



PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
FORMATION OF A 1MW SOLAR FARM,
ON LAND AT TYDDYN TEG,
LLANNON, LLANELLI.

On behalf of
Power On Demand Limited

Our Ref: 1675.a
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Prepared by: RDG

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Evans Banks Planning Ltd has been instructed by Power On Demand (the Applicant) to prepare this Planning, Design and Access Statement to accompany a full planning application for the “*Formation of a 1MW Solar Farm*” At land off Heol y Nant Road, Llannon, Llanelli.

1.2 This Statement therefore forms part of the submissions of the application to be considered by the Authority, and in compliance with the requirements of TAN12 provides information on the following points:

- A brief description of the site and surrounding area
- A description of the proposed development
- Consideration of relevant local planning policy
- Accessibility
- Character
- Community Safety
- Environmental Sustainability
- Movement to, from and within the development

1.3 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared following the guidance set out in *Planning Policy Wales* (12th Edition) (February 2024) and *Technical Advice Note 12: Design* (2014), particularly the objectives of TAN 12 for facilitating ‘good design’, summarised in the diagrams below.

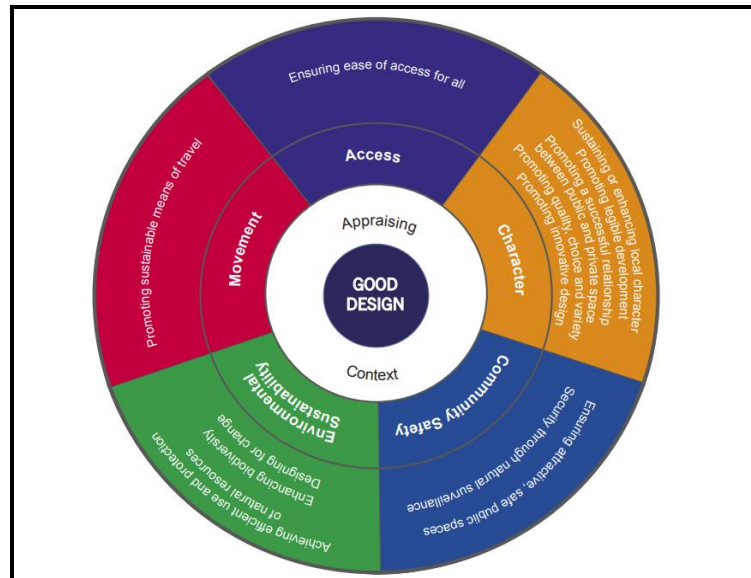


Figure 1 – Objectives of Good Design

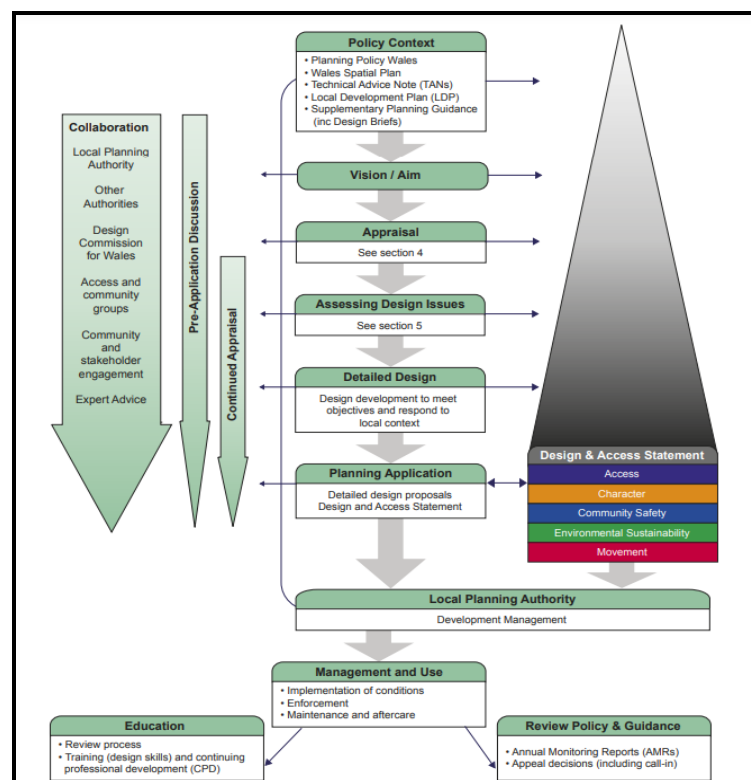
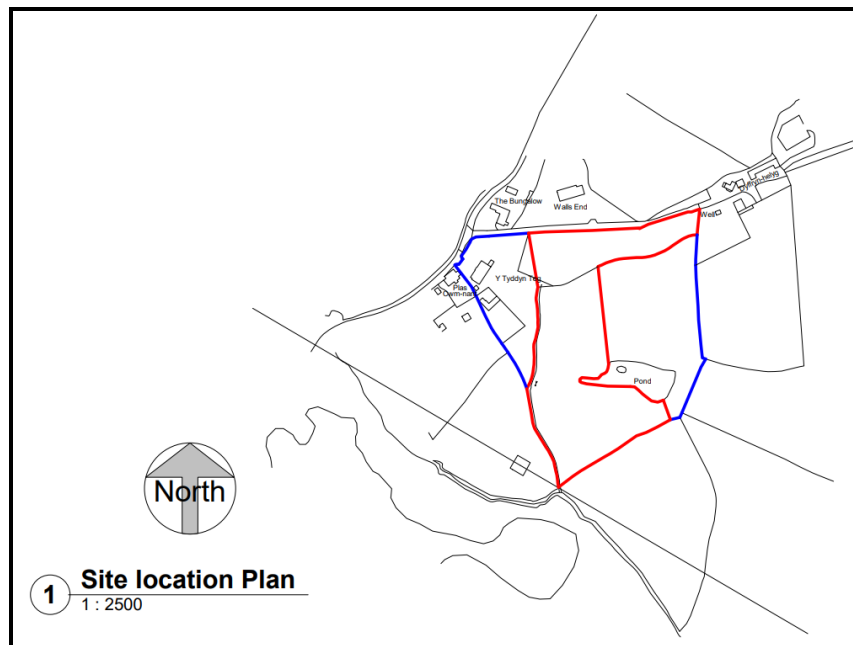


Figure 2 – The Stages Required to Achieve Good Design

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application site comprises 3 semi-improved fields that are slightly sloping and approximately 1.15 hectares (circa 2.8 acres) in size. The land is privately owned and lies immediately off the eastern side of Heol y Nant Road, with a private access lane that runs alongside the northern boundary of the site. The site location plan is displayed in Plan A below.



