planning policy and Cadw guidance.
- 4.14. Further details of the heritage and archaeological baseline information, surveys, methodologies, assessment and conclusions can be found in draft Chapter 10 Built Heritage Assessment of the ES.

Air Quality

- 4.15. The Application Site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area ("AQMA") the closest to the Application Site is the Caerleon High Street AQMA declared for Nitrogen dioxide located c. 1.6km south of Land Parcel 12.

Ground Conditions

- 4.16. The baseline conditions comprise an undeveloped, predominantly agricultural site with no significant on-site contamination sources identified. The geo-environmental setting is characterised by superficial deposits overlying mudstone and sandstone bedrock, with underlying secondary aquifers, surface water features and nearby residential receptors. Any potential contamination is considered to be localised and associated with limited areas of made ground and associated with farm gateways to improve access.
- 4.17. Based on published geological records, the majority of the Site is underlain predominantly of bedrock Raglan Mudstone Formation, with small areas underlain by the Downton Castle Sandstone Formation and the Upper Llanbadoc Beds and Llangibby Beds. The

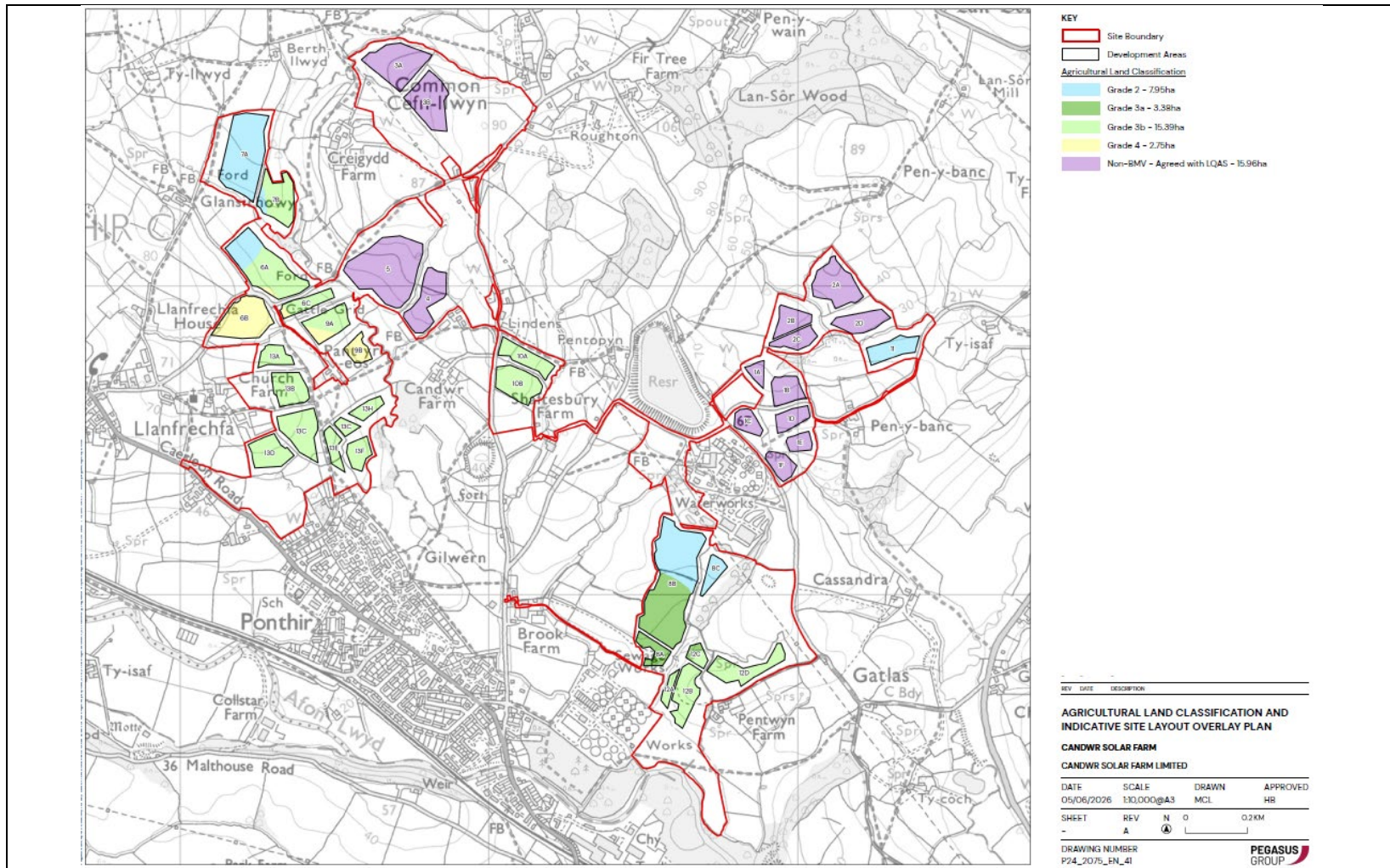
bedrock strata generally comprises mudstone and sandstone. The Site is not located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. The majority of the Site does lie within Radon Affected Areas.

- 4.18. Baseline conditions have been informed through a desk-based assessment supported by a site walkover survey undertaken in September 2025. Sources include historical mapping, environmental database records, regulatory authority consultation, geological and hydrogeological data (including BGS mapping and borehole records), and hydrological datasets. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with LCRM and relevant British Standards.
- 4.19. The assessment adopts a qualitative risk-based approach through development of a Conceptual Site Model (CSM), identifying potential contaminant sources, pathways and receptors. Potential linkages are evaluated using a likelihood-consequence risk matrix in accordance with CIRIA guidance and LCRM. The assessment is based on desk study information and site reconnaissance, with no quantitative modelling or intrusive investigation undertaken at this stage.
- 4.20. Further details of the ground conditions can be found in the Phase 1 Geo Environmental Desk Study.

Agricultural Land

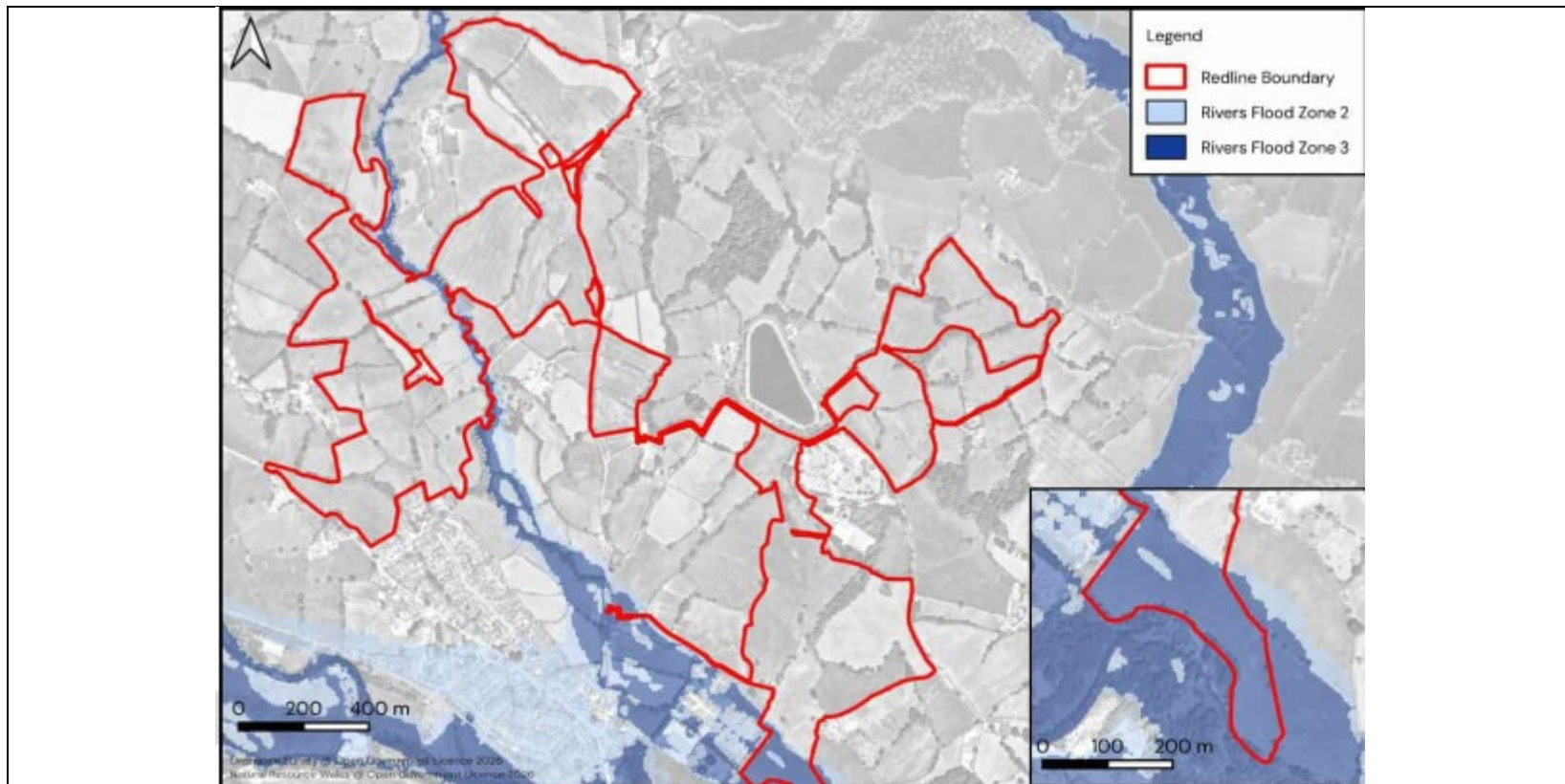
- 4.21. An Agricultural Land Classification Survey has been undertaken for the Application Site. Consultation was undertaken with the Welsh Governments Agricultural Land Use & Soil Policy Advisor who advised that land parcels 1–5 are very likely to be 'Gradient Limited' to Subgrade 3b at best and are therefore not considered best and most versatile (BMV') land. It was recommended by the Welsh Governments Agricultural Land Use & Soil Policy Advisor that no detailed ALC field surveys need to be undertaken for these Land Parcels. The baseline conditions comprise agricultural land of varying quality (Grades 2–4) characterised by clay loam and silty clay loam soils. Land quality is primarily influenced by climatic conditions, soil properties and topography, with soil wetness representing the principal limiting factor, alongside localised effects of droughtiness, stoniness, depth and gradient.

