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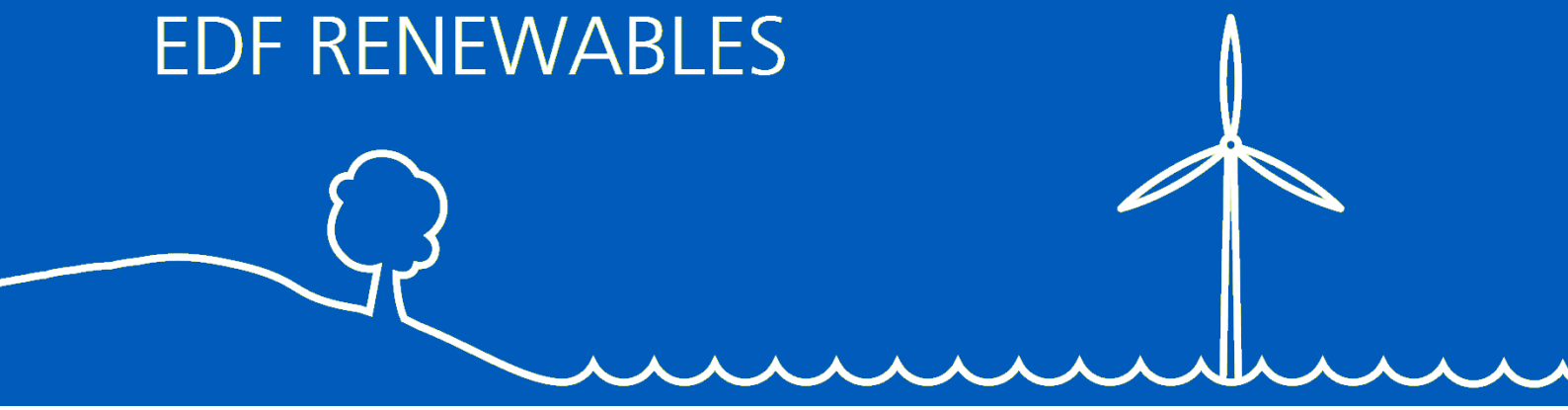

Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

Feedback Summary on Second Round of Public Information Days & Informal Consultation

3rd to 31st May 2023

EDF renewables
Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

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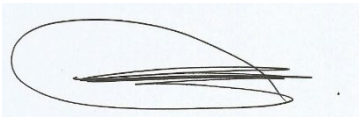
Sarah Jones (Cadno Comms Ltd) Preparation		21st July 2023
Angharad Davies (Cadno Comms Ltd) Check		21st July 2023
Simon Morgan (EDF Renewables UK) Approval		21st July 2023

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Executive summary

1. Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park is an EDF Renewables UK proposal for up to seven wind turbines, a solar array, and battery storage on land near to Crynant and Seven Sisters, in Neath Port Talbot.

2. EDF Renewables UK publicly announced the project in July 2022 and held an initial round of early consultation and public information days between 30th September and 17th October 2022. During that consultation, 133 people completed a feedback form, with 43.6% of people stating they support the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park proposal, 34.6% stated they were not supportive, and 21.8% were unsure. Key themes raised were visual impact and proximity to homes, environmental benefits of renewable energy, potential impact on local wildlife and biodiversity, archaeology and existing mine works. EDF Renewables UK committed to running a second informal consultation in spring 2023, prior to the statutory Pre-application Consultation (PAC), expected to take place in autumn 2023.

3. The second informal consultation was held from 3rd May to 31st May 2023. The outcomes of this consultation are the subject of this report. The primary purposes of this second round of consultation were to spread awareness of the project by providing information more widely, to be available to answer questions and queries, and to listen and consider feedback. This consultation period ran for four weeks compared to three weeks for the first round of consultation following a request from Seven Sisters Community Council that the consultation be lengthened.

4. To spread awareness of the consultation, information packs were sent to the consultation zone which comprised 1,954 households. Two drop-in Public Information Days (PIDs) were held from 14.00 – 19.00 on Friday 12th May 2023 at Seven Sisters Community Hall and 10.00 – 14.00 on Saturday 13th May 2023 at Crynant Community Centre. The PIDs were attended by 180 people.

5. Updated information was provided to the community about the draft layout and survey work undertaken. By contrast to the initial round of consultation, more information was sent to residents in the form of an information pack, and this included a Freepost feedback card making it easier for local residents to provide feedback.

6. Across all feedback channels, which included the Freepost feedback card sent to all households, the hard copy form which attendees to the PIDs could complete, and the online form, a total of 471 feedback forms were received.

7. EDF Renewables UK notes that a far greater number of responses were received in the second consultation compared to the first consultation (133 forms). It is further noted that the levels of support versus opposition, versus those who are unsure about the proposal, has changed. At this consultation, in response to the question 'Do you support the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park Proposal?' 25.3% of respondents stated they were supportive, compared with 43.6% of respondents in the first round. This time, 69.2% stated they were not supportive compared to 34.6% who stated that view at the last round of consultation. Finally, the percentage of people saying that they are unsure has decreased from one in five (21.8%) in round one compared to just 5.5% saying that they were unsure, this time.

ARE YOU SUPPORTIVE OF THE HIRFYNYDD RENEWABLE ENERGY PARK PROPOSAL?			
	Round 1: Sept/Oct 2022	Round 2: May 2023	Change in proportion of responses from round 1 to round 2
Yes	43.6% (58)	25.3% (119)	-18.3%
No	34.6% (46)	69.2% (326)	+34.6%
Unsure/did not answer	21.8% (29)	5.5% (26)	-16.3%
Total	133	471	+254% (338)

Table 1 : 'Are you supportive of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park?'

