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4.01.6	6.3	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan

OUTLINE CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN: OAKLANDS SOLAR FARM AND BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

LAND OFF FIVE MILE LANE | NEAR BONVILSTON | VALE OF GLAMORGAN



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) has been prepared by Sirius Planning on behalf of Sirius Renewable Energy Ltd, in support of a planning application for a 50MW export capacity solar farm and 50MVA Battery Storage Energy System (BESS) on three parcels of land ('Development Areas') which are located approximately 750m to the south of the villages Bonvilston and St Nicholas.
- 1.1.2 This OCEMP describes how a detailed, site-specific CEMP will be developed to avoid, minimise or mitigate any construction effects on the environment and the surrounding community. This OCEMP covers site activities which may require operational controls in relation to potential environmental impacts and details mitigation measures to minimising risks to the environment.
- 1.1.3 This Outline CEMP will be monitored regularly throughout the duration of the works to ensure it can be adapted as may be necessary, and that ensures best practice is followed.

1.2 PROPOSED WORKS DURING CONSTRUCTION PHASE

- 1.2.1 The proposed development is for the construction and operation of a ground mounted solar farm with an export capacity of 50MW and Battery Energy Storage System with a storage capacity of 50MVA, below ground cabling, substation, associated infrastructure and landscape and biodiversity enhancements. The operational life of the proposal will be 40 years.
- 1.2.2 The proposal site comprises three parcels of land measuring a total area of 127ha bisected by Five Mile Lane. The majority of the site to the west of Five Mile Lane is allocated as being a 'Search Area for Solar Energy' with the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan.
- 1.2.3 The principal construction works include:
- Creation of two temporary set down areas (either side of Five Mile Lane) and improvements to existing field gate accesses;
 - Laying of aggregate to form access tracks;
 - Piling of steel frame mounting systems or mounting frames on ballast blocks;
 - Fixing panels to steel frame mounted systems;
 - Construction of BESS compound and electrical transmission components;
 - Concrete base formation for inverters, transformers, substation and cabins;
 - Trenching and laying of electrical cables;
 - Installing fencing and ancillary equipment including CCTV cameras; and
 - Removal of set down areas and the reinstatement of the land as per its current use.

1.3 SITE OVERVIEW

- 1.3.1 The application site comprises three parcels of farmland, bisected by Five Mile Lane measuring c. 127ha. The site and surrounding areas are rural in nature, characterised by farmland, scrubland, established hedgerows and woodland blocks. The majority of the site is relatively flat with the exception of the north-western area which falls away

to the north. The proposal site can be directly accessed via existing field gates off the A4226.

- 1.3.2 The villages of Bonvilston and St Nicholas are principal developed areas. Bonvilston is approximately 750m north and St Nicholas, approximately 950m north-east of the parcel to the east of A4226.
- 1.3.3 For descriptive purposes the application site can be divided into three areas:
 - Development Area 1 (Pancross) – 66ha
 - Development Area 2 (Redlands) – 40ha
 - Development Area 3 (Oaklands) – 21ha
- 1.3.4 The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan allocates the majority of the site to the west of Five Mile Lane as ‘Search Area for Solar Energy’.
- 1.3.5 Adjacent to the southern boundary of the proposal site to the west is Nant Whitton Woodlands which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- 1.3.6 There is a 132kV overhead power line that run across the site, parallel to the northern boundary in an east to west alignment with six existing electricity pylon towers located within the application boundary. In addition, there is a 33kV overhead power line running south-east to north-west and a 11kV overhead power line running south-east to north-east within DA1. Buffers were created between the deployment area and the power lines where applicable.
- 1.3.7 A utilities search identified a high-pressure gas pipeline ran north to south within the western part of Development Area 2. Following discussions with the undertaker, Wales and West Utilities, the deployment of solar panels were therefore removed from the field in which the pipeline runs due mainly to the standoff requirements from the pipeline itself as set out by the undertaker.
- 1.3.8 The nearest residential properties include several farms located adjacent to the site boundaries to the north and to the south of the proposal site.