4.22. The agricultural land grading for the development parcels are presented on the following illustration.

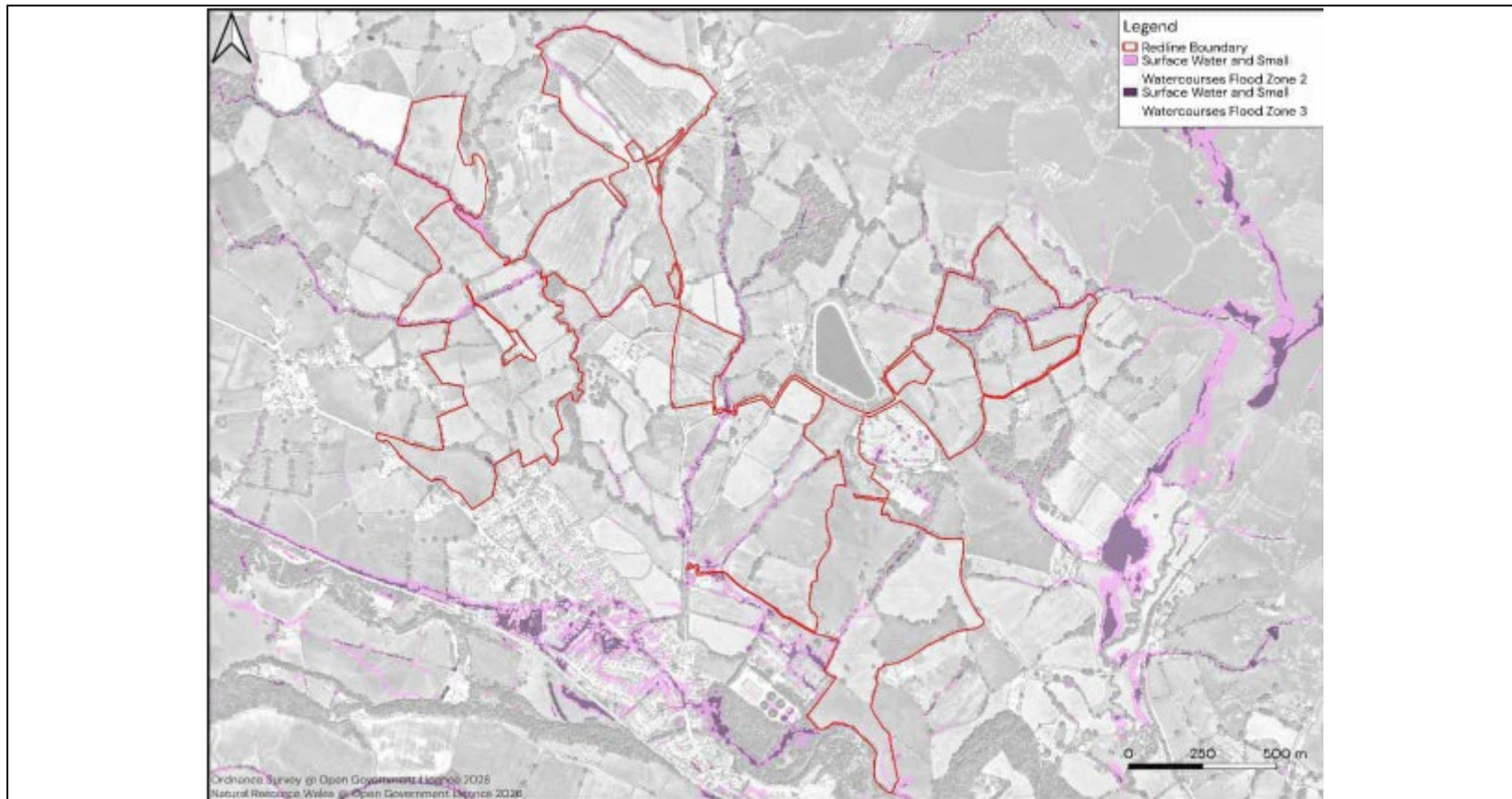


Flood Risk

- 4.23. Baseline conditions comprise a predominantly agricultural site characterised by gently undulating topography, freely draining soils, and underlying mudstone and sandstone geology. The Site contains a network of Ordinary Watercourses and is located within the catchment of the Afon Lwyd and Sor Brook. Flood risk mapping indicates that the majority of the Site lies within Flood Zone 1 for all sources, with localised higher-risk areas associated with watercourses. Overall, the existing flood risk baseline is low.
- 4.24. The majority of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1 for Rivers according to the Flood Map for Planning for Rivers by Natural Resource Wales and therefore has a low probability of flooding from rivers (less than 1 in 1,000 year). There are small localised higher-risk areas associated with watercourses located within Flood Zone 2 and 3: –



- 4.25. The Flood Map for Planning for Seas by Natural Resource Wales does not predict the Site to be at risk. There are therefore no tidal flood risk mitigation measures recommended onsite.
- 4.26. The Flood Map for Planning for Surface Water and Small Watercourses by Natural Resource Wales shows that the Site is generally located in Flood Zone 1 and has a predominantly low risk of flooding from surface water and small watercourses (less than 1 in 1,000 year). Surface water flow paths are noted across the Site predicting small areas of the Site to be at risk of flooding from surface water and/or small watercourses (Flood Zone 2 and 3): –



Transport

4.27. The proposed development is situated approximately three kilometres to the north of Junction 25 of the M4 Motorway. The most direct routes between the motorway junction and the proposed development are summarised below:

- A4042, B4236, Candwr Road, Unnamed Roads; and
- B4596, B4236, Candwr Road, Unnamed Roads.

5. DESIGN PARAMETERS AND DESIGN SOLUTION

The Proposed Development and Design Principles

- 5.1. The Applicant's design aim for the project was to design a cohesive scheme which maximises the potential renewable energy yield to allow Dwr Cymru to decarbonise its operations at Court Farm Water Treatment Works as well as its wider operations; whilst achieving a layout which relates to and takes into account the surrounding landscape, environmental designations, residential amenity and delivers on green infrastructure requirements.
- 5.2. The design of the development has developed thorough a multidisciplinary design process guided from the following five sources:-
- the physical opportunities and constraints the application site provides;
 - the physical needs (and land take requirements) of the proposed development;
 - the policy context which surrounds the proposed development;
 - consultative process – technical and design comments provided by statutory and specialist consultees as part of the various informal consultation undertaken by the applicant; and
 - advice put forward by the applicant and their multidisciplinary design team.

Design Solution

- 5.3. The application proposal relates to the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a ground mounted solar farm. The proposed development will have an operational lifespan of 40 years, after which the proposed development will be decommissioned and the site restored.
- 5.4. The development proposal can be split into the following key components:
- Solar photovoltaic ("PV") fixed panels mounted on a simple metal framework;
 - Onsite supporting equipment including string inverters, transformers and MV Stations;
 - Onsite 132 kilovolt ("kV") substation compounds including transformers, switchgear, circuit breakers, control equipment buildings, control functions, material storage, parking, as well as wider monitoring and maintenance equipment;
 - 132kV overhead wires coming from the existing electricity pylon (owned by National Grid Electricity Distribution ("NGED")) to the onsite 132kV substation;

- Underground cable connections to connect and transmit electricity from the solar PV panels to the National Grid Electricity Distribution point of connection at the Dwr Cymru Court Farm Water Treatment Works;
- Perimeter fencing (deer proof) and access gates around the perimeter of the Site;
- Inward facing infrared CCTV system;
- Associated internal access tracks within the Site;
- Relevant communications and monitoring equipment;
- Temporary construction compounds during the construction phase;
- Environmental mitigation and enhancement measures, including landscaping, habitat management and biodiversity enhancement;
- Exploring the potential for new permissive pathways;
- Associated infrastructure including parking, lighting, drainage infrastructure, storage containers, earthworks, culverts, surface water management, maintenance and welfare facilities, security cabins and any other works identified as necessary to enable the development, and
- Creation of new or improvement of existing vehicular accesses for the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the proposed development, predominantly utilising existing farm access points.

Development Constraints

5.5. Appropriate design and siting required to take account of:

- Established built form and other physical constraints within the landholdings (including overhead electricity cables and underground utilities pipes);
- Established field boundaries, with ditches/watercourses and site-specific ecological and flood risk sensitivities;
- Proximity to nearby residential receptors;
- Proximity to public right of ways
- Providing an access strategy which responds to the physical limitations of the local highway network

Development Opportunities

- Enable Dwr Cymru Welsh Water to decarbonise its operations by using part of its landholding at Court Farm Water Treatment Works to generate low carbon renewable energy.
- Land take requirement – the application site is an appropriate size for the development proposal;
- Most points of access to the application site are via existing agricultural accesses;
- Sunlight intensity levels – the site is well located geographically for solar gain and is free of any buildings or landscape features that could cause overshadowing;
- Contribute to the provision of renewables and low carbon energy;
- Contribute towards Welsh energy strategy which seeks to speed up the move from using fossil fuels to renewable energy;
- Rural diversification to the farming enterprises within the wider planning application boundary;
- Candwr Solar Farm would make a significant contribution towards Wales' 70% target of electrical consumption from renewables by 2030, which is a relatively short time away;
- It would deliver landscape and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures, and this would be managed and maintained during the lifetime of the proposed development;
- Development is time limited and would be decommissioned and removed from site after 40 years of generation to the electricity network;
- The Applicant is proposing a legacy community benefit fund and details will be established post the consenting process and prior to construction; it is anticipated that an annual community fund payment in the region of £46,000⁴ will be made, amounting to £1.8million over the 40-year lifespan of the scheme (current prices).
- Economic benefits would be secured in terms of construction and operational management of the application proposal. The application proposal will provide employment and business opportunities for component suppliers / installers and those involved in grid connection, transport and logistics. Local businesses will be contracted for relevant parts of the scope of works over the period of construction, operation and maintenance, such as landscaping, plant hire, aggregates and security where possible (See employment and skills plan). There will be additional induced impacts during the construction period with any incoming construction workers (engineers, project managers etc) spending their wages at a local level (restaurants, retail stores etc) and using local accommodation; and,

- Community benefits funding for the lifetime of the development.