8. The main concern raised remained the potential visual impact on residents. This was followed by concern about the impact on wildlife and biodiversity.

9. Across the board, respondents were less supportive about all matters in relation to the project - climate change, onshore wind, solar, shared ownership and Community Benefit Fund – not just the proposals relating to the infrastructure.

10. EDF Renewables UK is grateful to Seven Sisters Community Hall and Crynant Community Council for hosting the PIDs, to all those who responded, and to members of the public for attending the events and providing feedback.

Introduction

Background

12. EDF Renewables UK publicly announced its plans to develop Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park in July 2022 and held an initial round of non-statutory early consultation and public information days (PIDs) between 30th September and 17th October 2022. The PIDs were attended by 148 people and 133 people provided feedback, with 43.6% of people stating they were supportive of the proposal. Key themes raised were visual impact and proximity to homes, environmental benefits of renewable energy, potential impact on local wildlife and biodiversity, archaeology and existing mine works.

13. Although it is not a statutory requirement to undertake this form of informal engagement, as a responsible developer, it is EDF Renewables UK's normal practice to do so. EDF Renewables UK committed to undertake a second informal consultation during 2023, prior to the Pre-application Consultation (PAC), expected to take place later in 2023.

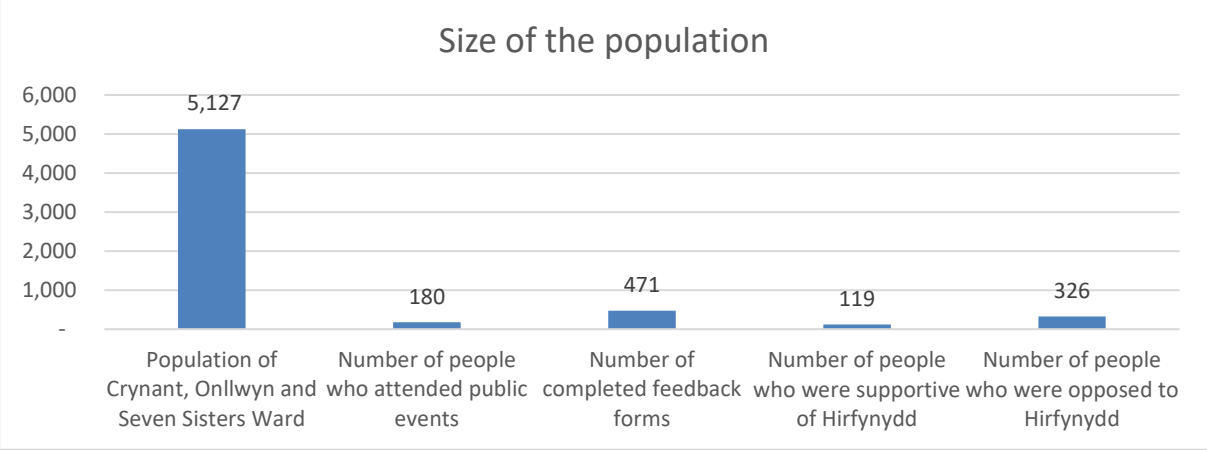
14. EDF Renewables UK held the second informal consultation on its draft plans for Hirfynydd from 3rd May to 31st May 2023. Feedback from a small number of people was that there was not a great deal of 'new' information since the initial round of consultations. There were updates shared on the turbine and solar layouts, progress on grid discussion with the Global Centre for Rail Excellence, and updates from survey findings. One of the primary purposes of the second round of consultation was also to spread awareness of the project. By sending out an information booklet to all households within the consultation zone, this objective has been achieved. The evidence on attendance at the PIDs, and the number of feedback forms received, suggests that more local people are aware of the project now than they were when EDF Renewables UK first launched its plans in autumn 2022.

15. During the first round of consultation and the intervening period, EDF Renewables UK became aware of a local opposition group, Dulais Valley Action Group. The group was active on Facebook, had circulated a flyer to residents, submitted questions to Jeremy Miles MS, had featured in an article in the national press, and in a free community newsletter. EDF Renewables UK were keen to provide information to address the issues being raised by the group.

16. Cadno Communications Ltd (Cadno) had been appointed to manage the first round of PIDs and online consultaion and were engaged again for the second round. Cadno worked closely with EDF Renewables UK to plan and deliver the PIDs. 3D Webtech (3DW) provided the computerised 3D modelling software and hosted this element of the exhibition. Renewable energy consultants, Land Use Consultants (LUC) Ltd, responsible for managing the environmental assessments, also attended the events, as well as geological consultants Yellow Sub Geo.

Population

17. The population of the ward of Crynant, Onllwyn and Seven Sisters is 5,127[1]. Based on this this figure, the equivalent of 3.5% of the population of the ward attended the public events and 9.2% of the ward responded to the consultation.