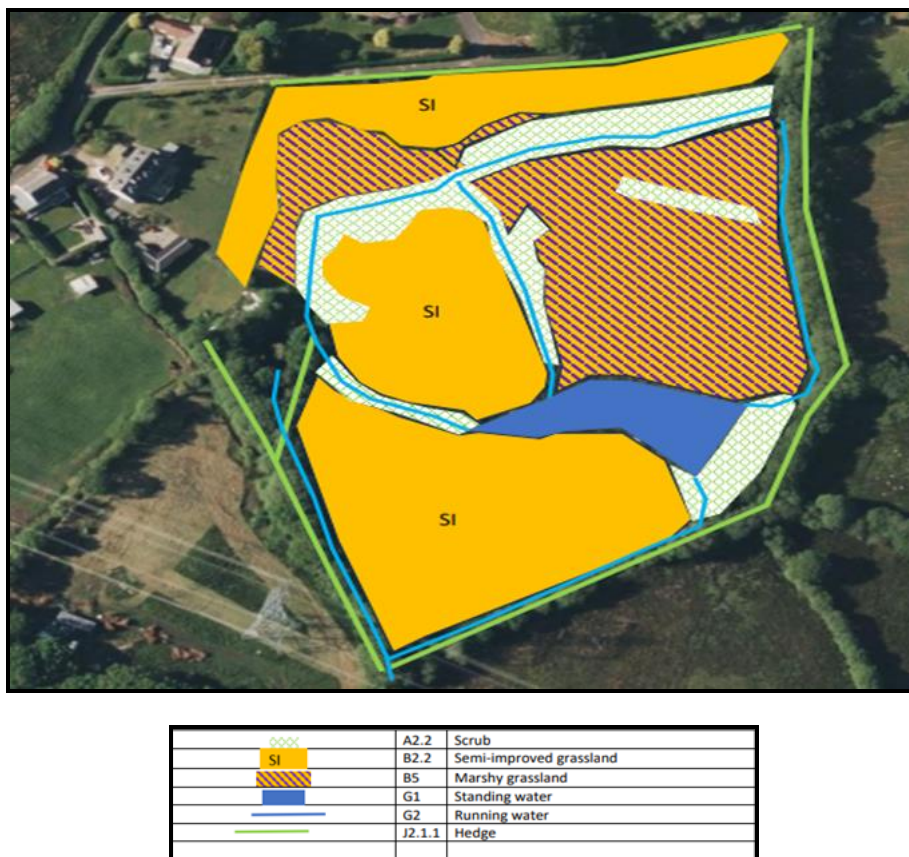
Plan A

- 2.1.2 The land itself comprises predominantly of semi-improved and poor marshy grassland bordered by a network of hedgerows and ditches. The solar farm will be situated on the three semi-improved areas of the wider land holding, avoiding the majority of marshy grassland that adjoins the application site (see accompanying PEA for further details).

- 2.1.3 At the centre of the land holding lies a large pond, which can be identified in Photograph 1, and borders two of the proposed fields for the solar farm. Two unnamed watercourses drain both the western and eastern sides of the site and a confluence of waters, specifically the headwaters of Afon Marlais are all situated within 0.25km of the site.
- 2.1.4 Photograph 1 provides a “Google Earth” image of the site, with the above features identified, whilst Plan B illustrates the Phase 1 Habitat Plan that clearly identifies the areas of land that are suitable for the application proposal.



Photograph 1



Plan B

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2.1 The land is situated to the north of the centre of Llannon, in a sparsely inhabited area that consists primarily of agricultural land. The agricultural fields extend off the northern, southern, eastern, and western sides of the site. There are six dwellings within 0.25km of the site, with three to the west and a further three to the north. The large 10ha (24.7 acres) Pentre solar farm is situated 1km west of the site and an area of woodland is located 0.10km to the South of the site. Hedgerows border both Heol y Nant Road and the lane to the north of the land.
- 2.2.2 The Application Site's perimeters and proximity to Heol y Nant Road, the lane north of the site, and the nearest dwelling to the site are shown within the photographs

below. The photos depict the field's form and frontage and enclosed nature set off Heol y Nant Road.

- 2.2.3 Photographs 2 and 3 illustrate an aerial view of the current site. The images clearly show the location of the three semi-improved areas, marshy grassland, the pond, neighbouring dwellings, and the current access to the site.



Photograph 2



Photograph 3

- 2.2.4 In the wider sense, the site lies within a 5–10-minute walking distance of Llannon's town centre with its public house, primary school and play area, with the historic town of Llanelli and its much wider range of community facilities and local services a short drive further.
- 2.2.5 In terms of accessibility, this section of Llannon road just of Heol y Nant lies upon a primary public bus route, with three bus stops that facilitate the running of **Services 128 and 166** to Ammanford Bus Station to the Northeast and Carmarthen Bus Station to the West.

2.3 PROJECT DESIGN PARAMETERS AND PRINCIPLE

- 2.3.1 As a result of the above, the following design principles and parameters have influenced the design subject of this planning application:
- **Density** – The proposal represents a balance between making efficient and effective use of a greenfield site, whilst being respectful and sympathetic to the existing adjoining built form of the settlement the site forms part of and its existing biodiversity assets.

