# Planning Statement
## (Incorporating DAS)

Erection of ground mounted solar panels and associated works at Ty Uchaf Farm, Llannor, LL53 6YB

Ty Uchaf
Llannor
LL53 6YB

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# Mr Parry

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Planning Statement

November 2023

Site address

Ty Uchaf
Llannor
LL53 6YB

Planning Authority

Gwynedd Council

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Planning Statement is prepared and submitted in connection with the full application for the erection of ground mounted solar panels and associated works at Ty Uchaf, Llannor, LL53 6YB.

1.2. The site is currently vacant and comprises a large area of poor agricultural land of approx. 5 hectares. The site sits in the context of the farm holdings and agricultural fields used for grazing and cultivation purposes.

1.3. The proposal seeks to generate sustainable energy to the national grid and provide diversified additional income for the farm enterprise.

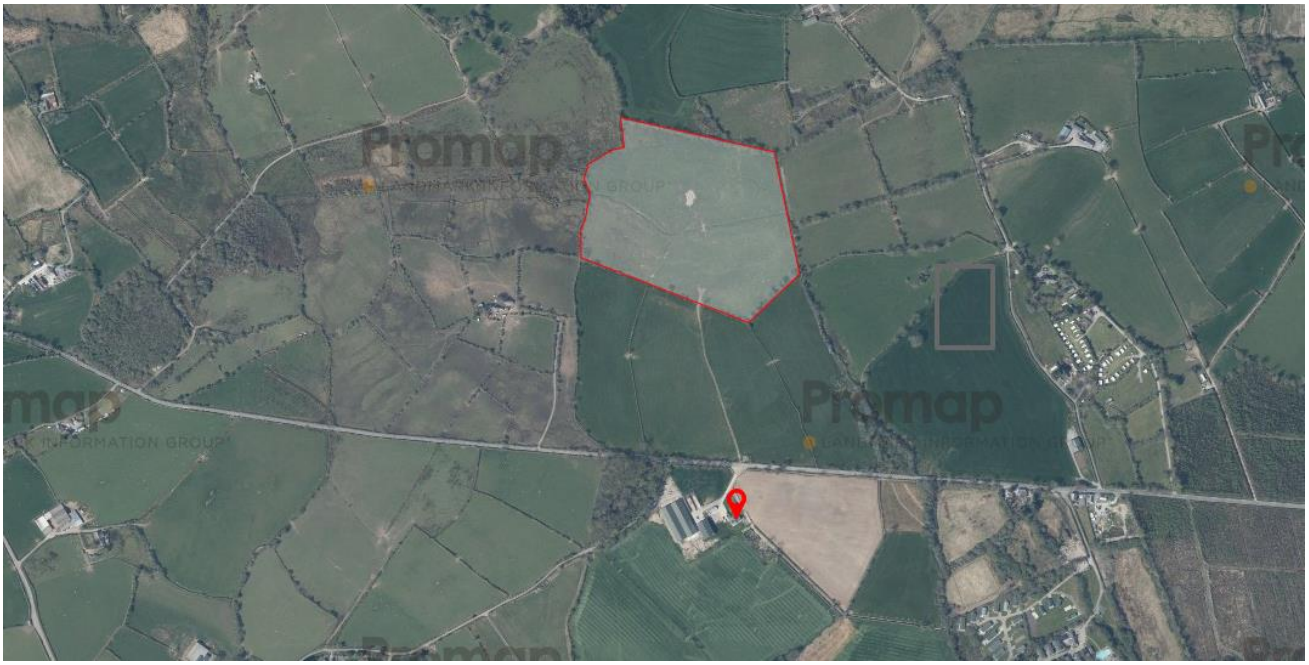
1.4. Mr Parry wishes to develop a solar farm which also includes hardcore track and improvements to the site entrance. It aims to achieve a high standard of design, with careful consideration given to detailing and materiality in keeping with the character of the local area, whilst making every effort to ensure high standards of energy efficiency and low carbon consumption.

# 2. SITE AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS

## Site Location and Context

2.1 The site is located at Ty Uchaf, Llannor, LL53 6YB.

2.2 Aerial View:



2.3 The site is approximately 5 hectares in area. It is currently used as an agricultural field for grazing, with estimated low ecological value and the site boundary is lined with mature trees and hedgerows.

2.4 The proposed development is surrounded by small farm holdings and agricultural fields used either grazing or cultivation purposes. Low density forest, coniferous, broad-leaved and felled woodland, young trees and shrub can be found within 5km radius of the site.

