

Powys County Council
The Gwalia
Ithon Road
Llandrindod Wells
LD1 6AA

Date: 23/06/2022
Our Ref: PLA0065837
Your Ref: DNS/3244499

Dear Sir/Madam,

Grid Ref: SO026823 304417 280521
Site: Garn Fach, Ir de or Drenewydd, Powys
Development: DNS - Wind Farm

We refer to your planning consultation relating to the above site, and we can provide the following comments in respect to the proposed development.

We refer to your consultation documents received in accordance with Article 9(3) of the Development of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016,. We note that the consultation relates to Garn Fach Wind Farm at Garn Fach, Ir de or Drenewydd, Powys.

We were previously consulted on the above development proposal in July 2021, as per our previous response we request that the below is clarified. Upon receiving this information, we can provide further comment.

SEWERAGE

It appears the application does not propose to connect to the public sewerage system, and therefore w Cymru Welsh Water has no objections in principle. However, should circumstances change and a connection to the public sewerage system/public sewage treatment works is preferred we must be re-consulted on this application.

As of 7th January 2019, this proposed development is subject to Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The development therefore requires approval of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) features, in accordance with the 'Statutory standards for sustainable drainage systems – designing, constructing, operating and maintaining surface water drainage systems'. It is therefore recommended that the developer engage in consultation with Powys County Council, as the determining SuDS Approval Body (SAB), in relation to their proposals for SuDS features. Please note, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water is a statutory consultee to the SAB application process and will provide comments to any SuDS proposals by response to SAB consultation.

The applicant is also advised that some public sewers and lateral drains may not be recorded on our maps of public sewers because they were originally privately owned and were transferred into public ownership by nature of the Water Industry (Schemes for Adoption of Private Sewers) Regulations 2011. The presence of such assets may affect the proposal. In order to assist us in dealing with the proposal the applicant may contact Dwr Cymru Welsh Water on 0800 085 3968 to establish the location and status of the apparatus. Under the Water Industry Act 1991 Dwr Cymru Welsh Water has rights of access to its apparatus at all times.

Water Catchment

The proposed falls within a Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) drinking water catchment's 'Wye at Builth', the abstraction point of which is designated as a Drinking Water Protected Area under Article 7 of the Water Framework Directive. This Article requires the UK to take action to protect drinking water sources. Section 7.3 states that the aim is 'to avoid deterioration in water quality where this may lead to additional purification treatment being required'.

The development falls approximately 47km upstream of Welsh Water's abstraction at Builth Wells, a review of the development area suggests that there is potential hydrological connectivity between the site and the main River Wye.

In order to determine the suitability of this proposal we ask the applicant provides the following:

1. **A risk assessment method statement detailing a pollution prevention and incident contingency plan to be implemented in perpetuity.** Addressed in Appendix 5-1, 5.6.43 - 5.6.51
2. **A sampling/monitoring to be undertaking downstream as well as within water courses within site boundaries? Due to topography of site, sediment disturbance and movement is at a higher risk.** Addressed in Section 10.3
3. **Confirmation of a peat survey to be undertaken.** Refer to ES, chapter 10, 10.3.4
4. **A sediment management plan be adapted in emergency situations to cope with high rainfall and runoff.** Addressed in Appendix 5-1, 5.6.43 - 5.6.51
5. **A flood zone impact assessment during and after construction due to the increase of impermeable areas within the catchment.** Refer to ES, Appendix 10-4



Our response is based on the information provided by your application. Should the proposal alter during the course of the application process we kindly request that we are re-consulted and reserve the right to make new representation.

If you have any queries please contact the undersigned on [REDACTED] or via email at developer.services@dwrcymru.com

Please quote our reference number in all communications and correspondence.

Yours faithfully,

Phillip Little
Development Planning Officer
Developer Services



Welsh Water is owned by Glas Cymru – a 'not-for-profit' company.
Mae Dŵr Cymru yn eiddo i Glas Cymru – cwmni 'nid-er-elw'.

We welcome correspondence in
Welsh and English

Dŵr Cymru Cyf, a limited company registered in
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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y
Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg

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Nghymru rhif 2366777. Swyddfa gofrestredig: Heol Pentwyn
Nelson, Treharris, Morgannwg Ganol CF46 6LY.



28th June 2022

Planning and Environment Decisions Wales
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

pedw.infrastructure@gov.wales

Dear Sir or Madam

Application ref: DNS/3244499 - Garn Fach Wind Farm: Installation of a wind farm (17 turbines) with a generating capacity of up to 110MW with an energy storage facility, together with associated equipment, infrastructure and ancillary works on land at Garn Farn, South of Newtown Powys.

The Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust objects to the above application.