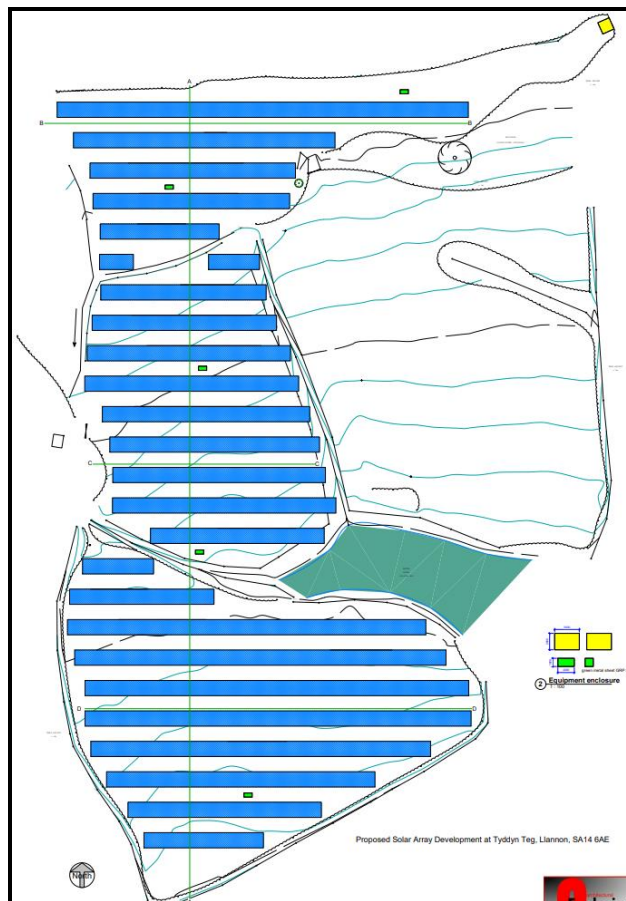
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- **Layout** – The layout has been steered by the land's aspect, topography, and key biodiversity elements.
 - **Scale** – The proposal is for a solar array that covers approximately 1.15 hectares.
 - **Biodiversity** – The proposal will avoid the ecological assets located to its east, whilst retaining any of value within the application site boundary.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposal is for the construction of a 1MW solar array. The following information therefore provides an overview of the scheme and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying supporting documentation and drawings.

General Siting

- 3.2 The general layout of the site has been steered by a number of on-site and off-site factors. Its point of access will be via the existing entrance point to Tyddyn Teg, via Heol Y Nant Road, leading into the site. The site layout plan is shown in Plan C below.

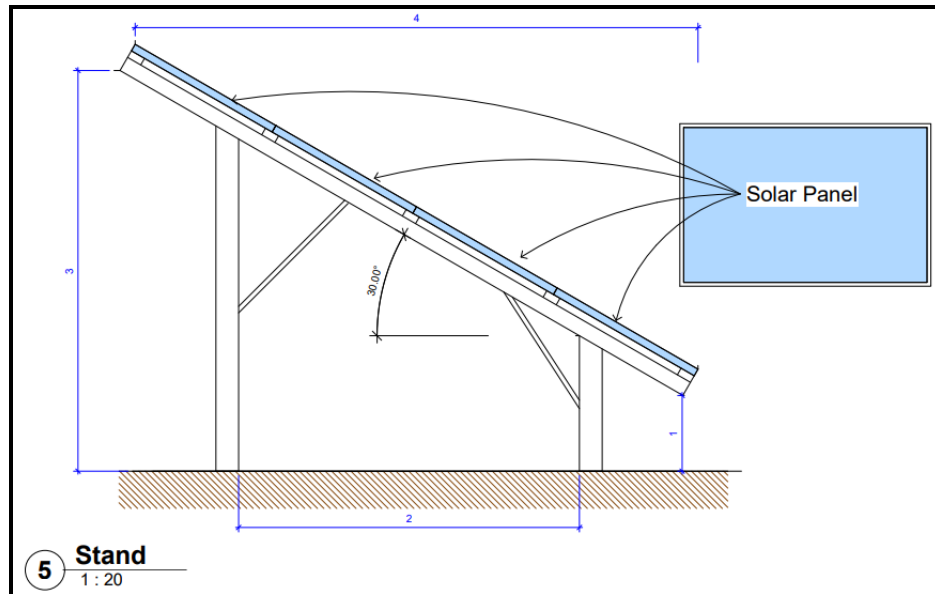


Plan C

- 3.3 The proposals have sought to use the sloping land to form a solar array over the majority of the three enclosed fields present on the land at Tyddyn Teg. A single point of access exists via the established access currently used for the occupants of Tyddyn Teg. This would then serve to provide access to the solar farm for both the occupants of Tyddyn Teg and for any construction or maintenance workers that are required to access the site.
- 3.4 As illustrated in Plan C, the solar park will be equipped with below ground connections to a transformer unit set at the north east of the proposed development. The six green metallised equipment boxes associated with the development will be placed at the appropriate locations throughout the array.