Design Flexibility

- 5.6. It is recognised that parts of the proposal's design and construction methodology may be subject to further refinement and optimisation prior to and during construction. This is very pertinent to solar development due to the rapid pace of change in technology. For example, as technology advances, it is possible that solar PV panels could become more efficient, which could result in a potential reduction in total panel area required to deliver the same amount of generation. This in turn could require the micro-siting of panels and the associated equipment and infrastructure to reflect such changes, i.e., the final alignments of cabling and the number and location of panels, substation, inverters and transformers.

Buffer Zones

- 5.7. A number of buffer zones have been established to protect valuable natural resources, including trees and field margins. The following minimum buffers have been adopted as standard as part of the design of the proposed development:
- Existing 33kV (or lower) overhead Power Lines: 6m easement either side
 - Existing 132kV overhead Power Lines: 30m square exclusion zone from the base of the pylon, 20m easement either side.
 - Existing underground low voltage Electricity Lines: 3m easement either side
 - Existing Telecom Lines: 6m easement either side.
 - Existing Gas Lines: 5m easement either side.
 - Existing Water Mains: 3m easement either side.
 - Existing Sewer Surface Water: 3m easement either side.
 - Watercourses: 7m easement either side.
 - Ancient Woodland to fence line: 15m
 - Smaller Vegetation and Root Protection Areas (RPA) to fence line: 5m.
 - Established Vegetation to fence line: 10m.

- Fence line to panels: 3.5m
- 30m from any badger setts

Components of the Proposed Development

5.8. The design parameters for each component of the proposed development are detailed within the following sections.

Solar PV Panels and Framework

- 5.9. The solar PV panels generate electrical power by converting solar irradiance into direct current (DC) electricity. A solar PV panel consists of a layer of silicon cells, an anodised aluminium frame and various wiring to allow current to flow from the silicon cells. Silicon is a non-metal with conductive properties that allow it to absorb and convert sunlight into electricity. When light interacts with a silicon cell, it causes electrons to be set into motion, which initiates a flow of electric current. Solar PV panels are proposed in Land Parcels 1-13 as shown in Figure 4.1 – Indicative Site Layout.
- 5.10. The solar PV panels are likely to have a typical maximum height of approximately 2.85m, however, for the purposes of the EIA, a worst-case height of 3m has been assumed in accordance with the Rochdale Envelope approach. This ensures that the assessment remains robust should panel dimensions increase during detailed design or procurement as a result of advances in solar technology. The panels will be mounted on a fixed framework, with a minimum clearance of 0.8m AGL to the lowest edge, set at a tilt of 15–30° facing south, and spaced between 1.5–4.5m between rows to respond to local topography.
- 5.11. For the fixed system the mounting structure will be supported at intervals by double mounted posts. The posts will be pushed into the ground with a small plant rig, to depths of up to 2.5m and this will be guided by localised ground conditions. The rest of the mounting frame would then be fitted to the posts to create angled support tables ready for the solar PV panel installation.
- 5.12. Depending on ground conditions, the posts may be mounted to ballast slabs. If any areas of archaeological interest are identified within the work area, then consideration will be given to the use of non-intrusive installation method, where the posts will be fixed into concrete pads resting on top of the ground. However, there is currently no identified need for this method within the site.
- 5.13. The solar PV panels would be preconstructed to help minimise on-site construction activity.
- 5.14. The solar PV panels will be connected in strings and insulated cabling will be routed in channels fixed on the underside of the mounting frame. The string cables will run along the entire underside of each row and connected to string inverters at the end of rows, before being taken below ground.
- 5.15. Land between and beneath the solar PV panels would be used for biodiversity enhancements and potential for seasonal sheep grazing for maintenance. Mechanical cutting may also be deployed to manage the grass.

String Inverters, MV Stations and Transformers

- 5.16. String inverters take direct current (DC), as generated by the solar PV panels, and convert it into alternating current (AC) to enable the on-site generated electricity to be transferred to the on-site substation, the Water Treatment Works and on to the local electricity distribution network. The design of string inverters varies between manufactures, but they are typically approximately 1.1 m wide × 0.9 m high × 0.4 m deep and attach to the end of panel rows. An approximate 173 inverters are anticipated to be spread across the solar PV panelled areas (Land Parcels 1-13).
- 5.17. The proposed development requires the installation of 16 MV Stations co located with 16 Transformers. These are distributed across Land Parcels 1-13 as shown in the Indicative Site Layout. The MV Stations and Transformers handle electricity at medium voltage levels and increase the voltage of the electricity generated by the solar panels before it reaches the on-site substation and ultimately the distribution network.
- 5.18. The Transformers comprise individual containers (approximately 6m long × 2.4 m wide × 2.9 m high). The MV stations would be approximately 2m long, x 1m wide x 1.8m high).
- 5.19. Due to the continuing advances in solar technology, it is not possible to specify the precise type of inverter, MV station or Transformer at this time, as this will depend on the detailed electrical design and competitive procurement process. However, final details could be controlled through suitably worded planning conditions requiring the final details to be submitted for approval.

Electrical Cabling

- 5.20. On-site cabling would be required to connect the solar PV panels to the string inverters, MV Stations/Transformers, and the onsite 132kV substation. As mentioned above, the solar PV panels will be connected in strings and insulated cabling will be routed in channels fixed on the underside of the mounting frame. The string cables will run along the entire underside of each row and connect to string inverters at the end of rows, before being taken below ground.
- 5.21. The 33kv electrical cabling from the arrays would be laid by open trench technique, concealed in shallow trenches linking the solar panels to the inverters / transformers and then to the 132kV onsite substation. The dimensions and depth of the trenches would vary depending on the amount of cabling and ground conditions, typically they would be minimum 1m in depth and 4.7m wide. The cable trench may also carry earthing and communications cables and will be backfilled with fine sands and excavated materials to the original ground level.
- 5.22. The underground cabling connecting the 132kV onsite substation to the existing overhead 132kV powerline would be laid by open-cut trench. At the point of connection, there may be upgrade works required to the existing pylon to facilitate the connection works.
- 5.23. The construction process will follow a soil management plan to ensure that the soil structure and quality are not degraded as part of the construction process, an Outline Soil Management Plan is submitted as part of the DNS application.

- 5.24. The underground cables will be located in existing gaps in hedgerows wherever feasible.
- 5.25. Some of the underground cabling will be routed a short distance south of Land Parcel 10 within the public highway, either in the carriageway or adjacent footways, to connect into the onsite 132kV substation adjacent to the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Treatment Works. Additionally, a short distance between Land Parcel 3 and Land Parcel 10 is proposed to have underground cabling connecting the Land Parcels located within the public highway (Candwr Road).
- 5.26. The electrical cabling would all be located underground and there would be no above ground infrastructure required other than within the onsite 132kV substation compound to connect to the 132kV overhead wires coming from the existing electricity pylon adjacent to the onsite 132kV substation compound.

Substation Compound

- 5.27. The design provides for an onsite 132kV substation and compound, positioned on land owned by Dwr Cymru Welsh Water adjoining the Court Farm Water Treatment Works, north of Land Parcel 8. A 11kV connection would link the Candwr Solar Farm to the Court Farm Water Treatment Works. Surplus energy would then be stepped up from 33kV to 132kV via the onsite 132kV substation for export to the National Grid.
- 5.28. The onsite 132kV substation compound would have a footprint area in total of approximately 0.71 ha and a maximum height of 6.2m. The arrangement of the 132kV substation compound is split into 3 fenced and gated compounds connected by an access track. The arrangement has been designed to take into account constraints such as the overhead power lines, water mains, PRow and vegetation with suitable buffers.
- 5.29. The onsite 132kV substation compound would be gated with security fencing, with a 3m high palisade fencing.
- 5.30. Except for the concrete foundations for the various equipment components, the onsite 132kV substation compound would comprise ground that would be permeable to surface water.
- 5.31. The substation will not be continuously lit, downward facing emergency lighting will be installed within the compound. The final design for the substation would be subject to agreement with the DNO.

Access

- 5.32. The Site is served by eight access points (5x existing and 3x new), the locations of which are shown in Draft Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan. The existing access points generally provide access to agricultural fields via field gate entrances located along unnamed rural roads, they are therefore associated with existing large agricultural vehicle movements, however, where necessary modifications will be made as outlined within Draft Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan. The new access points (1, 6 & 7)

have been designed to accommodate construction and operational traffic associated with the proposed development, including larger vehicles where required.

- 5.33. The primary access is located off the B4236 Caerleon Road and designed to accommodate larger vehicles, including articulated HGVs, and will connect directly to an internal haul road to distribute traffic within the Site. Secondary new accesses are intended to accommodate smaller construction and maintenance vehicles, such as tractors with trailers, and provide connectivity to construction compounds and the onsite 132Kv substation.