2.5 The site will be accessed from the B4354 road to the south, via an existing restricted access road leading directly to the southern boundary of the site.

2.6 The closet settlements to the site boundary are Pentreuchaf 1.3km south west, Llanor 2.9km east, Nefyn 5.8km west and Trefor 6.7km north.

2.7 The proposal seeks to generate sustainable energy to the national grid and provide a diverse additional inform for the farm enterprise.

2.8 The solar panels are proposed to be located North of the family farm and with the combination of the low level of the development and proposal will have minimal impact on the landscape.

2.9 The site is currently accessed on a Gwynedd Council Highways Road south of the proposal and associated works. The surroundings of the proposed site is agricultural land.

2.10 The site is roughly rectangular but splays out towards the north west, following the natural boundary provided by the hedgerow.

## 3. AMOUNT

3.1 The proposed development is for full planning permission for Erection of ground mounted solar panels and associated works.

3.2 The solar panels will be on a tracking system, with 8862 panels producing 4.83MWP. They will be installed on a 15 degree angle and will not be mounted any higher than 2.31m off the ground.

3.3 The battery storage will be 4.9MWh within two 40ft and two 20ft containers.

3.4 A 20ft container will also be sited on site for the inverters and switchgear

3.5 A site office will also be included which will be a 20ft container.

3.6 Two parking spaces will also be provided on the proposed site.

3.7 A 5m X 5m fenced compound will be located near the centre of the proposal to home the substation/transformer.

3.8 The proposal includes a new improved access to the proposed development The proposal also looks to use existing field access to the solar panels. The development therefore will ensure that a safe means of highway access will be developed, which will benefit the prospective residents.

3.9 The site will extend to approximately 5ha.

# 4. NEED FOR PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

*Overall Need*

4.1 It is the Welsh Government's aim to enhance the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the people and communities of Wales and its ambition is to "create a sustainable, low carbon economy for Wales". In doing so, the Government wants to ensure that full advantage is taken of the transition to a low carbon economy to secure a wealthier, more resilient and sustainable future for Wales.

4.2 Paragraph 5.1.2 The UK Government is committed to delivering its share of the EU target for 15% of energy from renewable sources by 2020 as implemented by the Renewable Energy Directive (2009). Welsh Government has an ambition to make low carbon energy a reality in Wales. Welsh Government's energy policy and aspirations are set out in "A Low Carbon Revolution" which identifies Wales' sustainable renewable energy potential to 2020/2025. The Welsh Government is committed to pursuing these aspirations and promoting all forms of renewable energy with onshore wind currently the most viable technology. Welsh Government policy seeks to achieve these targets through the following objectives:

- Maximining energy savings and energy efficiency in order to make producing the energy we need from low carbon sources more feasible and less costly;

- Energy needs must be met from low carbon sources and move to a resilient low carbon energy production via indigenous sources and thus secure renewable energy, on both a centralized and localized basis; and

- By ensuring that this transition to low carbon maximizes the economic renewal opportunities for practical jobs and skills. Annually, the Welsh Government aims to double renewable electricity production by 2025 in comparison to 2010. By 2050, at the latest, to be in a position where all local energy needs can be met by low carbon electricity production.

*Site Selection*

4.4 The Applicant's site requirements for a 4.83MWP solar array, based on technical and operational requirements have informed the site selection process. The Application Site meets these requirements in the following respects:

- Sunlight intensity levels – the site is well located geographically for solar gain, is flat and free of landscape features that could cause overshadowing;
- Grid connection - proximity of a site to a sub-station that has capacity is essential.
- Good road access for construction/routine maintenance and eventual decommissioning. The site benefits from excellent access from an existing access off a council maintained road.
- No environmental constraints – the application site is not subject to any landscape, ecological, archaeological or conservation designations
- The chosen site is located in a poor area of the field and as such is suitable for such a development.

*Benefits*

4.5 The indirect benefits of the scheme include the following:

<u>Environmental Benefits</u>

- Reducing carbon emissions – in the long term, reduced carbon emissions are expected to contribute to a deceleration in the rate of global climate change;
- Air quality improvements; renewable energy proposals have indirect benefits in this regard through the contribution to reduced fossil fuel emissions;

<u>Economic Benefits</u>

- Reduce reliance on expensive predominantly fossil fuel derived imported electricity.
- Job creation: direct (e.g. construction of, management and operational maintenance of solar energy generating installations) and indirect (e.g. making components for renewable installations) and induced economic multiplier effects (e.g. re-circulating income in local area);
- Increased security and reliability of supply: through more distributed generation closer to the point of use, less power wastage in transmission over long distances, more diverse sources and technology types, domestically available fuels; and
- Economic gains or penalties may soon be linked to the farms carbon balance

## 5. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 **Landscape setting** – LVIA will be conducted prior to formal submission of the application.