Scale Parameters

- 3.5 The application seeks to form rows of photo-voltaic panels set over arrays in a uniform formation across the level field enclosure. The arrays will be arranged to all be orientated south to maximise solar gain and be arranged with 3.0 metres wide open aisles between rows for ease of maintenance.
- 3.6 Each array is shown with four panels banked vertically with a plane height of 4 metres, set to be a minimum of 1.0 metre above ground level, as shown in Plan D below, with the panels set at an angle of 30 degrees, resulting in the **upper most height of the array being 3 metres above ground level**. Plan D below illustrates the measurements of the panels being used in this solar array development.



Plan D

External Finishes

- 3.7 As shown on the accompanying drawings, the external appearance of each of the panels has drawn on existing solar farm designs, such as the Pentre Solar Farm that is situated just 1km west of the site
- 3.8 Photograph 5 below illustrates an example of the typical appearance of the proposed solar arrays at the site, which will appear uniform in appearance, and formed over existing ground levels with no changes in ground profile proposed.



Photograph 5

- 3.9 Photo voltaic panels and their supports have a uniform appearance comprised from prefabricated materials and will appear no different to other solar farm schemes implemented in Carmarthenshire. Two much larger such schemes are highlighted are nearby at Pentre Farm, and at Brynteg Farm between Five Roads and Furnace, near Llanelli, the latter being prominently located alongside the B4309 main road in / out of Llanelli.

Access and Parking

- 3.10 The proposed development will be served by the existing access to Tyddyn Teg.

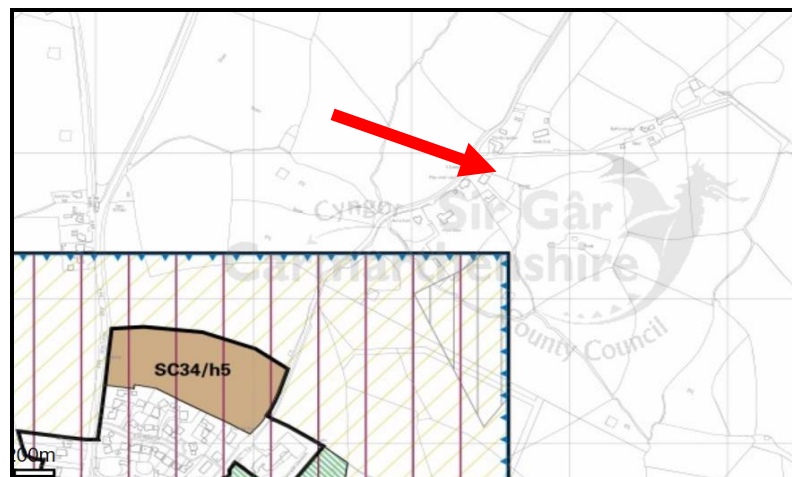
4.0 PLANNING POLICY

4.1 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

4.1.1 The development plan for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compensation Act 2004 is the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan, which was adopted in December 2014. It is therefore the policies of this document that have been referred to in the preparation of the proposal subject of the planning application in question, including the following:

- GP1 - Sustainability and High Quality Design
- GP2 - Development Limits
- RE3 - Non-wind Renewable Energy Installations
- EQ4 - Biodiversity
- EQ7 - Caeau Mynydd Mawr SPG Area

4.1.2 The application site is located outside of the defined settlement limits of Llannon set out in GP2 - Development Limits, but within the Caeau Mynydd Mawr SPG Area - EQ7, as reproduced in extract as Plan E below.