1.4 EMEREGENCIES

- 1.4.1 Procedures for a general response will be included in the Health and Safety Plan detailed to be prepared by the appointed contractor. This will state the chain of command and standby operatives and will be clearly advised to all site operatives. The emergency contact details for the works will be clearly displayed at the site.
- 1.4.2 A list of all nearby residential properties, downstream abstractors and other sensitive receptors that could be affected by an environmental incident will be compiled by the appointed contractor.
- 1.4.3 Lessons learnt will be reviewed and imparted to site operatives through safety and environment briefings. The CEMP is a live document and will be updated/amended where necessary.

1.5 MONITORING

- 1.5.1 Daily inspections will be carried out on site. Where necessary reporting will record environmental performance and any non-compliances with the detailed CEMP.



2. DETAILED ASPECTS OF THE OCEMP

2.1 SCOPE OF THE OCEMP

2.1.1 The OCEMP has been prepared with reference to the environmental assessments which have been undertaken in support of the planning application, these include (amongst others); Ecological Appraisal, Flood Risk and Drainage, Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, Heritage Assessment and Transport Statement.

2.1.2 **Table 2.1** below identified environmental receptors and summarises potential impacts.

Table 2.1: Environmental Receptors and Potential Impacts

Receptor	Potential Impact
Designated Sites	Physical damage, emissions related pollution (water/dust/noise)
Habitats	Physical damage, emissions related pollution (water/dust/noise)
Protected Species	Disturbance, movement restriction, habitat loss
Hydrology	Emissions related Pollution
Hydrogeology	Emissions related Pollution
Soils	Contamination, erosion and compaction

2.1.3 The OCEMP is structured to address the above potential impacts through the following issues associated with construction works:

- Safety and Security;
- Noise;
- Air Quality;
- Ecology;
- Archaeology;
- Lighting;
- Ground Conditions;
- Contaminated Land;
- Water Pollution;
- Waste;
- Local Community Responsibility; and
- Traffic and Transport.

2.2 SAFETY AND SECURITY

2.2.1 An appointed Site Manager will have the responsibility of applying all Health and Safety requirements on site. Duties may include providing a daily update to a Health and Safety Board identifying potential hazards. All visitors to the site will be required to sign in and adhere to on-site Health and Safety practices. All personnel working on site will be required to wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including a

high visibility vest or jacket, steel toe cap boots, and a hard hat as well as any other activity-specific safety wear.

- 2.2.2 A utilities search identified a high-pressure gas pipeline runs north to south within the western part of Development Area 2. Following discussions with the undertaker, Wales and West Utilities, the deployment of solar panels were removed from the field in which the pipeline runs due to necessary standoff restrictions. Given the position of the pipeline and access to the eastern Development Area from the A4226, an internal service track does cross the pipeline for vehicle crossing. Appropriate build above measures will be put in place as part of the design and build of said access track.
- 2.2.3 Security fencing will surround the site throughout the 40-year operational life of the proposal. It is proposed to erect this fence at the start of construction work to ensure that the site is also secure during this initial phase.

2.3 NOISE

- 2.3.1 It is proposed that deliveries of materials will be made to the remote set down areas during the following hours:
- Monday to Friday: 0800 to 1800;
 - Saturdays: 0800 hours to 1600; and
 - Sundays and Bank Holidays: No deliveries.
- 2.3.2 Deliveries will be carried out within the hours set out above. Under exceptional circumstances, both working and deliveries outside of these hours may be required, however, this would be agreed with the LPA in advance.
- 2.3.3 The nearest residential properties include several farms located adjacent to the site boundaries to the north (west) and to the south (central) of the proposal site.
- 2.3.4 Any potential for noise nuisance arising from construction activities will largely be due to vehicle movements, and from plant and machinery operating on site, such as the movement of soils, piling and the construction of infrastructure, solar panels, BESS compound and associated equipment. Excavators, haulage lorries, hydraulic piling, cranes, mobile plant, concrete plant and power tools would all, at some time during the construction programme, be operating.
- 2.3.5 Noise and vibration impacts associated with the construction works relating to the building of the infrastructure and utilisation of associated plant to facilitate this could adversely affect nearby sensitive receptors. However, given the temporary nature of the construction phase, noise sources would vary throughout the different stages of the construction period, and for relatively short durations.
- 2.3.6 To minimise noise impacts the following measures will be implemented:
- Vehicles will be fitted with effective silencers;
 - Engines will be turned off when not in use;
 - Vehicles will avoid reversing on site to minimise reversing and associated beepers;
 - Use of 'broadband' reversing alarms will be promoted as opposed to single tone; and

- Plant and machinery will be maintained in good working order.