[1] Census 2021

Conclusions and recommendations from the first informal consultation

18. Following the first round of public information days and early consultation, EDF Renewables UK produced a feedback report which was shared with key stakeholders and made available publicly on its website[2]. The report outlined 14 conclusions and recommendations. These are laid out below along with how EDF Renewables UK acted on each of the recommendations during the second round of public consultation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FIRST INTIAL INFORMAL CONSULTATION			
Reference	Conclusion	Recommendation	Action taken at second informal consultation
1.	Overall, EDF Renewables UK felt the PIDs were very worthwhile. Attendees provided positive feedback on how the events were run.	Hold future events (informal consultation early 2023 and PAC in autumn 2023) at the same venues and at similar times of the day.	The venues and timings were repeated. More information is provided in the section Public Information Days.
2.	The materials provided were well received by attendees. Attendees made suggestions about having a project video or presentation at future events.	Maintain range and quality of materials at future events. Consider producing a project video/presentation.	In addition to updated information boards and handouts available at the public events and online: A 28-page information booklet was sent to households A new virtual online exhibition was created Further maps, figures, a FAQ and factsheets were available at the public events. More information is provided in the section Public Information Days.
3.	Attendees particularly appreciated the 3-dimensional model of the proposed energy park.	Maintain this element at future events and make fly-throughs available online at the next consultation.	The 3-dimensional model was updated and brought to the public events.
4.	EDF Renewables UK is pleased with the level of awareness for Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park.	Continue engagement with local communities and stakeholders.	EDF Renewables UK updated key stakeholders and offered briefings between the first and second consultations. More information is provided in the section Key stakeholders.
5.	Residents have concerns about the potential visual impact and proximity of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park.	Consider location of turbines and feedback any changes to residents at future events.	Updated turbine and solar PV layouts were provided. A fact sheet was produced about glint and glare and shadow flicker. Copies were available at the public events for people to take away.

[2] https://www.edf-re.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Hirfynydd-Renewable-Energy-Park_PIDs-Report-FINAL.pdf

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FIRST INTIAL INFORMAL CONSULTATION			
Reference	Conclusion	Recommendation	Action taken at second informal consultation
6.	Residents have concerns about the potential impact of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park on wildlife and biodiversity.	Report findings of assessments at future events.	Updated information was available at events in relation to habitats, peat depths and watercourses.
7.	Residents have concerns about the potential impact of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park on archaeology in the area.	Report findings of assessments at future events.	Updated information was available at events in relation to historic assets and experts on hand during the consultation events to provide further detail.
8.	Residents have concerns about the potential impact of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park on traffic and access.	Report findings of assessments at future events.	More information about the potential site access and swept paths was provided.
9.	Residents have concerns about the potential impact of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park on PROWs.	Report findings of assessments at future events.	More information about PROWs was provided.
10.	Residents have concerns about the potential impact of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park on noise.	Report findings of assessments at future events.	A fact sheet was produced about noise. Copies were available at the public events for people to take away.
11.	Residents have concerns about existing mine works.	Report findings of assessments at future events.	More information about EDF Renewables UK's discussions with Energy Build Ltd and The Coal Authority were provided. Reassurances provided in all materials that this was a key consideration. Cross sections of the area showing the proximity of the former mine workings were available to view at the public events. Consultants Yellow Sub Geo attended the events to respond to queries.
12.	Many concerns raised by attendees are addressed in the Scoping Report which outlines EDF Renewables UK's approach to developing the project.	Produce a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) based on the issues raised providing information from the Scoping Report in relation to each topic.	A FAQ was produced. Copies were available at the public events for people to take away. The Scoping Report was also available for reference at the events, and is available online at the PEDW website.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FIRST INTIAL INFORMAL CONSULTATION			
Reference	Conclusion	Recommendation	Action taken at second informal consultation
13.	Understanding of shared ownership is low.	At future events provide information about the opportunities are for local people, organisations, and Neath Port Talbot Council. Signpost local people to further independent sources of information such as Community Energy Wales and the Welsh Government's Energy Service.	The Welsh Government local and shared ownership guidance policy document was available at the events for reference and staff were able to answer questions on the different types of shared ownership models that could be considered.
14.	Low attendance at events and low rate of feedback from younger people.	EDF Renewables UK to engage with more young people at the next informal consultation and throughout development of the plans.	EDF Renewables UK reached out to local schools to offer a presentation. All About Energy materials aimed at young people were provided online and available in print at the public information days.

Key stakeholders

19. EDF Renewables UK has engaged with key stakeholders frequently since they were first briefed on the project in June 2022.
20. All key stakeholders were sent posters about the second informal consultation in the post and electronically and encouraged to share these in the community and in their networks, and across their social media channels.
21. Local ward councillors Councillor Steve Hunt and Councillor Sian Harris were both offered briefing meetings in March 2023.
22. EDF Renewables UK attended a full council meeting of Seven Sisters Community Council on 3rd April 2023. Members were provided with an update on draft plans and information about the second informal consultation. The meeting was attended by Councillor Steve Hunt and Councillor Sian Harris.
23. EDF Renewables UK attended a full council meeting of Crynant Community Council on 27th April 2023. Members were provided with an update on draft plans and information about the second informal consultation.
24. In February 2023, Jeremy Miles MS asked EDF Renewables UK to provide a response to written questions which had been sent to him by the Dulais Valley Action Group. EDF Renewables UK submitted a full written response and offered Jeremy Miles a briefing meeting.
25. Christina Rees MP was offered a briefing meeting.
26. EDF Renewables UK also met Councillor Jeremy Hurley, Neath Port Talbot Council's Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Well-being, on 20th March 2023 at a roundtable dinner for EDF Renewables UK and DP Energy's Gwynt Glas floating offshore wind project, and on 26th April 2023 at the opening of EDF Renewables UK's office in Cardiff.
27. EDF Renewables UK met Ross Evans, Public and Community Affairs Manager for CPRW at his request on 9th May 2023.

Supply chain

28. During the second informal consultation, EDF Renewables UK announced they were holding a supply chain event on 7th July 2023 at Blanco's Hotel in Neath Port Talbot. The event is aimed at local businesses interested in opportunities with EDF Renewables UK in relation to several projects it is developing within Neath Port Talbot, and its nearby Gwynt Glas floating offshore project.
29. A fact sheet about supply chain opportunities, including information about the supply chain event, was available at the public events.

Publicity

What was different this time?