Plan E - LDP Proposals Map Extract

Policy EQ7 - Development within the Caeau Mynydd Mawr SPG Area

- 4.1.3 Policy EQ7 (EQ7 Development within the Caeau Mynydd Mawr SPG Area) states that *“Proposals will be permitted where they accord with the Council’s commitment to promote and contribute to the delivery of the Conservation Objectives of the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Special Area of Conservation (CMM SAC) in line with the Habitats Directive. Where applicable, proposals in the SPG area will be required to contribute towards increasing the quality and amount of suitable habitat for Marsh Fritillary butterfly available within the SPG Area”*.
- 4.1.4 It can be determined that there will be no demonstrable likely significant effect upon the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Special Area of Conservation (CMM SAC) in accordance with the SPG, as the area of marshy grassland adjoining the site does not form part of the application and will be retained and protected. An Ecological Appraisal Report found that the marshy grassland is un-grazed and rank, scabious populations are low, and the site is currently sub-optimal for marsh fritillary. The Applicant is amenable however to managing the marshy grassland in a positive manner.

Policy RE3 - Non-wind Renewable Energy Installations

- 4.1.5 The relevant LDP Policy for schemes involving the placement of renewable energy generation, including solar arrays and associated apparatus, is **Policy RE3 “Non-wind Renewable Energy Installations”**. It distinguishes between non-wind forms of renewable energy generations such as Solar, Biomass, Hydro-Power and Combined Heat and Power. The scheme proposed at Tyddyn Teg, Llannon is expected to **generate up to 1 Megawatt of electricity**.
- 4.1.6 Policy RE3 indicates that in such circumstances *“Large scale schemes located outside defined Development Limits may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where there is an overriding need for the scheme which can be satisfactorily justified, and the development will not cause demonstrable harm to the landscape. Proposals that would cause demonstrable harm to the landscape, visual impact, noise, ecology,*

or ground and surface water as a result of the cumulative effect of renewable energy installations will not be permitted.

- 4.1.7 The development is in accordance with this criterion, as the proposed development has been carefully designed in terms of scale and layout, so not to cause a demonstrable impact to the landscape or ecology of the site and its surrounding areas. The development will not create any issues regarding noise pollution or detrimental visual impacts.
- 4.1.8 LDP Policy SP11 “Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency” is also supportive of new forms of renewable energy generation, stating that: *“Development proposals which incorporate energy efficiency measures and renewable energy production technologies will be supported in areas where the environmental and cumulative impacts can be addressed satisfactorily. Such developments will not cause demonstrable harm to residential amenity and will be acceptable within the landscape. Each proposal will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.”*
- 4.1.9 In conclusion, it is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with all relevant aspects of Policy RE3.

Policy GP1 – Sustainability and High Quality Design

- 4.1.10 Policy GP1 (*Sustainability and High Quality Design*) provides the overarching framework for high quality design in development, conservation and enhancement proposals within the County. For development proposals to be permitted they must accord, where relevant, to 14 Criteria. Taking into account the nature and form of the application proposal, it is considered that 7 are of relevance to the proposed development and an assessment of the application proposal against each now follows:
- 4.1.11 Criterion a) requires that developments conform and enhance with the character and appearance of the site, building or area. The proposed application has given full

consideration to its setting in the immediate and wider sense with regard to the scale of the proposed development and its positioning within the existing semi-rural form.

4.1.12 Considering the above and the combination of the fact that the proposal has given full consideration of the topography of the site, it is considered that the proposal adheres to the requirements of Criterion a), b) and c).

4.1.13 Criterion d) then requires that the proposal does not have a significant impact on the amenity of adjacent land uses, properties, residents, or the community. The proposed parcel of greenfield land is of an appropriate size for its proposed use, particularly when its topography is taken into consideration. In addition, the accompanying layout for the proposal, highlights that sufficient separation can be achieved between the proposed development and the adjacent dwellings to the north of the site to ensure that all interests are protected. The proposal therefore satisfies the requirements of Criterion d).

4.1.14 Criterion f) requires the retention of important local features such as trees and hedgerows, together with the use of good quality hard and soft landscaping. As mentioned above, the application site will retain the existing trees and border vegetation, whilst protecting and managing the area of the marshy grassland that adjoins but is not part of the application site.