2.4 AIR QUALITY

- 2.4.1 Possible impacts to local air quality only have the potential to occur during the relatively short construction phase through vehicular and plant emissions and through the potential creation of dust.
- 2.4.2 The site is not within or near an Air Quality Management Area and proposed traffic generation will not lead to significant vehicle emissions. Excessive dust is unlikely to be generated through anchoring of the frames to the ground as the majority of the frames will be secured by piles that will be pushed into the ground. Excavation is limited to scraping of top and sub soil for proposed tracks, BESS compound and foundations for the inverters, transformers and substation bases and trenching thus minimising the potential for ground disturbance and the liberation of dust emissions. Vehicle movements on site will be limited to transportation of equipment to/ and across site.
- 2.4.3 Measures outlined below are proposed to ensure that adequate mitigation procedures are in place for dust mitigation during the construction phase:
- Wheel washing equipment will be available and used on-site, as required, to prevent the transfer of dirt and debris onto the public highway;
 - Dust generating activities will be minimised during dry, windy conditions where possible;
 - Where required, loads into and out of the site will be sheeted;
 - Soil stockpiles will be covered when left for extended periods;
 - Where necessary a dust suppression / water spray system will be available; and
 - Implementation a dust monitoring scheme as required.

2.5 ECOLOGY

- 2.5.1 The Site is formed by three farms, Oaklands, Pancross and Redlands, each with differing management practices which has influenced the habitat types found. Habitats across the site include; arable, semi-improved grassland, marshy grassland, woodland, mature trees, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses.
- 2.5.2 The nearest statutory designated site is the Nant Whitton Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) which lies approximately 200m south-west from Development Area 3 (Oaklands) site boundary. In addition, several non-statutory designated sites including; North of Coed Quinnet SINC, Coed Quinnet SINC, Betty Lucas Wood SINC, Coed y cwm SINC, Land south of Ty'n-y-Coed SINC, Redland Wood SINC and Brook Wood SINC are located immediately adjacent to the site boundary, however, are all designated for the presence of woodland and semi-improved grassland habitats which will not be affected by the installation of the solar panels either directly or indirectly.
- 2.5.3 The identification of key ecological and nature conservation features and the assessment of the potential effects of the proposed development upon these features are outlined within the Ecology Survey Results Non-Technical Summary presented in **Appendix 11.1** (Doc Ref. 4.01.11a). All of the existing areas of woodland, scrub, hedgerows, trees, ponds and watercourses within the site boundary will be retained

throughout the construction, operational and decommissioning stages of the scheme.

- 2.5.4 The Principal Contractor will comply with relevant legislation for protected species and habitats and should retain habitats intact and undisturbed, and if possible, enhance natural habitats. If it is impossible to maintain habitats in their existing condition, the habitat and species it contains should be relocated / transplanted or restocked to an equivalent or richer ecological status.
- 2.5.5 A detailed overview of the ecological baseline conditions is outlined within **Appendix 11.1** (Doc Ref. 4.01.11a). Enhancement and mitigation measures have been designed into the proposed development, in order to avoid and minimise any potential impacts during the construction and operation of the solar farm and BESS. These include setbacks from boundary features, minimisation of vehicle movements and retention of existing hedgerows / trees.
- 2.5.6 The contractor will implement the following measures, to avoid or minimise potential ecological impacts during construction:
- Good site management will be implemented to avoid generation of excessive litter, dust, noise and vibration
 - Existing farm access tracks will be used wherever possible
 - Establish site boundary by erecting fencing to prevent access to areas outside working areas, particularly in areas adjacent to features of ecological interest / value.
 - Workforce will be restricted to working areas through the erection of fencing to prevent additional damage.
 - Cover trenches over night to prevent wildlife (for example, badgers) from falling in and becoming trapped resulting in injury or death.
 - Restricted night-time working and minimal lighting directed away from retained habitats.
 - Temporary lighting would only be required at the set-down areas during construction.