Access Tracks

- 5.34. Access to the proposed development during operation would be required for maintenance. Access to the proposed development is proposed through a mix of existing and new access points for each Land Parcel. Once accessing the Site, the internal access tracks will connect into the various Land Parcels.
- 5.35. The proposed development would utilise existing farm track routes, where practicable, with new access tracks approximately 3.5m wide, created as required. The access tracks have been located so they utilise existing field gates between fields to reduce the impact on hedgerows where practicable. MV stations and Transformers will be located off a number of these internal access tracks.
- 5.36. The access track would be formed by excavating 150mm and laying clean Type 1 aggregates onto a terram geotextile layer. The access track would be laid on a compacted soil base, with a depth of 350 mm.

Public Right of Ways (PRoW)

- 5.37. Several PRoWs cross through and abut the Site, these are illustrated on Figure 4.1 – Indicative Site Layout. A Draft Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan is submitted to assess the impact on PRoWs and to provide a management strategy for the proposed development. There are no proposals to alter/divert or stop-up any PRoW during the construction and operational phase. Measures such as fencing, signage, and designated crossing points may be used to manage interactions between users and construction activity.

Permissive Paths

- 5.38. Enhancements to the PRoW network within and around the Site are also proposed with additional permissive paths, as shown on the proposed Indicative Landscape Strategy (Figure 5.5). New proposed sections of permissive footpath include:
- Two sections within the southeastern corner of Land Parcel 12;
 - Lengths running along the south and west of Land Parcel 7, running northeast and south of Parcel 6A and connecting to existing footpath southwest of Parcel 5 and northeast of Parcel 6B, and
 - Length to the south of Parcel 3, connecting to existing footpaths to the northwest and southeast of Land Parcel 3.

Crossings

- 5.39. Where internal access tracks are required to cross a watercourse, a culvert or similar feature will be required to be installed. The final design for watercourse crossings will be submitted at the detailed design stage prior to construction, agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities by way of planning condition.

Fencing and Security

- 5.40. Perimeter fencing will enclose Land Parcels. Fencing will be approximately deer/stock wire deer fencing approximately 2.4m in height with wooden posts piled into the ground. The fencing would be designed in such a way to allow small animals to pass through and would also be gated to allow access to and from the Site.
- 5.41. The design of the perimeter fencing has taken into account the design constraints of utilities, with appropriate buffers. As such, the proposed development has been split into a series of fenced areas, which ensure access into the proposed development is controlled, but still enables the operators of utilities to access their assets at the Site.
- 5.42. Pole mounted Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system, inwardly facing, will be deployed around the perimeter of the operational areas of the Site. These cameras will be mounted on poles of approximately 4m in height, located adjacent to the perimeter fencing. It is anticipated that the CCTV system would have motion detection technology for recording and pointed directly within the Site and away from any land outside of the Site.
- 5.43. No areas of the proposed development would be continuously lit during operation, however, security lighting would be required around key electrical infrastructure i.e. the onsite 132kV substation compound.

Landscape and Biodiversity

- 5.44. Ecological mitigation and enhancement measures form an integral part of the proposals, including the retention of woodland, hedgerows, ponds and riparian habitats, incorporation of native planting to strengthen habitat connectivity, and the maintenance of dark corridors along hedgerows and the riparian corridor to safeguard bat commuting and foraging routes.
- 5.45. Green infrastructure features such as habitat buffers, grassland creation areas and wetland enhancements have been located outside higher-value habitats and woodland edges, ensuring that ecological function is maintained while delivering additional biodiversity benefits across the Site. Invasive non-native species will be managed through appropriate mitigation measures to prevent spread and safeguard the integrity of retained habitats and green infrastructure assets.
- 5.46. Key measures include:
- 2,241.50 linear m of hedgerow planting;

- Approximately 2.6ha of new woodland planting;
- 18no. native hedgerow trees;
- 18no. orchard trees;
- Enhancement of approximately 0.18ha existing low value (modified grassland) grassland to botanically diverse grassland;
- Enhancement of approximately 22.84ha of existing low value (modified grassland) grassland to other neutral grassland;
- Enhancement of approximately 9.7ha of arable land to organic set-aside;
- Enhancement of approximately 4.3ha coastal floodplain grazing marsh;
- Creation of hibernacula to improve shelter and refuge opportunities for wildlife;
- 44 no. general purpose bird boxes (mixture of hole and open-fronted);
- 4 no. barn owl boxes;
- 2 no. raptor boxes;
- 30 no. bat boxes, including minimum;
- 5 no. hibernation boxes;
- 5 no. colony boxes;
- 10 no. reptile/ amphibian refugia;
- 10 insect hotels; and
- 10 no. hedgehog boxes.

5.47. These measures would more than mitigate/compensate for the habitat losses of the proposed development and would provide enhancements by targeting key species and leading to a net biodiversity benefit across the Site in line with PPW12.

Operational Phase

- 5.48. The design life of the proposed development is expected to be operational for a maximum of 40 years.
- 5.49. During operation of the proposed development, human activity on the Site will be minimal and would be restricted principally to:
- Landscaping and ecological management in accordance with the detailed LEMP,
 - equipment maintenance and servicing,
 - replacement of any components that fail, and
 - monitoring to ensure the continued effective operation of the Proposed Development.
- 5.50. Operational areas will be surrounded by perimeter fencing with pole-mounted CCTV cameras adjacent to the perimeter fencing for security.
- 5.51. Access to the proposed development during operation for maintenance activities would utilise all available access locations into the Land Parcels.
- 5.52. Land between and beneath the solar PV panels would be used for biodiversity enhancements including dedicated skylark mitigation areas and potential for seasonal sheep grazing for maintenance which would retain associate areas in productive agricultural use. Mechanical cutting may also be deployed to manage the grass. In fields dedicated to skylark mitigation enhancement, management will be typical meadow management.
- 5.53. Given the proposed development is operational for a maximum of 40 years, there will be a need potentially for some or all of the solar equipment to be replaced during the operational phase. The solar equipment would be disposed of following the waste hierarchy, with materials being reused or recycled wherever possible. Any electrical waste would be disposed of in accordance with the Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013, minimising the environmental impact of the replacement of any elements of the proposed development.

Decommissioning Phase

- 5.54. Following a 40-year generation period, the development will enter into a decommissioning stage and this can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition. The Applicant will ensure that appropriate financial and management mechanisms are in place to secure the decommissioning and restoration of the site at the end of its operational lifespan.
- 5.55. Depending on the ecological value of the habitats that develop over the lifespan of the scheme, it is possible that certain areas of the site may need to be retained due to their value for wildlife on decommissioning. It cannot reasonably be foreseen what legislative

protection will be afforded to particular wildlife species at the end of the scheme's lifespan. Further surveys for protected species which could be impacted by decommissioning would also be expected. No less than 12 months before the 40th anniversary of the first export date, a decommissioning and site restoration scheme would be submitted to the relevant planning authority for approval. The decommissioning strategy would detail how plant and equipment located within the application site would be removed.

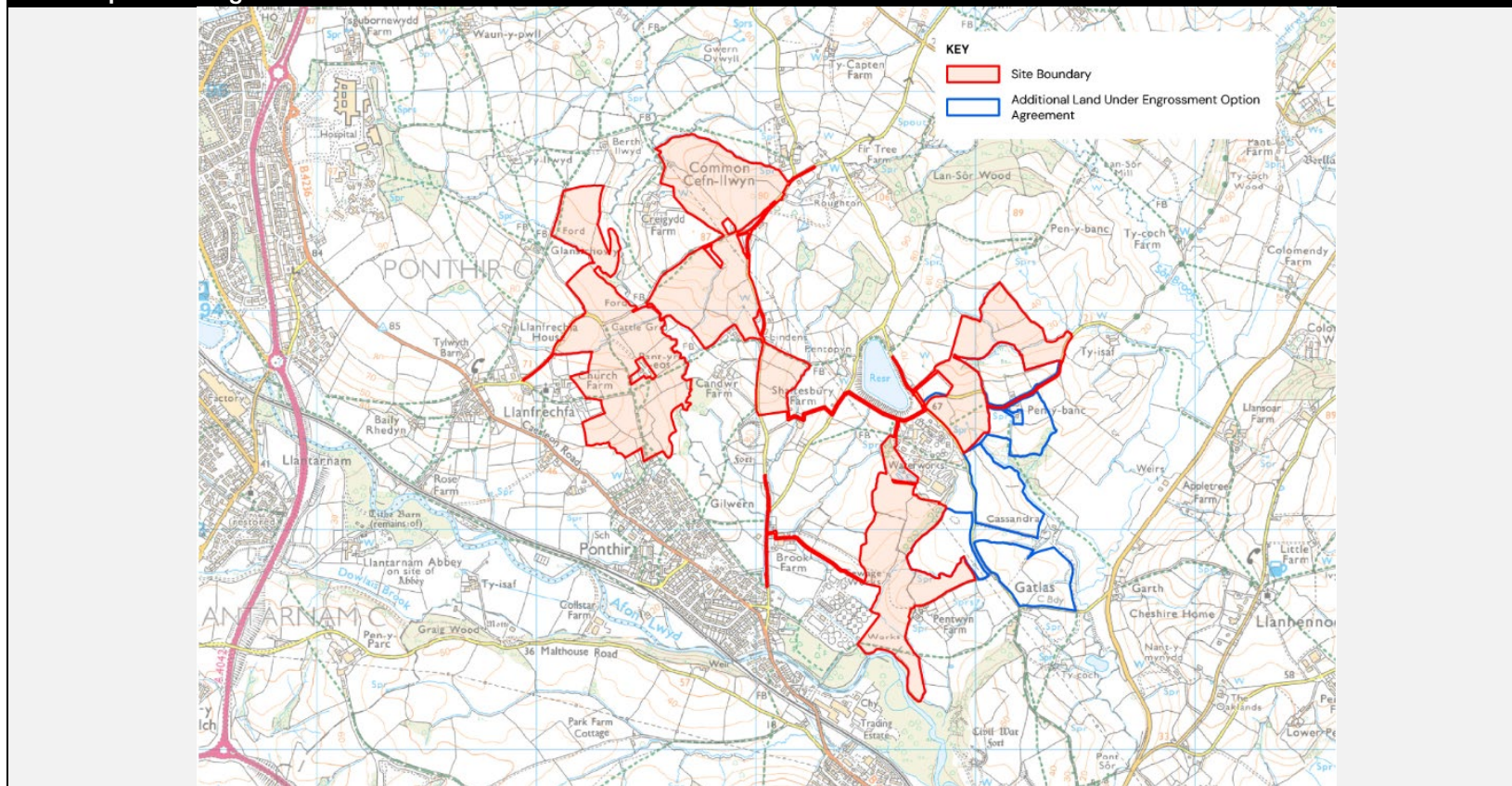
6. DESIGN EVOLUTION

- 6.1. Over the course of the design process, the applicant has continuously refined the design of the proposed development to encompass the Councils and other stakeholders' feedback at numerous junctures.
- 6.2. The proposed development has undergone an iterative design process, evolving from an initial assessment of potential landholding for development (as presented in the non-statutory consultation in June 2025), to the layout presented for the statutory pre-application consultation (June 2026). The early layout established the broad development parameters, including the overall extent of the site, indicative panel arrangement, and high-level infrastructure principles. However, it remained flexible, with infrastructure such as the substation, construction compounds, and access provision shown on an indicative basis only.