- Detailed 28-page information pack sent to households, including a Freepost feedback card
- More information available online via a new virtual exhibition
- All About Energy learning resources for young people
- Engagement with local schools
- Date in diary for local supply chain event
- Four week consultation period, extended from the previous three week consultation period

30. The second round of public consultation was publicised in the following ways:
    - Information pack to households
    - Poster
    - Press release
    - EDF Renewables UK website https://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd/
31. All materials were produced bilingually with Welsh on one side and English on the other side, or as separate English and Welsh documents. Welsh and English-speaking members of staff attended each of the PIDs.
32. An information pack was sent via Royal Mail to every household within a 2-3km radius of the site. This totalled 1,954 households. The information pack was sent second class to arrive with households from 3rd May 2023 onwards. A map at Appendix A shows the households that were sent the pack.
33. During the consultation it was brought to EDF Renewables UK's attention that eight households had not received an information pack. They were immediately sent a pack and their addresses were added to the mailing list in order to receive future correspondence. A further household notified the team at an event that they had not received a pack because they are registered with the Mailing Preference Service. Their address was added to EDF Renewables UK's mailing list at their request.
34. The information pack contained an A5, 28 page, bilingual information leaflet (Appendix B) and an A5 Freepost feedback card (Appendix C). The pack was printed on recycled paper and mailed in a clear, compostable mailing bag.
35. The information sent out was the same as the information boards displayed online and at the public events, so that people who were unable to attend the public events had access to the same information as those who attended the events.
36. The information pack sent to households provided much more detailed information, compared with the postcard which was sent out for the first round of consultation.
37. A poster was produced and printed in A4 on recycled paper (Appendix D). Key stakeholders were sent printed and electronic copies of the poster on 28th April 2023 and were invited to display these locally and on social media.
38. The poster was shared on Facebook by Crynant Community Council[3], Crynant Community Centre[4], Seven Sisters Community Hall[5] and Jeremy Miles MS[6].
39. A press release (Appendix E) was distributed to the following media on 3rd May 2023:

[3] https://www.facebook.com/CrynantCommunityCouncil
[4] https://www.facebook.com/crynantcc
[5] https://www.facebook.com/SevenSistersHall
[6] https://www.facebook.com/JeremyMilesMSAS/

- BBC Cymru Fyw
- BBC Radio Cymru
- BBC Radio Wales
- BBC Wales
- Business Wales Insider
- Capital FM Wales
- Daily Post
- ITV Wales
- Nation Cymru
- Nation Radio
- South Wales Argus
- South Wales Echo
- South Wales Evening Post
- South Wales Guardian
- Swansea Bay Radio
- The Guardian
- The National
- The Times
- The Week
- Wales Online
- Industry press

40. The press release was published here:
    - "Public Consultation for Renewable Energy Park", Insider Media Limited, 4th May 2023[7]
    - "Second Round of Public Consultation Events for Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park" businessnewswales.com, 10th May 2023[8]
41. The press release was also shared with the following key stakeholders:
    - Jeremy Miles, MS for Neath
    - Christina Rees, MP for Neath
    - Councillor Steve Hunt, Leader of Neath Port Talbot Council and Ward Member for Crynant, Onllwyn and Seven Sisters
    - Councillor Sian Harris, Ward Member for Crynant, Onllwyn and Seven Sisters
    - Crynant Community Council
    - Seven Sisters Community Council
    - Tom Giffard MS, Regional MS South Wales West Region
    - Altaf Hussain MS, Regional MS South Wales West Region
    - Sioned Williams MS, Regional MS South Wales West Region
    - Luke Fletcher MS, Regional MS South Wales West Region
42. The events were also promoted on EDF Renewables UK LinkedIn platform.
43. The website https://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd/ was updated on 3rd May 2023, providing information about the public information days and a link to view the new virtual exhibition.
44. 3DW created a bilingual virtual exhibition[9] (Appendix F) which went live on 3rd May 2023. The site hosted:
    - A splash page (identical to the poster)
    - Electronic versions of the ten information boards that were displayed at the public information days

[7] https://www.insidermedia.com/news/wales/public-consultation-for-renewable-energy-park
[8] https://businessnewswales.com/second-round-of-public-consultation-events-for-hirfynydd-renewable-energy-park/
[9] https://3dwebtech.co.uk/dashboard/edf-re/hirfynydd/exhibition/

- Young people's All About Energy materials
- Press release
- Online feedback form

45. The project email address hirfynydd@edf-re.uk and telephone number 01639 500871 were included on all printed material and the website.

46. During the period 3rd May to 31st May 2023 the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park website was viewed 564 times across both the English and Welsh versions of the site, with 298 unique users.

47. During the period 3rd May to 31st May 2023 the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park virtual exhibition was viewed by 52 unique users.

48. The feedback form asked where people had heard about the consultation so EDF Renewables UK could evaluate the effectiveness and reach of these methods. The information booklet sent to households was the most common way people found out about the events, followed by word of mouth and social media.

49. The online feedback form was available from 3rd May until 31st May 2023. The link was placed within the virtual exhibition so that people who were unable to attend the events in person could read the information on the virtual exhibition and then complete the online form. Two people said that it was difficult to find the online feedback form, and in response EDF Renewables UK put a second link to the form directly on the project webpage https://www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd/. No further queries of this nature were received.

Materials for young people

50. In 2020 EDF Renewables UK developed a set of information booklets aimed at young people. The bilingual materials were aimed at 8-11 year olds, and 12 to 14 year olds as a resource for schools and children during the covid lockdown. These were developed in liaison with local schools and distributed within the UK.

51. Prior to the second informal consultation, both sets of materials were updated. The materials were printed and taken to the consultation events. The materials were also made available digitally on the online exhibition.

Public Information Days (PIDs)

What was different this time?