2.6 ARCHAEOLOGY

- 2.6.1 The Heritage Desk Based Assessment (DBA) (**Appendix 9.1**, Doc Ref. 4.01.9a) identified fourteen specific recorded sites of archaeological interest within the development boundary, alongside two others that were identified as part of the DBA. In addition, the DBA concluded a 'Medium' potential for further unrecorded activity spanning from the prehistoric to the post-medieval period. Given this, geophysical survey work was undertaken across the site, the results of which are presented in **Appendix 9.2** (Doc Ref. 4.01.9b).
- 2.6.2 The geophysical survey identified three main areas of archaeological potential. The first within the central parts of Development Area 1 (Pancross) included a concentration of potential archaeological features centred on a square, likely a farmstead enclosure of likely Iron Age or Roman date. The second within the western part of Development Area 2 (Redlands) is likely to be a farmstead feature however ploughing in this area may have disturbed earlier archaeology. The third area within

the central area of Development Area 3 (Oaklands) likely to be a possible enclosure area demarked by a curvilinear feature.

- 2.6.3 Where there is the potential presence of archaeological findings on some parts of the site, consideration will be given for the PV panels to be mounted on ballast blocks to ensure stability of the panels and frames without penetrating the ground and disturbing potential archaeology.

2.7 LIGHTING

- 2.7.1 During the construction phase it will be necessary to utilise security lighting at the temporary set down areas during hours of darkness. However, efforts will be made to ensure that the lighting will be directed away from identified site habitats and inward facing. Furthermore, where lighting is required, cowling will be used to ensure light spill is limited to the set down areas.

- 2.7.2 No lighting is required during the operational phase.

2.8 GROUND CONDITIONS

- 2.8.1 Potential impacts to the soil resource during the construction phase include movement of vehicles and plant and incorrect soil management, which can cause damage to soil structure through compaction and erosion. This risk increases through soil wetness. The following measures should be followed to minimise adverse impacts on soil:

- No vehicle / plant movements over reinstated soil;
- Where practicable, soil handling when soil moisture content is above the plastic limit will be avoided;
- Avoid handling of soils during periods of prolonged, heavy rainfall;
- No mixing of topsoil with subsoil;
- Stabilise newly created surfaces and/or re-vegetate as soon as possible;
- Soil only to be stored in designated soil storage areas; and
- Use machines with tracks and/or low-pressure tyres.

2.9 CONTAMINATED LAND

- 2.9.1 The application site comprises farmland and grazing fields. As part of the desk study review, there is no known previous use to suggest brownfield land or contamination will exist. It is therefore reasonable to assume that none of the land to which the proposal relates has an industrial legacy or is contaminated.

2.10 WATER POLLUTION

- 2.10.1 Construction activities may result in both direct and indirect impacts on the hydrology (water quality, flooding, drainage) and the hydrogeology of the site. Potential receptors may include watercourses, surface water bodies, groundwater, floodplains and flood sensitive areas.

- 2.10.2 NRW's Development Advice Maps (DAMs) confirms that the majority of the site is located within Zone A, which is considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial or tidal / coastal flooding. However, very small proportions of the site to the west and east are located within Zone B, areas known to have flooded in the past evidenced by sedimentary deposits. NRW's Flood Map for Planning identifies the site as being within

Flood Zone 1 for rivers and sea flooding. The majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 for surface water and / or small watercourses however, a small portion of the site is located within Flood Zone 3 associated with small watercourses. It should be noted that the proposed built development will be located within Flood Zone 1.

2.10.3 Potential impacts to the water environment may include:

- Increased surface water runoff;
- Increased sediment from runoff of rainfall onto exposed ground; and
- Chemical and fuel spillages from operational areas.