Illustration 6.1 Land options presented during the Informal Consultation – June 2025

- 6.3. For the non-statutory consultation, the Applicant shared the land options put forward for the proposed development. The landholding plan was used to inform the baseline studies and it also accompanied the Applicant's EIA Screening Direction Request, submitted to PEDW in April 2025.

6.1 Inception Design





second route was from the northwest via the A4042, Tre-Herbet Road and then the unnamed rural roads leading to the site. The original routing strategy was not supported by the relevant Highways Departments.

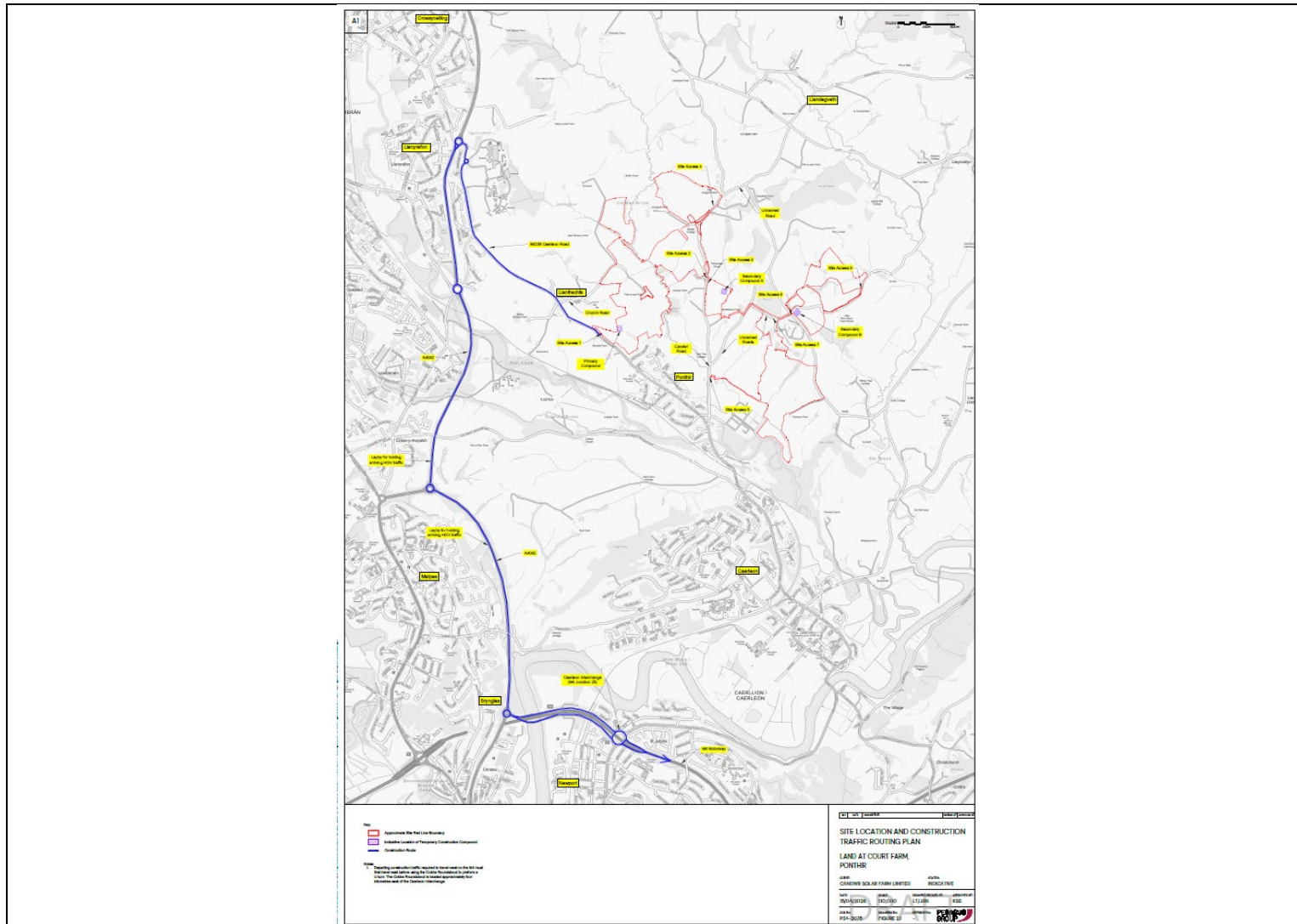
- 6.6. Illustration 6.3 presents the current layout that is subject to the statutory pre-application consultation (2 July 2026 to 20 August 2026).
- 6.7. The planning application boundary has also been refined to provide greater clarity, including providing clarification of land not forming part of the application. In addition, new areas of land (Land Parcel 15) has been incorporated into the scheme to provide further ecological enhancement opportunities – no development is proposed in this Land Parcel. This ensures a clear distinction between the extent of the proposed development and adjoining land, supporting robust environmental assessment and definition of the development envelope. Through ongoing environmental assessment, technical design and consultation, the layout has been progressively refined to form a deliverable and coordinated scheme. The substation layout and its positioning has also evolved and due to arboricultural, ecological and ground stability constraints, it now occupies the field to the immediate west of the Court Farm Water Treatment Works.
- 6.8. Access and construction arrangements have also been significantly developed, with the inclusion of a defined network of site access tracks, passing places, and updated gate locations. In addition, new area of land (Land Parcel 14) has been included to provide an indicative haul road for construction traffic and deliveries after engagement with highways officers at MCC, TBDC and NCC and advice on the construction routing strategy. The haul road which fronts onto the B4236 Caerleon Road, is designed to accommodate larger vehicles, including articulated HGVs, and will connect directly to an internal haul road to distribute traffic within the Site. Secondary new accesses are intended to accommodate smaller construction and maintenance vehicles, such as tractors with trailers, and provide connectivity to construction compounds and the onsite 132Kv substation



- 6.9. The above therefore illustrates an iterative approach to design, which has been incorporated into the proposed development as 'embedded mitigation' or 'mitigation by design'.
- 6.10. Notwithstanding this, the layout has been presented at the Statutory Consultation stage and remains subject to further refinement in response to consultation feedback and ongoing detailed design. Any such changes will be reviewed to ensure that they do not give rise to new or materially different likely significant environmental effects, or that these are appropriately assessed where required.