- Updated turbine and PV layouts
- Updated information following further surveying
- More information about peat, mine workings and relationship with GCRE
- More maps and figures
- Consultants Yellow Sub Geo attending the events to respond to coal mining queries
- New factsheets for people to take away
- Reference documents available on Welsh Government policy and climate change.

52. The PIDs were held in the same two locations as they were held during the first round. The events were held at:
    - 15.00 - 19.00, Friday 12th May 2023 at Seven Sisters Community Hall
    - 10.00 - 14.00, Saturday 13th May 2023 at Crynant Community Centre
53. Those timings and days of the week were chosen as they were thought to be convenient for the maximum amount of people, offering the ability to drop into the events during an afternoon, evening or weekend. The feedback from the first informal consultation did not highlight any issues with these timings, so they were repeated for the second informal consultation.
54. A map of the locations in relation to the project site location is at Appendix G.
55. The events were attended by a total of 180 people. Seventy people attended in Seven Sisters and one hundred and ten attended in Crynant.
56. Attendance in Seven Sisters was exactly the same as the first round of PIDs. Attendance in Crynant went up 41%.

COMPARISON OF ATTENDANCE AT PIDs				
Date	Area	Round 1 PIDs attendance	Round 2 PID attendance	Difference
Friday 30 September 2022 Friday 12 May 2023	Seven Sisters	70	70	0
Saturday 1 October 2022 Saturday 13 May 2023	Crynant	78	110	+32 (41%)
TOTAL		148	180	32

Table 2 : Schedule of PIDs

57. Both events were attended by members of staff from EDF Renewables UK, Cadno, 3DW, Yellow Sub Geo and LUC who actively engaged with attendees and answered questions.
58. On arrival, attendees were greeted at a welcome desk and were provided with a handout (which was a printed copy of the information boards (Appendix H) displayed at the events and online), a feedback form (Appendix I) and the layout of the exhibition was explained. Attendees were encouraged to take a copy of the handout home, and to take additional copies for friends and family members. The handout was a printed version of the information boards which were displayed at the events.

59. All printed materials were printed on recycled paper.

60. Four new factsheets (Appendix J) were produced for people to take away, covering key areas:

    - FAQ
    - Noise
    - Glint & glare, and shadow flicker
    - Supply chain

61. Attendees were encouraged to complete a feedback form while they were at the event and to place the completed form in one of the two boxes provided. Clipboards and pens were provided for attendees.

62. Ten information boards were displayed on easels, arranged around the room. Images of how the information was displayed are below at figures 1-4. The information boards were produced using recyclable material.

63. Large, printed copies of the following figures were available for attendees to view and discuss with members of the team:

    - Site layout
    - Solar PV layout
    - Photographs of typical grid connection poles
    - Cross-sections of mine workings
    - Peat and watercourses
    - Historic assets and Lidar
    - Photographs of typical battery storage
    - Habitats

64. 3DW attended the events again with an updated virtual model of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park which enabled attendees to see what Hirfynydd could look like from anywhere within 10km of the site. This had been extremely popular with attendees at the first round of PIDs. Again, people congregated around this area more than any other. As during the first informal consultation, the virtual model was rated in feedback as the most useful element of the exhibition.

65. As before, refreshments were provided at both events, and tables and chairs were set up for attendees to sit down. In addition, this time colouring in-sheets and colouring pencils were provided on tables for children.

66. During the first PIDs, observations were that having viewed the information boards, people visiting the exhibition then stayed a significant length of time to have a cup of tea or coffee, complete the feedback form and speak to other attendees. This was reflected in feedback with 40 people stating they found the opportunity to meet local people from their community one of the most useful elements of the event. However during the second consultation only 10 people stated they found the opportunity to meet others in the community one of the most useful elements of the event.

67. EDF Renewables UK is grateful to the communities for welcoming the PIDs and for engaging in discussions about the proposal.

68. The images below show the layout of the exhibitions:

Figure 1 : Information boards at Seven Sisters Community Hall

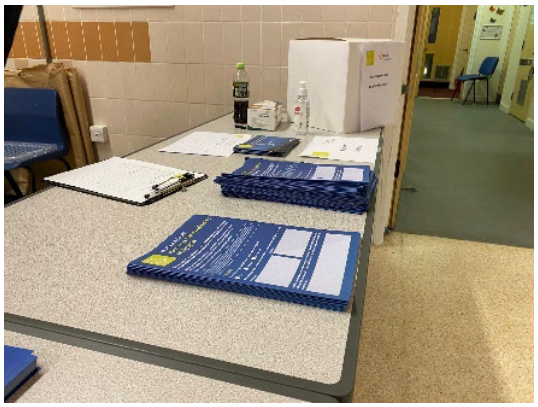


Figure 2 : Information boards at Seven Sisters Community Hall

Figure 3 : Information boards at Crynant Community Centre

Figure 4 : Welcome desk at Crynant Community Centre

Feedback

What was different this time?

- Freepost feedback card in information pack distributed to 1,954 households
- Additional question seeking views on shared ownership
- More feedback received
- Lower support for renewable energy

Methodology

69. The Freepost feedback card in the information pack was sent to 1,954 households. Two hundred and sixty-eight of these were returned.

70. The amended question on shared ownership stated: 'EDF Renewables UK plans to offer up to 10% local ownership in the project. Are you supportive of this?' with options to respond by ticking the 'yes', 'no' or 'unsure' boxes.

71. The feedback form that was available online and at events was designed to obtain views under six main headings:

    - The project
    - Climate change
    - Local ownership
    - Community Benefit Fund
    - The public information days
    - About the respondent

72. A section was included at the end where respondents could provide their contact information if they wish to be kept up to date about the project.