2.10.4 The Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA) (**Appendix 10.1**, Doc Ref. 4.01.10) confirms that the proposed development is categorised by TAN 15 as “utilities infrastructure” and is in a “less vulnerable development” category. The DAM classification therefore indicates that the site is suitable for the proposed use. Furthermore, the proposed development will be in accordance with the requirements of the National Standards for Sustainable Development Systems which will be demonstrated through the application for Sustainable Drainage Approval to the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB), prior to the commencement of works.

2.10.5 The following measures should be followed to minimise adverse impacts on the water environment:

- In the event of a liquid spill work shall cease immediately in the vicinity, then locate the source of the pollution and stop / contain any further flow if possible. If spillage is flammable, extinguish all ignition sources. Immediately deploy the spill kit and clean up the spill. Used spill kit materials should be disposed of in an appropriate manner.
- The surface water runoff from the hardstanding of the temporary set down areas will be directed to a swale on the hardstanding’s lowest boundary. This drainage feature will be removed at the end of the construction stage and the area reinstated.
- Early preparation, seeding and protection to encourage vegetation to established on all bare areas as soon as possible after construction.
- Monitoring the weather and being alert to the implications of wet weather within the construction programme.
- Sewage and foul water drainage will be collected in appropriate collection tanks (toilet blocks) at welfare areas. Regular collection and disposal of sewage and foul water will be conducted by a licenced company.
- Any wheel wash facilities will be securely constructed with no overflow and the effluent will be recirculated and contained for proper treatment and disposal.
- Use of cut-off ditches to prevent entry of surface water and well point dewatering or cut-off walls for groundwater. The corner of the excavation can be used as a pump sump. Do not allow personnel or plant to disturb water in excavations.

2.11 WASTE

2.11.1 The reduction of waste and the recycling of waste materials is a key environmental consideration during the construction phase. Materials such as packaging, plastic, pallets, metal, residual waste will be segregated and collected from site by a permitted waste management operator. As part of the detailed CEMP, a Site Waste Management Plan will be prepared and implemented by the appointed contractor.

2.11.2 The waste management hierarchy prescribes the most sustainable approach to resource management:

- Prevention and Minimisation – Reduce the amount of waste generated at each stage of the project
- Reuse of Waste – Maximising reuse of waste generated on site. This will reduce the quantities of waste transported from site
- Recycling of Waste – Segregating materials for collection and off-site management.

2.11.3 The following measures will be implemented to minimise waste generation during the construction phase:

- Ordering of materials will be on an ‘as needed’ basis to prevent over-supply. Requirement for take back for surplus stock with suppliers;
- Use of materials pre-cut to length to avoid surplus waste generated on site;
- Use of suppliers that use the least amount of packaging on purchase products;
- Correct storage and handling of goods to avoid damage resulting in unnecessary disposal and resupply;
- Ensuring correct sequencing of operations; and
- Use of reclaimed / recycling materials in the construction works wherever possible.

2.12 LOCAL COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

2.12.1 The Site Manager will manage and co-ordinate on-site environmental activities and act as a point of contact for local residents. Ongoing effective liaison between the Site Manager and local residents will seek to ensure that any concerns are resolved quickly and efficiently.

2.12.2 The Site Manager will be responsible for briefing the Construction Environmental Management Plan to construction staff; fulfilling environmental obligations on site; attending to any on-site environmental incidents or concerns; reporting and monitoring any environmental incidents; and ensuring waste management procedures are followed.

2.13 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

2.13.1 A Transport Statement (TS) accompanies the planning application submission. The TS sets out the predicted transport impact of the proposed development, including the likely trip generating potential of the site, the likely vehicles needing access to the site, and how this will be achieved. A Construction Traffic Method Statement (CTMS) is appended to the TS.