7. CONSTRUCTION

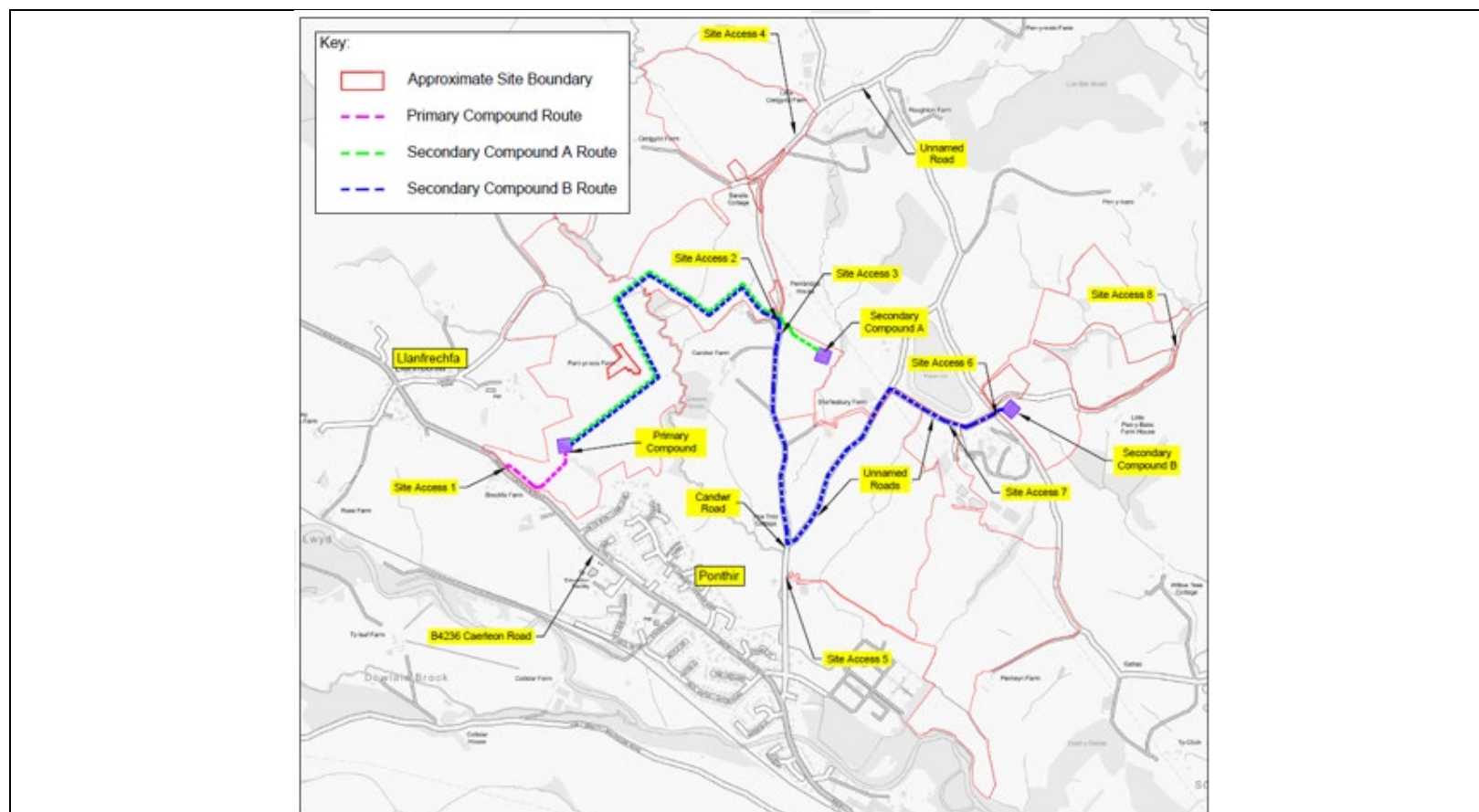
- 7.1. Details regarding the construction programme and delivery vehicle types are provided below, based on a review of similar sites elsewhere in the UK whilst taking into account the specifics of the application site.
- 7.1. It is anticipated that the construction phase of the Development would last between 12 to 18 months. The construction of the solar farm element of the Development would include the preparation of the Site, installation of the access tracks, erection of security fencing / CCTV, assembly and erection of the photovoltaic arrays, and the installation of the inverters/transformers and grid connection and underground cables. During the construction phase, the primary construction access will be taken from the B4236 Caerleon Road, providing a purpose-built junction suitable for highway-capable vehicles, including articulated HGVs.
- 7.2. The proposed route for all construction traffic associated with the scheme is:
- Exit the M4 at Junction 25A turning north onto the A4042.
 - Follow the A4042 north for approximately five kilometres.
 - At the Turnpike Roundabout turn right onto B4236 Caerleon Road following it southeast before turning left into the site.
- 7.3. This route will be used for all traffic associated with the site including HGV deliveries and construction workers. Departing construction traffic will follow the same route in the opposite direction, and illustration of the route is set out below.



- 7.4. The solar farm components will be transported to the site by HGVs the majority of which will be 16.5 metre long articulated HGVs or smaller. At least one Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) delivery is also anticipated which will be subject to a detailed route assessment in due course. Once materials and plant have been delivered to and decanted within the primary construction compound, smaller

vehicles (tractor and trailer) will transfer the materials to the rest of the site and the secondary compounds, as required. Three temporary construction compounds are proposed during the construction phase of the development, including one primary compound and two secondary compounds. All HGVs will route directly to the primary compound via the haul road where they will decant their loads, before smaller vehicles distribute plant and material around the site or to the secondary compounds as required. This approach removes the need to route construction traffic in from the south via Caerleon or the north via Tre-Herbet Road.

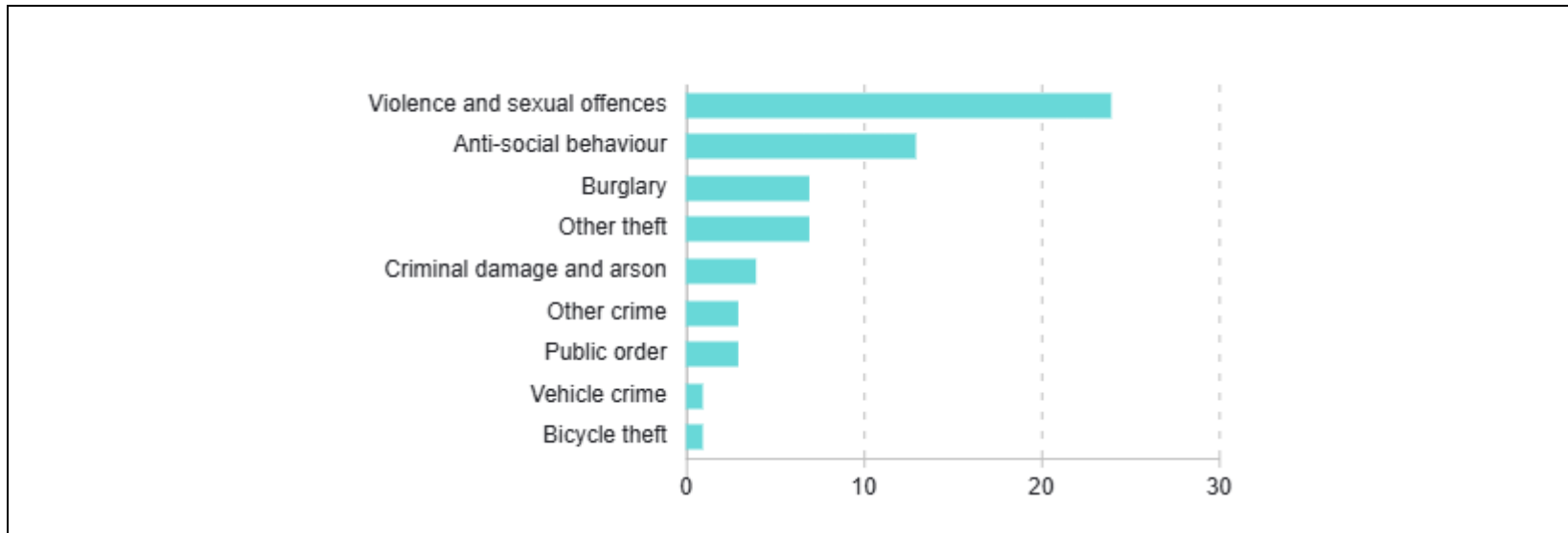
- 7.5. The illustration below shows the suggested location of the primary and secondary construction compounds, together with the internal routing.



- 7.6. A total of 408 deliveries (816 two-way movements) are forecast to be associated with the construction of the site. During the peak delivery periods there could be up to two HGV deliveries per day (four-two way movements) on average. Deliveries will be limited to outside of the highway network peak periods (08:00–09:00 and 16:00–17:00). The Grange Hospital roundabout currently operates with around 316 HGV movements during the day (not including movements undertaken between 20:00–06:00). It is not considered that the additional four daily two-way HGV movements will have a material impact on the operation or safety of the Grange Hospital roundabout or the wider local highway network.
- 7.7. The construction vehicles will only access the site via the designated construction traffic route identified in this CTMP. An appropriate signage scheme will be put in place from the A4042 for HGV drivers to follow. Drivers will be informed of the route prior to departing for the site and will be advised not to use Sat-Nav.
- 7.8. Temporary construction signage will be located within the site adjacent to the main Site Access 1 indicating that construction vehicles are required to turn right out onto the B4236 Caerleon Road. This will ensure that construction vehicles will not turn left out of the site access point and will only depart northwest towards the A4042. In the unlikely event of unforeseen road closures or adverse weather conditions, deliveries to the site will be held to prevent HGVs from routing through local towns and villages. It is considered that this can be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition. Appropriate signage will be displayed in strategic locations within the vicinity of the site accesses, warning other road users of potential slow moving construction traffic in the area. The signage will be provided in accordance with TSRGD standards in Welsh above English, the details and location of which will be agreed with the highway authority prior to commencement of the development.
- 7.9. Deliveries to the site will be limited to outside the typical highway network peak hours and will occur between 10:00–16:00 Monday to Friday, and between 08:00–13:00 on Saturdays. This will also avoid the peak periods at the Grange Hospital roundabout. A member of the construction team will be situated at the Grange Hospital roundabout during deliveries to monitor for emergency situations and warn approaching HGVs if an emergency situation is occurring so they can wait on the A4042 as they approach until the situation clears.
- 7.10. After energisation, it is anticipated that maintenance vehicles will access the Site on an ad-hoc basis, when required, with around four maintenance trips forecast to the Site per month. Maintenance trips will generally be made by 4x4 or a small van type vehicle. Whilst the contractor's compounds will have been removed, space will remain within the site for such vehicles to turn around to ensure that vehicles can turn and exit in a forward gear.
- 7.11. It is expected that decommissioning the site will involve a similar profile of vehicles as the construction phase with processes predominately in reverse of those which will be undertaken during the construction phase. This would be dealt with at the time of decommissioning.

8. CRIME AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1. This section of the Design and Access Statement deals with the issue of crime. The Crime Impact Assessment process involves identifying, evaluating and mitigating the crime and disorder effects of a development proposal early in the design process.
- 8.2. The goal is to reduce the development's vulnerability to crime by taking into account the analysis of the proposed development context and the crime issues in the area.
- 8.3. The www.police.uk website provides data on crime levels. For the catchment area of Ponthir, 62 crimes incidents were reported to the Police between May 2025 and August 2025. For the period between September 2025 and April 2026, only 1 crime incident has been reported to the Police. A breakdown of crime types over the last 12 months is displayed in the table below, and it should be noted that the majority of crimes were reported prior to September 2025.



General Risk Assessment

- 8.4. The typical security issues for a development of this nature are:
- Acts of criminal damage during the construction period;
 - Theft of components during the construction phase;

- Criminal damage during operational phase;
- Theft of components during the operational phase;
- Theft of components during site restoration.