73. The printed feedback form and online feedback form were identical, apart from the section about the public information days. The printed feedback form asked how useful the person found the information at the public events. The online form asked how useful the person found the virtual exhibition.

74. A total of 471 feedback forms were completed.

    - Two hundred and sixty-eight Freepost feedback cards were received.
    - One hundred and twenty-six forms were completed in person at the PIDs.
    - Seventy-seven forms were completed online.

75. Five feedback forms were completed in Welsh.

NUMBER OF FEEDBACK FORMS			
	Round 1: Sept/Oct 2022	Round 2: May 2023	Change from round 1 to round 2
Freepost feedback card	n/a	268	+268
Events	98	126	+28
Online	35	77	+42

Total	133	471	+338

Multiple returns

76. Having multiple feedback forms to provide residents with convenient options to provide feedback from home using the Freepost feedback card, online using the online form, or at events, means that people had the opportunity to respond more than once. It is difficult to identify or prevent multiple returns from the same people. Where the same IP address was identified online, the returns were examined.

Late returns

77. Eight Freepost feedback forms were received after the deadline and were not able to be included in this analysis but feedback will be considered by the Hirfynydd team

Emails and calls

78. Eight enquiries were received from members of the public via email.

79. Two emails were received from organisations: CPRW and The Woodland Trust.

80. No phone calls were received.

Results

81. This section presents the findings from the feedback, with the main themes discussed in detail in the Key themes section.

82. The qualitative information presented here refers to written comments provided in the feedback forms. The issues raised within the feedback forms were also discussed verbally with event staff.

Support for Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

83. The proportion of people expressing support for Hirfynydd has decreased since the initial informal consultation. In response to the question 'Do you support the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park Proposal?' 25.3% of respondents stated they were supportive, 69.2% stated they were not supportive, and 5.5% were unsure whether they supported the proposal.

84. This is compared with the first round: In response to the question 'Do you support the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park Proposal?' - 43.6% of respondents stated they were supportive, 34.6% stated they were not supportive, and 21.8% were unsure whether they supported the proposal.

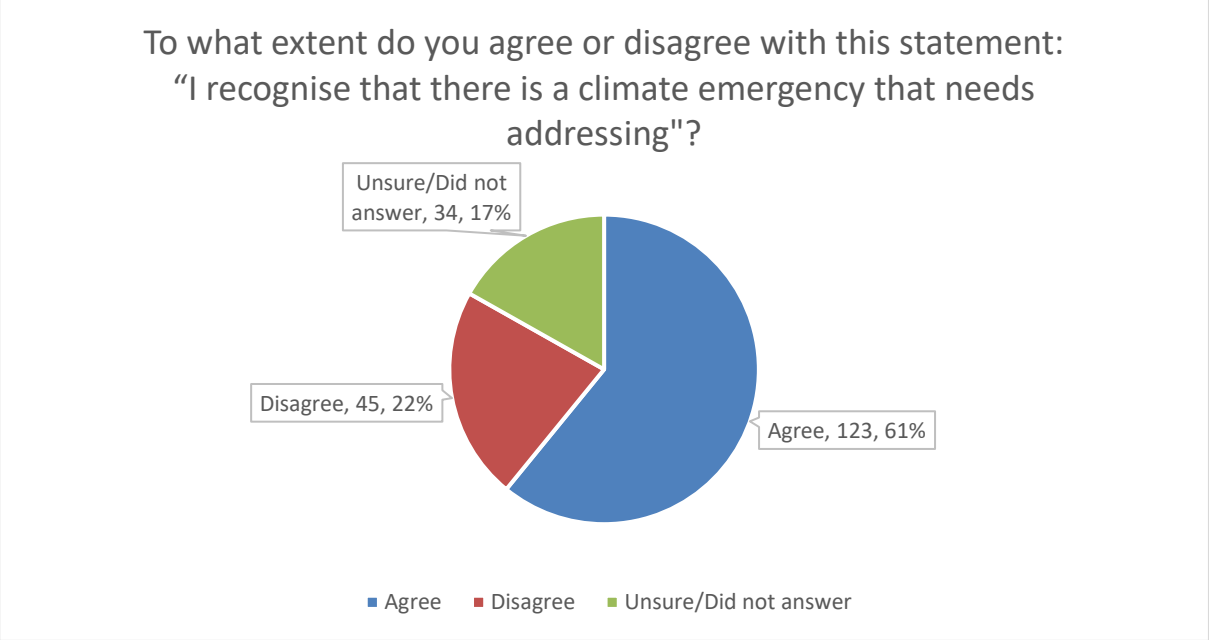
ARE YOU SUPPORTIVE OF THE HIRFYNYDD RENEWABLE ENERGY PARK PROPOSAL?			
	Round 1: Sept/Oct 2022	Round 2: May 2023	Change in proportion of responses from round 1 to round 2
Yes	43.6% (58)	25.3% (119)	-18.3%
No	34.6% (46)	69.2% (326)	+34.6%
Unsure/did not answer	21.8% (29)	5.5% (26)	-16.3%
Total	133	471	+254% (338)

Table 3 : 'Are you supportive of Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park?'