5.2 Surface water drainage has been considered and assessed in a separate document, in which a system will be put in place, to ensure no surface water issues arise from the development.

## 6. MOVEMENT & ACCESS

6.1 The application submitted includes the existing access onto the road, which will serve the erection of the ground mounted solar panels and associated works.

6.2 The proposed development will generate a negligible amount of traffic throughout the year, which is expected to be very considerably less than in previous years when the farm was a considerably larger, busier operation. The proposal is to include all facilities on site, therefore there is less demand on the use of transport to and from site.

6.3 The road pattern internally to the site is single track lane and will be provided with a suitable turning head to allow all vehicles using the site to enter and leave in a forward gear. Suitable pedestrian facilities will be provided throughout the development.

6.4 The provisions included within the development will be level access around the exterior of the proposed works, level threshold access to each entrance door at ground floor level and sockets and light switches at appropriate heights.

## 7. CHARACTER

7.1 The solar panels will comprise of a multiple linear structure. It thought that the proposed development will seek to integrate well within the settlement in its appearance, and complement the existing designs and materials currently used within the settlement. (See elevations drawings for details)

7.2 An understanding of the distinctive character of the site setting, both in built form and broader landscape has played a key role in the development of proposals, which look to achieve a high standard of design and enduring quality, whilst seeking to avoid the pitfalls of creating a poor-quality anonymous place or pastiche.

**Form and Layout**

7.3 The layout has been carefully considered to balance a confident urban density whilst remaining rural in scale and character.

7.4 There are very few other residential properties within close proximity of the site, with the closet properties being approximately 200m and 300m away. As such it is not considered that the scheme would result in any significant harm to the residential properties as the site is not readily visible from the properties.

7.5 The site is already well screened with mature hedgerows and vegetation surrounding the field. This allows an opportunity to provide additional areas of landscaping, to negate against any biodiversity loss as seen on the Landscaping map.

## 8. COMMUNITY SAFETY

8.1 In proposing a Solar farm development, consideration must be given to ensuring an attractive but safe place is created. Site security is a key element in any development, and one element of ensuring this is developing a site that has natural surveillance.

## 9. NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

9.1 Strategic policy PS7 Renewable Energy Technology and policy ADN 2 and AMG2 of the Joint Local Development Plan:

9.2 All impacts on landscape character, heritage assets and natural resources have been adequately mitigated, ensuring that the special qualities of all locally, nationally and internationally important landscape, biodiversity and heritage designations, including, where appropriate, their settings are conserved or enhanced.

9.3 The proposal will not result in significant harm to the safety or amenity of sensitive receptors including effect from glint and glare and will not have an unacceptable impact on roads, rail or aviation safety.

9.4 The proposal will not result in significant harm to the residential visual amenities of nearby residents.

9.5 The proposal will not have unacceptable cumulative impacts in relation to existing solar PV farms and those which have permission and other prominent landscape features.

9.6 The panels and associated infrastructure will, at the end of the operational life of the facility, be removed in accordance with a restoration and aftercare scheme submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

9.7 That a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is provided to demonstrate that any potential negative effects arising during construction and decommissioning phases are avoided.

9.8 **Economic context** – The proposed scheme will inevitably boost the local economy, in providing local business to nearby businesses, providing work during construction to local businesses and labourers as well as the continued need for veterinary nurses.

9.9 **Social context** – During groundworks and installation, this will create jobs for the local area. The renewal energy created on site will assist in powering local homes, indirectly.

9.10 **Physical context –** The physical context of the site as existing is an agricultural field. The development is low lying to avoid any disruption to the landscape. The site will be surrounded by new trees and hedgerows to ensure the proposed works will integrate well within the immediate and surrounding landscape.

## 10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The proposed development is for the erection of ground mounted solar panels and associated works.

10.2 The solar panels will easily be removed from site when their use has come to an end. The extent of land that would need to be restored would be minimal and the site could easily be reverted to it's existing agricultural use.

10.3 The proposal is considered environmentally friendly.

10.4 In light of all the information provided to you, and the relevant planning policy context that is currently in place, we consider that the proposed scheme should be viewed positively and recommended for approval.