4.1.15 The above ensures therefore that the requirements of Criterion f) will be fully supported and satisfied by the application proposal, as well in turn the requirements of Policy EQ4, which is discussed further below.

4.1.16 Criterion g) requires that proposed developments achieve and create attractive, safe places and public spaces which ensure security. Although the application scheme does not propose public access, its proposed layout will ensure that the scheme secures a high level of natural surveillance from Tyddyn Teg and the adjacent dwellings, ensuring the relevant aspects of Criterion g) are met.

4.1.17 Criterion h) states than an appropriate access/exit must be provided which does not give rise to any parking or highway safety concerns on the site or within the locality. What little traffic that will be generated by the development will use the existing access to Tyddyn Teg. Therefore, sufficient levels of visibility are available for such levels and will provide safe access to and from the site for all users. This ensures that the scheme adheres to the requirements of Criterion h), and in turn those of Policy TR3.

4.1.18 In conclusion it is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with all relevant aspects of Policy GP1 (*Sustainability and High Quality Design*).

Policy EQ4 – Biodiversity

4.1.19 Policy EQ4 is a specific Policy set out in the LDP that aims to protect the “*priority species, habitats and features of recognised principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity and nature conservation*”. It should be noted that the application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment. For development proposals to be permitted they must accord, where relevant, to 2 Criteria. Taking into account the nature and form of the application proposal, it is considered that 1 is of relevance to the proposed development and an assessment of the application proposal against it now follows:

4.1.20 Criterion a) of Policy EQ4 states that the impacts of development on biodiversity must be satisfactorily mitigated, acceptably minimised or appropriately managed to include net enhancements. The proposed development will retain all of the existing trees that both border and lie within the site, in line with a Preliminary Ecological Assessment that was out carried out in November 2023.

4.1.21 The retention of existing trees and hedgerows allows for the continued use of them by bats and birds. There is also sufficient space within the site for the future enhancement of biodiversity, through measures such as native tree planting. There is also an opportunity for the removal of non-native species such as cotoneaster and

leylandii, to be replaced by native species on the land that would significantly increase the value of the hedgerow.

4.1.22 The report also identified that the biodiversity gain of the site can be enhanced, as the installation of a solar array provides opportunities to manage the grassland to increase its biodiversity value. If the site is well planned and managed, the grassland can be managed to increase floral diversity that will entail an early spring cut followed by a cut and remove of grass in late July/early August to allow for flowering and seed set. The removal of arisings will lower nutrient levels, increase diversity and reduce the biomass of cut material over time.

4.1.23 The proposal will also ensure that there is no detrimental impact to the area of marshy grassland that adjoins the site, but does not form part of the application

4.1.24 Therefore, in view of the above, it can be considered that the requirements of Policy EQ4 are satisfied.

5.0 ACCESSIBILITY

5.1 ACCESSIBILITY

- 5.1.1 The proposed development is sited over level to gently sloping ground, with no discernible differences in ground level from the proposed development site access to the public highway.

5.2 MOVEMENT TO, FROM AND WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.2.1 The application site is located at the edge of defined settlement limit of Llannon, with its associated community facilities and local services, many of which are located within walking distance of the site. The remainder then are easily accessible via one of the regular bus services running in close proximity to the site, as well then as the wider range of community facilities and local services offered by the nearby primary service centres.
- 5.2.2 The proposals will allow for construction and maintenance operatives to freely access all available parts of the development, with each row of solar array being fully incorporated into the internal mechanics of the site. The development proposed has been designed to illustrate for change, whilst ensuring that all movement outside and within the solar arrays are free from obstruction or hindrance.