85. It's worth noting that absolute numbers of people expressing support for Hirfynydd have increased, from 58 to 119.

Climate change

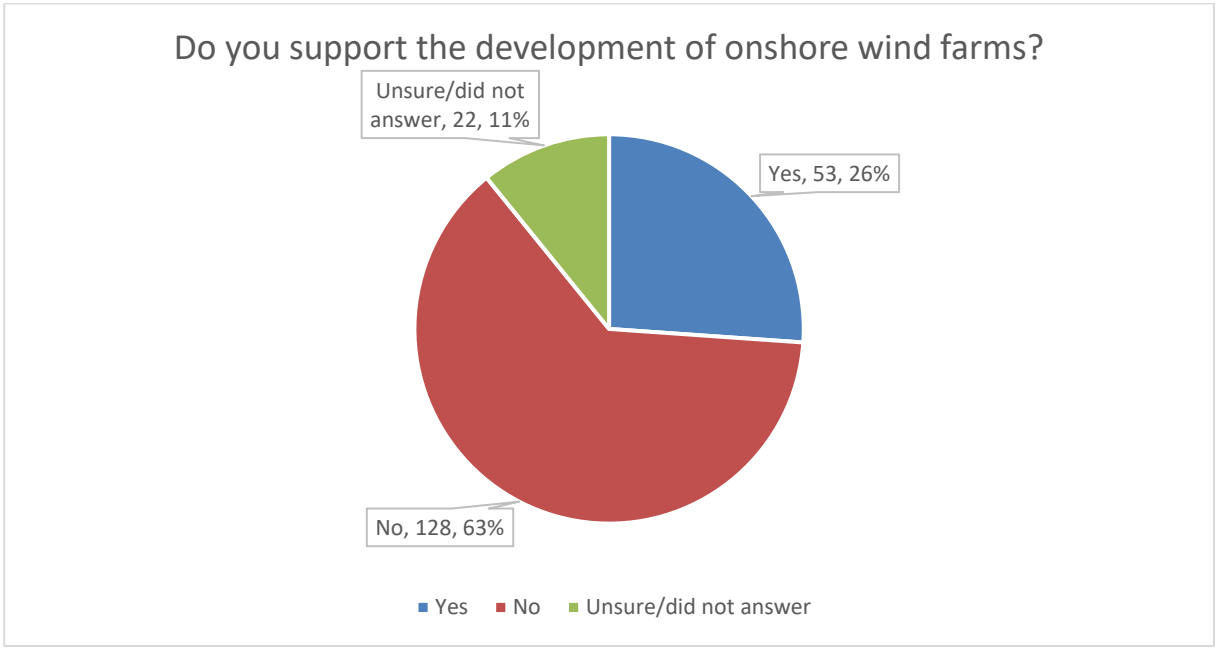
86. At the second informal consultation, a smaller percentage of respondents agreed with the statement, "I recognise that there is a climate emergency that needs addressing." 61% agreed, down from 86% of respondents in the first consultation. 39% either disagreed or were unsure on this statement.



87. A smaller proportion of respondents expressed support for onshore wind this time compared to the first round of consultation. This time, 26% of respondents stated they support the development of onshore wind farms and 63% stated they did not support the development of onshore wind farms. During the first round of consultation, 58% were supportive and 25% were not supportive.

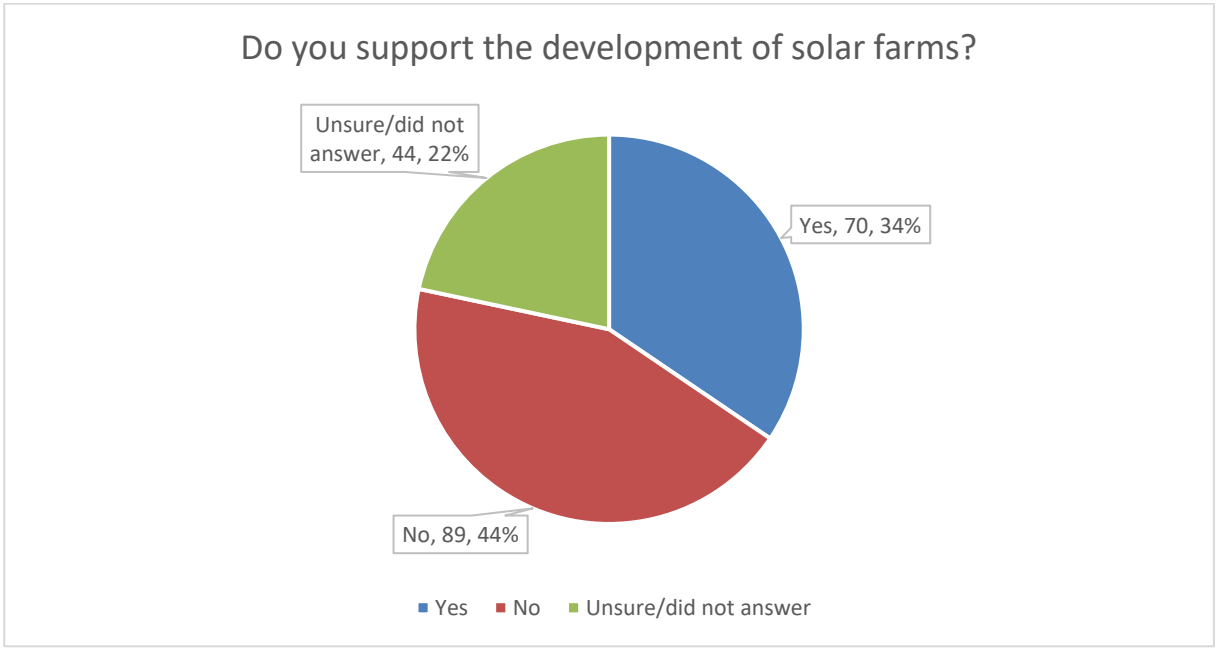
88. This is a significantly lower proportion of support for onshore wind than was shown in the Renewable UK Topical Poll conducted by Survation on behalf of RenewableUK (September 2022) which found 84% of Neath residents support onshore wind as energy generation[10].