Construction Site Risk Assessment

- 8.5. A secure temporary construction compound will be used to store materials and ancillary welfare facilities during the construction period. Security teams are likely to be detailed to additionally secure the application site.

Design, Layout and Security Requirements

- 8.6. Taking into account the low level of recorded crime for the locality, the following security measures are considered to be appropriate to combat potential criminal activity and unauthorised access into the arrays:-
- A 2.4 m high deer fence will encompass the fields containing the solar panels; and,
 - CCTV cameras with perimeter intruder detection (PID) will be fitted at appropriate intervals along the development edge of the PV arrays.

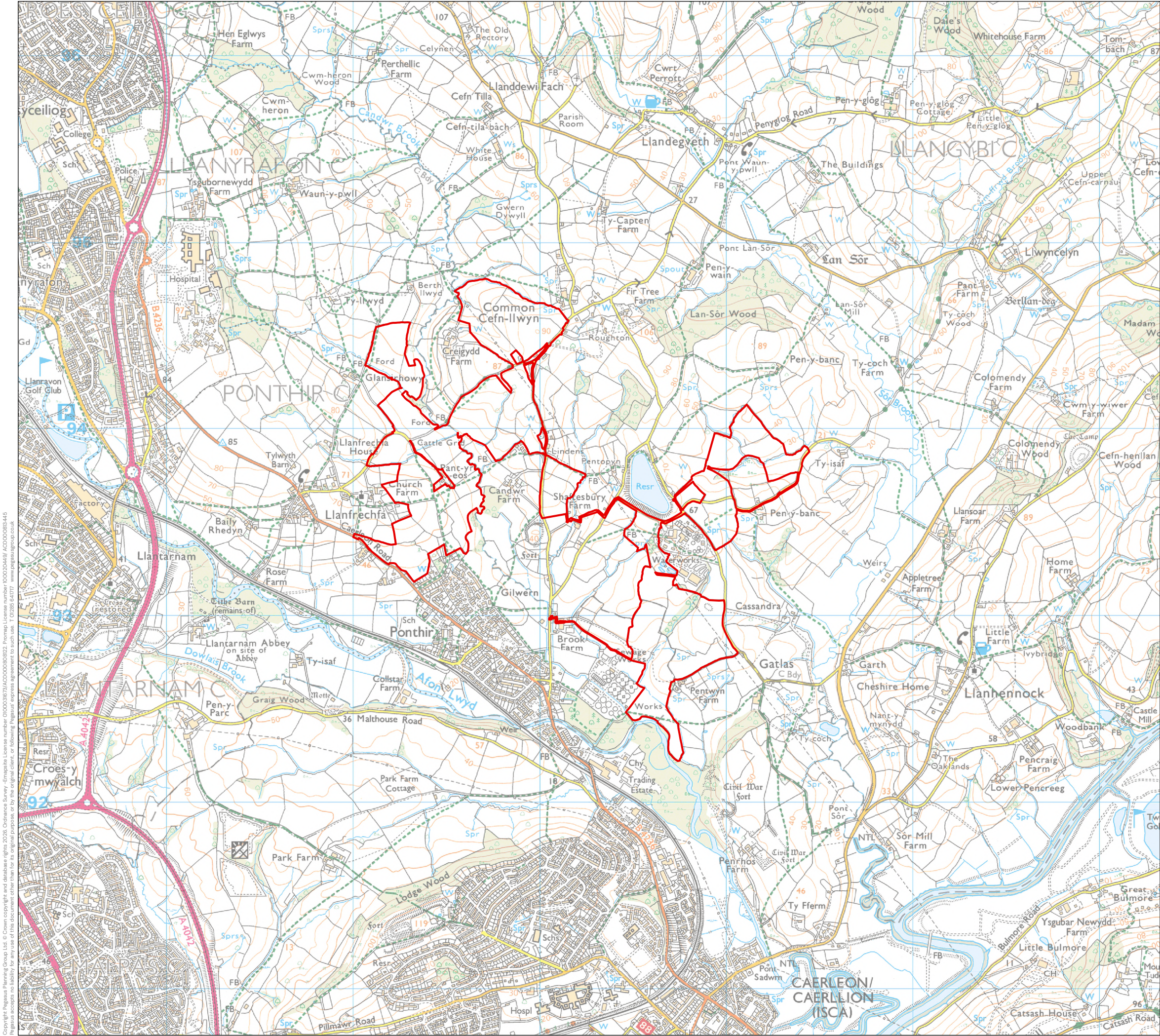
9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1. Matters pertaining to design, access and crime for the proposed development have been explored and presented within this draft Design and Access Statement. The application site is deemed to be appropriate in that it can accommodate the proposed solar scheme with a capacity of circa 46MWac. The applicant duly considers that the application site can suitably accommodate the development proposal without causing any unacceptable impact on the local environment. The applicant will look to further refine the proposal as responses submitted as part of the formal statutory consultation are taken into account.
- 9.2. The benefits of the proposal are multiple:
- Candwr Solar Farm would make a significant contribution towards Wales' 70% target of electrical consumption from renewables by 2030, which is a relatively short time away. It will also enable Dwr Cymru Welsh Water to decarbonise its operations by using part of its landholding at Court Farm Water Treatment Works to generate low carbon renewable energy.
 - It would deliver biodiversity net gain, and this would be managed and maintained during the lifetime of the proposed development.
 - Development is time limited and would be decommissioned and removed from site after 40 years of generation to the electricity network.
 - As part of the applicant's contribution towards community benefits, the applicant is proposing a legacy community benefit fund and details will be established post the consenting process and prior to construction.
 - Rural diversification of farming enterprises
 - Economic benefits would be secured in terms of construction and operational management of the application proposal. The application proposal will provide employment and business opportunities for component suppliers / installers and those involved in grid connection, transport and logistics. Local businesses will be contracted for relevant parts of the scope of works over the period of construction, operation and maintenance, such as landscaping, plant hire, aggregates and security where possible (See employment and skills plan). There will be additional induced impacts during the construction period with any incoming construction workers (engineers, project managers etc) spending their wages at a local level (restaurants, retail stores etc) and using local accommodation.
- 9.3. The time limited and reversible nature of the proposed development, together with the measures that are to be taken to enhance and encourage the ecological diversity of the application site will ensure that in the long term the application site can not only be restored to its current use, but will also have been improved.

- 9.4. The wider environmental benefits and sustainability credentials associated with the increased production of energy from renewable sources represents a significant case in favour of the development proposals. This Statement demonstrates how the application proposal accords with the relevant design policies set out in Future Wales, namely Policies 17 and 18. Compliance with these policies demonstrates the applicant's commitment towards good design.



APPENDIX 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN



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KEY
Site Boundary

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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SITE LOCATION PLAN

CANDWR SOLAR FARM

CANDWR SOLAR FARM LIMITED

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
01/06/2026	1:20,000@A3	CS	EHF

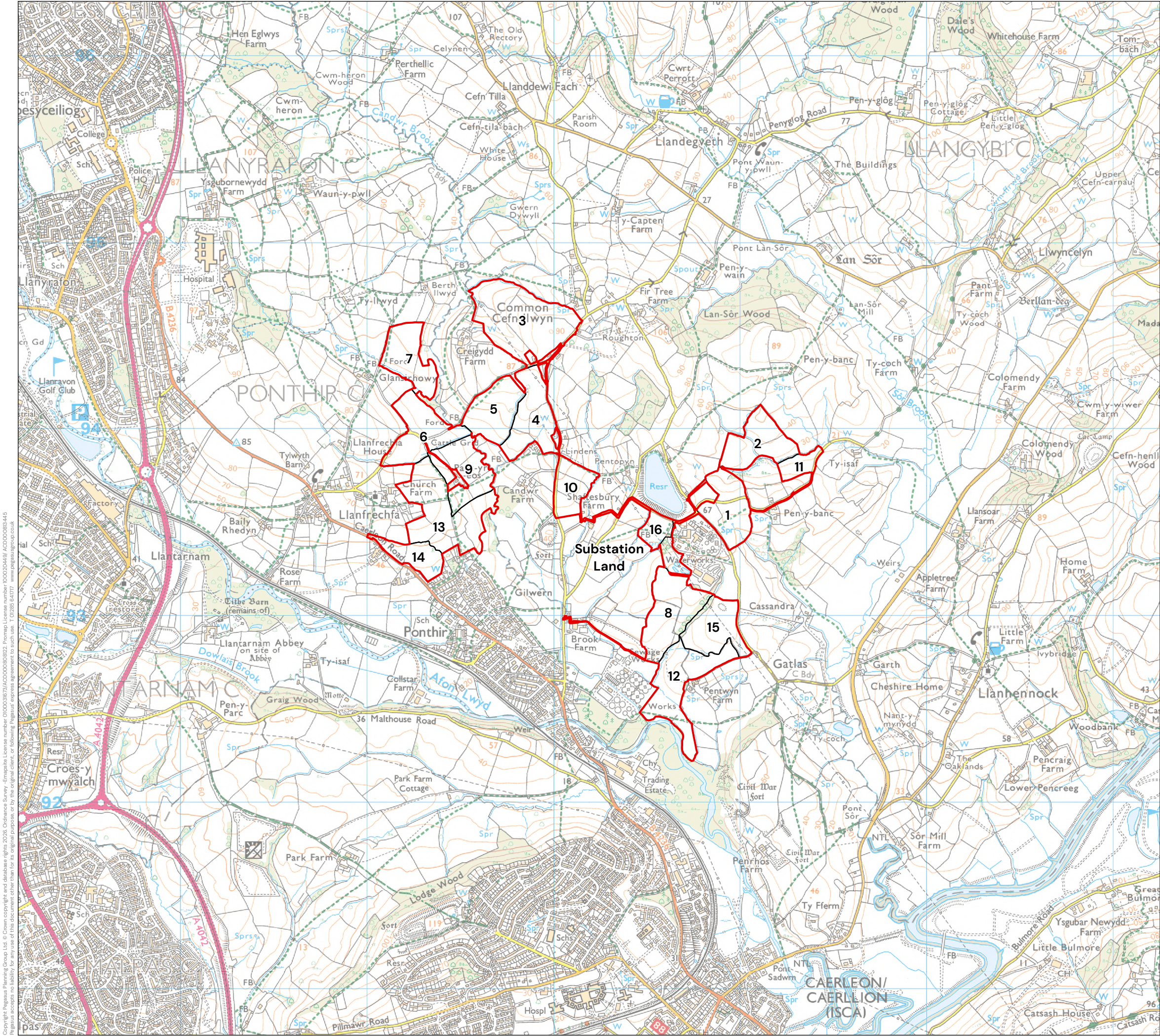
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DRAWING NUMBER
P24_2075_EN_01