6.0 CHARACTER

Landscape Design

- 6.1.1 It is considered that site is currently inconspicuous in the landscape, because of the enclosed nature of the site and its position in a setting that is generally rural. It is determined that there is sufficient screening between the site and the dwellings to its north, as a result of the hedgerow and lane that separates them. The scale parameters associated with the development also create an appropriate landscape design, as the solar panels are not overbearing, and have been designed to remain inconsequential in the wider setting of Llannon.
- 6.1.2 The general public are not afforded access into the enclosure, as there are no public rights of way crossing nor alongside the field. For all intents and purposes, it is a privately owned piece of land it is thus inaccessible and inconsequential in the semi-rural landscape.
- 6.1.3 The proposals seek to retain all perimeter vegetation and thus utilise this natural landscape envelope to provide wholesale landscaping about the site, continuing to naturally obscure views into the site from wider public vantage points on Heol Y Nant Road and the private access lane that borders the north of the site. For these reasons and for the purposes of evaluation under LDP Policy RE3, the proposals will not pose any detrimental effect upon the landscape quality of the locality at Llannon.

Scale

- 6.1.4 The proposal will deliver a solar array development that covers three enclosed sloping fields, that covers an area of approximately 1.15 hectares.

Number

- 6.1.5 The design objective is to provide a density and form that is representative of the site's position discussed above, as well as respecting its topographical form. As a

result, the proposal is for a solar array that does not impede upon the surrounding landscape and is of a density that does not create any overbearance on adjacent dwellings.

Layout of Development

- 6.1.6 The layout of the proposed development has been steered by a number of factors including the site's topography, its physical attributes, its means of access and its relationship with adjoining land uses. As a result, the proposal represents a logical layout that is sympathetic to both its immediate and wider setting, whilst also securing a high level of legibility for both the current land occupants and visitors to the site.

Appearance

- 6.1.7 As detailed previously, the proposal has drawn on the traditional existing design of solar farm in terms of its general design approach down to the detailed aspects of external finishes. This then combined with the aforementioned approach to both density and landscaping ensures that the proposal is harmonious with all adjoining land uses from an appearance perspective.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 The proposals will not allow for the community to be provided with general access to the site, but it will be retained as a secure enclosure in line with the current gated state.
- 7.2 The proposal can be overseen and overlooked from the Applicants' adjoining dwelling, which will ensure a degree of natural surveillance.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Landscaping/Townscape Setting

- 8.1 As detailed above, the sensitive design of each of the elements of the application proposal has ensured that the immediate and wider setting of the surrounding land uses are not harmed in any way.

Biodiversity and Local Environment

- 8.2 As detailed on the accompanying drawings and reports, as well as in Section 4, the development will retain all existing trees and hedgerows, whilst the Applicant has shown a willingness to manage the marshy grassland that exists on the land to the east but is not part of the application site. There will also be biodiversity enhancement as part of the development in line with the accompanying ecological appraisal report, which will improve the condition of the existing grassland. There is also future scope for the removal of non-native species and introduction of native species that will improve the condition of the hedgerow.

Energy Efficiency/Carbon Reduction

- 8.3 The development itself is for the construction of a renewable energy source, therefore the proposal will adhere to the energy efficiency and carbon reduction guidelines throughout the construction process. The finished development would then be renewable energy source that aids in meeting the energy efficiency and carbon reduction targets set out by the Welsh Government.

Sustainable Materials

- 8.4 It is understood that recycled or reclaimed products will be used in the construction of the proposal wherever possible.

Waste Management

- 8.5 It is understood that the existing dwelling of Tyddyn Teg has access to domestic recycling facilities if the development requires it.

- 8.6 It is understood that there will be no foul waste resulting from the proposed development.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal is for the construction of a 1MW solar array that seeks to maximise the 1.15-hectare site area with uniform rows of photo voltaic panels arranged in continuous arrays and thus allow for significant renewable energy generation.
- 9.2 The application proposals design has been formulated with its future contribution at its very core. Not only will the proposal ensure that the site makes a contribution towards local and national 'green energy' targets, but it will do so without cost to existing assets.
- 9.3 As has been demonstrated within this Statement, the proposal has taken on board the results and guidance of ecological assessments, avoiding areas that have the potential to facilitate important habitat types. In fact, through the application proposal, the positive management of these habitats could be facilitated and ultimately, avoid their loss
- 9.4 In conclusion therefore, the proposal represents an appropriate and sustainable renewable energy development that adheres to all relevant current planning policy.