- 2.13.2 Access to the Development Areas is from the A4226 Five Mile Lane which is an adopted highway which runs north to south, dividing the site approximately in half. Traffic will approach the site from either the M4 Motorway at Junction 33 and turn onto the A4232 which runs south-east to the western extent of Cardiff. Vehicles will then join the A48 at a roundabout junction. The A48 runs west in the direction of Bonvilston, however, prior to reaching the village, the A4226 can be joined at a signalised junction. Or approach the site from the west via the A48 turning onto the A4226. A vehicle routing plan is provided within the Construction Traffic Method Statement (CTMS) (**Appendix 12.2**, Doc Ref. 4.01.12b).
- 2.13.3 The existing field accesses that will be used to access the Development Areas are to be improved as detailed on **Drawing No. 300372-003** within the CTMS (**Appendix 12.2**, Doc Ref. 4.01.12b) to facilitate the required vehicles. Appropriate signage will be provided to warn road users, cyclists and pedestrians of the presence of construction vehicles.
- 2.13.4 During the construction phase, to minimise the number of vehicle movements crossing the A4226 between plots, temporary set down areas will be provided both sides of the A4226.
- 2.13.5 A series of vehicle swept-path analyses are shown within the CTMS (**Appendix 12.2**, Doc Ref. 4.01.12b) which demonstrate that a 16.5m articulated vehicle and 10m rigid vehicle are able to access the setting down areas, manoeuvre and leave the site in a forward gear, whilst not needing to cross into an opposing traffic lane. Smaller vehicles will be used to move materials within the Development Areas. In addition, a temporary access is to be provided to prevent the need for vehicles to utilise the A4226 when moving between the set down area in development area 1 and 3.
- 2.13.6 The construction phase of the solar farm would result in the temporary generation of construction and staff related traffic over a 6-month construction period. During this period, there will be approximately 740 HGV deliveries, or 1,480 two-way movements (in and out).
- 2.13.7 The first month will see the highest deliveries to site at 225 which is the equivalent of a maximum 1 movement every hour.
- 2.13.8 During the construction period up, to 80 staff will be on-site (approximately 26 per Development Area) depending on the phase of the development. Staff will arrive and depart the Development Areas in transit vans with a 'crew cab', with an expected minimum capacity of 6 persons. Given this, there would be approximately 14 vehicles arriving to the Development Areas in a morning and 14 departing in an evening.
- 2.13.9 All vehicle parking will be provided within the two temporary set down areas within the development site. There will therefore be no parking on the local highway network.
- 2.13.10 An appropriate highway safety signage strategy will be prepared as part of the detailed CTMS, to be dealt with by a suitably worded planning condition, which will mitigate the risks associated with the HGV movements on the surrounding highway network.
- 2.13.11 Given the trip generation outlined above and the temporary nature of the construction phase, it is expected that the construction of the proposed development will have minimal impact on the local highway network and is therefore deliverable.



3. DECOMMISSIONING

3.1 APPROACH TO DECOMMISSIONING

- 3.1.1 At the end of the operational phase of the development, the site shall be reinstated to its former use within a year of the last electrical import/export.
- 3.1.2 The potential impacts during the decommissioning phase are expected to be similar to those identified for the construction phase. It is therefore recommended that the pre-construction measures set out in this OCEMP should also be applied during the decommissioning stage of the development.
- 3.1.3 During the decommissioning phase, the majority of the infrastructure will be removed from site and recycled. Due to the long-life span of the project, no details of this can be provided at present, however it is recommended that a condition outlining the requirement for a Decommissioning Method Statement is attached to any planning decision.



4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 CONCLUSION

- 4.1.1 The purpose of this Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan is to detail appropriate pollution protection techniques that will be adopted by the appointed contractor for the construction of the Oaklands solar farm and Battery Energy Storage System, near Bonvilston, The Vale of Glamorgan.
- 4.1.2 The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the scope of measures that could be put in place during the construction / decommissioning phases to adequately protect the identified environmental resources and sensitive receptors, (including human receptors). This OCEMP should be read in conjunction with the Construction Traffic Method Statement (CTMS).
- 4.1.3 Following a decision by Welsh Government, this Outline CEMP will be updated in accordance with approved documentation by the appointed contractor prior to any commencement works on-site. The detailed CEMP will be submitted to The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council for approval prior to the start of construction.