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APPENDIX 2 – LAND PARCEL PLAN



KEY

Site Boundary

Field Boundaries

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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FIGURE 3.2: LAND PARCEL PLAN

CANDWR SOLAR FARM

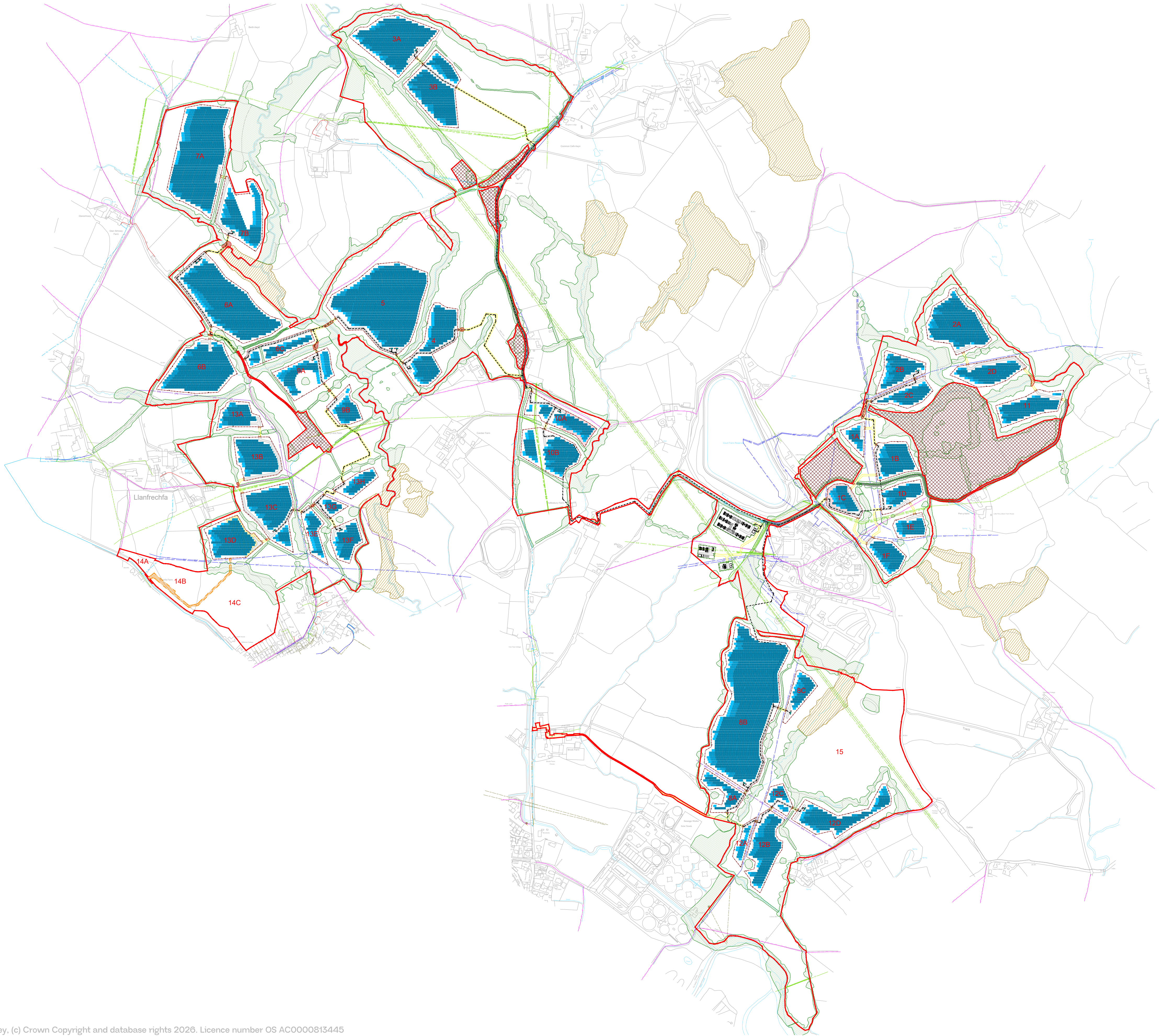
CANDWR SOLAR FARM LIMITED

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
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SHEET	REV	N	0
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DRAWING NUMBER
P24_2075_EN_11



APPENDIX 3 – INDICATIVE LAYOUT



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Revisions:				
Revision	Date	Revision Notes	Drawn	Inspected
01	03.10.25	First Issue (2 in portrait panels with inter row spacing of 2m)	RR	TH
02	09.10.25	Adjusted inter row spacing to 1.5m and distance from fence to panels to 3.5m	RR	TH
03	27.10.25	Adjusted tracks and amended RLB	EW	TH
04	11.12.25	Planning Application Boundary and Access Adjusted	RE	TH
05	05.01.26	Tracks and Gates Adjusted in Parcels 5, 6 and 7, CCTV and Fence Adjusted	RE	TH
06	06.01.26	Planning Application Boundary Amended	RE	TH
07	16.04.26	Cable Route Added	RR	TH
08	17.04.26	Updated Substation Design Added, Planning Application Boundary and Cable Route Adjusted	RR	TH
09	12.05.26	RLB, Access Tracks, Cable Route and Legend Adjusted, Land Not Part of Planning Application Boundary, Main Site Compound, Haul Road and Substation Design Added	RR	TH
10	20.05.26	RLB, CCTV and Haul Road adjusted, panels relocated / removed	RR	TH
11	27.05.26	Fenceline and Access Tracks Adjusted	RR	HB

LEGEND:	
	WATER COURSE
	PLANNING APPLICATION BOUNDARY
	LAND NOT PART OF PLANNING APPLICATION BOUNDARY
	PUBLIC HIGHWAY
	FOOTPATH

SOLAR SITE INFRASTRUCTURE:	
	SUBSTATION
	CABLE ROUTE
	PERIMETER FENCELINE
	PALISADE FENCELINE
	INDICATIVE TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION COMPOUND
	MAIN SITE COMPOUND
	INDICATIVE HAUL ROAD
	PASSING PLACE
	INDICATIVE TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION ACCESS
	SITE ACCESS TRACK
	MAINTENANCE TRACK
	TRANSFORMER
	MV STATION
	INVERTER
	PV FULL TABLE
	PV HALF TABLE
	PV QUARTER TABLE
	SECURITY GATE (PERIMETER)
	SECURITY GATE (PALISADE)
	CCTV CAMERA

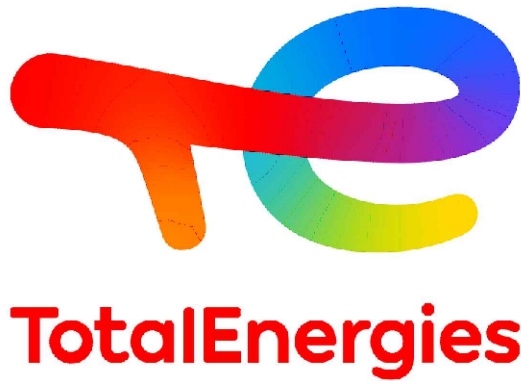
SERVICES:	
	ELE — HV — ELE — EXISTING O/H CABLE ROUTE
	ELE — HV 33kV — EXISTING 33kV O/H CABLE ROUTE
	ELE — HV 132kV — EXISTING 132kV O/H CABLE ROUTE
	ELE — LV — ELE — EXISTING U/G CABLE ROUTE
	TEL — TEL — EXISTING TELECOM SERVICES
	GAS — GAS — EXISTING GAS SERVICES
	WAT — WAT — EXISTING WATER MAIN
	SW — SW — EXISTING SEWER SURFACE WATER

VEGETATION:	
	EXISTING VEGETATION
	ANCIENT WOODLAND
	VEGETATION TO BE REMOVED

Status:

PLANNING

Project: **CANDWR SOLAR FARM**
LAND AT COURT FARM, PONTNIR, MONMOUTHSHIRE
Client:



10th Floor, 10 Upper Bank Street, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5BF
solaruk@totalenergies.com www.solar.totalenergies.co.uk

Designer:



UTU DESIGN LTD
Unit B2, The Courtyard, Severn Drive, Tewkesbury Business Park, GL20 8DD
+44(0) 1854 850010 design@utu.design www.utu.design

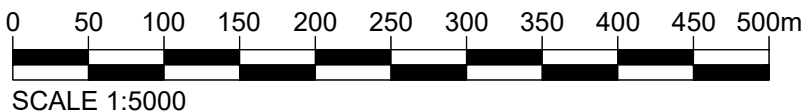
Drawing Title: **CAMDWR SOLAR FARM**
INDICATIVE SITE LAYOUT PLAN (2 IN PORTRAIT)

Drawn: RR	Checked: TH	Drawing Scale: 1:5000	Size: A1
Project Code: PEG002-	Drawing Number: PL-01.1	Revision: 11	

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CANDWR SOLAR FARM - INDICATIVE SITE LAYOUT PLAN (2 IN PORTRAIT)

Scale: 1:5000@A1



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