The Wildlife Trusts believe that climate change is almost certainly the most significant challenge facing nature conservation today, with the potential to have significant impacts on the future of UK and global biodiversity. We consider that wind power can help to meet the energy requirements of the UK in a sustainable manner, but these benefits cannot mitigate or compensate for any impacts on wildlife or on wildlife sites that are associated with wind farm developments.

In this case, it is clear that a significant area of important habitats and a number of priority [REDACTED] impacted by the development, should permission be granted. Not [REDACTED] res a new connection to the National Grid and therefore will have [REDACTED] represented in the supplied documentation. Determination cannot [REDACTED] of the entire combined and cumulative impacts.

Considering just the information provided in support of the wind farm footprint, we believe there is sufficient evidence that, if it was to go ahead, it would breach national and local planning policy [REDACTED] Planning Policy Wales 11', Powys Local Development Plan and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.



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Habitats

The Non-Technical Summary identifies that a total of 17.2 hectares of habitats will be lost for the purposes of the development, plus a further 3.81 hectares affected by “temporary land-take” by the construction. This includes the Section 7 priority habitats ‘Purple Moorgrass & Rush Pastures’ (marshy grassland) and ‘Blanket Bog’, of which there is approximately 132 and 22 hectares on the site, respectively.

Please refer to OHMP, OPMP & SEI Chapter 10

Not only are these habitats important for biodiversity, they provide an important contribution to climate change mitigation and so should be protected from adverse impacts.

Species: bats

The Non-Technical Summary states: “*The Site was categorised as high risk for Nathusius’ pipistrelle, Leisler’s and Serotine bat species, owing to the variety of terrain, habitats and potential roosting features within and surrounding the Site and their potential to fly within blade sweep areas; a further six species were low risk, inclusive of Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, , Noctule, , Myotis and Brown long-eared.*”

And: “*With regard to operational impacts, it is known through several studies that operational wind turbines can have negative impacts on bat populations through blade collision, where foraging or commuting bats collide with wind turbine blades, and to a lesser degree barotrauma due to the sensitivity of bats to change in air pressure around the wind turbine blades.*”

And: “*Post construction monitoring of the operational development at turbine locations through the April to October season will determine whether any significant losses are arising and what measures can be implemented to reduce them.*”

Given that the site is high risk for certain bat species (all of which are protected) which are known to collide with wind turbines, it would seem an inappropriate place for this kind of development. And, whilst we support the idea of post-construction monitoring, this should not be [redacted] on protected species; it is far easier to prevent negative [redacted] try to mitigate them after they have occurred.

Please refer to ES& SEI Chapter 8 on curtailment/embedded mitigation

[redacted] Water voles (*Arvicola amphibius*) should not be considered absent on the basis of one survey; signs of occupation can be hard to detect if the animals are living at low density. It is worth noting that all recent positive Water Vole sites in Montgomeryshire have been in upland sites such as [redacted] other surveys should be carried out to provide a more accurate assessment of the risk to this priority species. Please refer to ES appendix 8.7 - Otter & Water Vole

There was no assessment made for Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*), despite recent records confirming their presence nearby. As a very mobile Section 7 species, determination should not be made without further information on this species. Please refer to 8.7.61 where mitigation measures are put forward for all mammal species during construction. Pre construction surveys will be undertaken as a planning condition.



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Species: birds

A number of priority bird species have been found on the site and will be negatively impacted by the development to varying degrees. Of particular concern, is the potential harm to Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), one of the highest bird conservation priorities in Wales due to its rapid and ongoing decline, meaning it is now threatened with extinction. Any development which risks destruction of Curlew habitat and/or displacement of the birds themselves should not be given consent.

Please refer to SEI Chapter 9, 9.2.61 - 9.2.67

A number of bird species have been highlighted as at significant risk of collisions with the turbines in the operational phase, particularly Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*) and Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). It seems unlikely that any mitigation measures could significantly decrease this impact to make it acceptable.

Please refer to SEI Chapter 9

Cumulative impacts

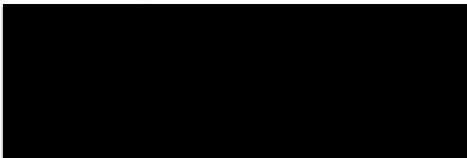
The Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust has long been concerned about the cumulative effect of large-scale wind farm development. There are many large-scale wind farms currently operational, proposed or in the pipeline for Montgomeryshire alone. It is also clear that significant new infrastructure is needed to serve any new developments. It is therefore vital that each application is not viewed in isolation; true assessment can only be made if the associated infrastructure, such as major alterations to the rural road network, electrical substation and extensive new electrical grid connections are also taken into consideration.


Please refer to HRA & SEI Chapter 9

In conclusion, the above application would be contrary to national and local planning policy and environmental legislation and should, in our opinion, be refused.

If there is any other information the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust can help with, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Tammy Stretton
Conservation Officer
Email 



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