[10] https://www.survation.com/polling-in-every-constituency-in-britain-shows-strong-support-for-building-wind-farms-to-drive-down-consumer-bills/renewableuk-mrp-constituency-topline/



89. Proportionate support for solar has also fallen. During the second informal consultation, 34% of respondents stated they support the development of solar farms. At the first round of consultation 64% were supportive of solar.

90. This is a significantly lower proportion than was found in the Renewable UK Topical Poll conducted by Survation on behalf of RenewableUK (September 2022) which found 91% of people in Neath support solar power as energy generation[11].

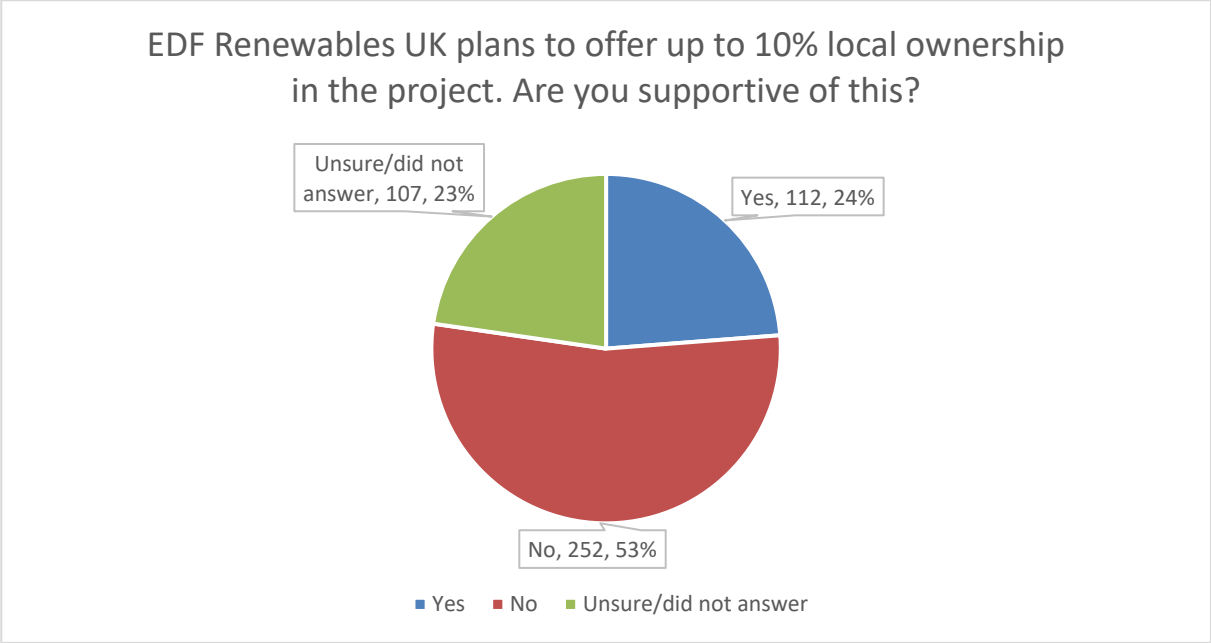


[11] https://www.survation.com/polling-in-every-constituency-in-britain-shows-strong-support-for-building-wind-farms-to-drive-down-consumer-bills/renewableuk-mrp-constituency-topline/

Local ownership

91. The feedback form asked respondents, "EDF Renewables UK plans to offer up to 10% local ownership in the project. Are you supportive of this?" This was a new question and was not asked during the first round. The majority of respondents were not supportive (53%). 24% were supportive and 23% were either unsure or did not answer the question.

92. This was a new question and was not asked during the first round. However during the first round, respondents were asked an open question, 'What do you think of local ownership?' The majority of responses were neutral or unsure.



93. One hundred and twenty-one comments were received in response to the follow up question, "What do you think about local ownership?" The majority of the comments were negative, with allegations that the offer of shared ownership is a bribe or a lie being the most commonly stated assertion (raised 26 times).

94. Thirteen generally negative comments were received, another thirteen comments stated the share amount of 10% isn't high enough. Other issues referenced cheaper electricity for local people as an objective, and that local people can't afford to invest.

95. Twenty positive comments were received, stating it is a good idea for the community.

96. Sixteen people stated that they don't know enough about shared ownership. This could account for the large proportion of people who are unsure about whether it's a good idea (87 individuals) or didn't answer the question (20 individuals). Four people commented that they asked for more information about shared ownership at the PIDs and felt they didn't receive a clear answer.

97. The following comments are illustrative of the feedback on shared ownership:

"Why do I want to buy into it? We should be given shares for free for being so close."

"I think it is a great idea and i would like to know more about how we can access this information about it."

Community Benefit Fund

98. Two feedback questions were asked in relation to the community benefit fund:

- EDF Renewables UK will be offering a community benefit fund which could amount to £270,000 per year for the lifetime of the project. (£5,000 per MW for wind, and £400 per MW for solar). Do you think this is a good idea?
- Do you have any suggestions how the fund should be spent?

99. Proportionate support for the community benefit fund has decreased since the first round of consultation. During the second consultation, 29% of respondents thought the community benefit fund was a good idea, this has fallen from 63% during round

one. 49% thought it was not a good idea, an increase from 18% during the first consultation. 22% were unsure or did not answer to question.

EDF RENEWABLES UK WILL BE OFFERING A COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND WHICH COULD AMOUNT TO £270,000 PER YEAR FOR THE LIFETIME OF THE PROJECT. (£5,000 PER MW FOR WIND, AND £400 PER MW FOR SOLAR). DO YOU THINK THIS IS A GOOD IDEA?			
	Round 1: Sept/Oct 2022	Round 2: May 2023	Change from round 1 to round 2
Yes	63%	29%	-34%
No	18%	49%	+31%
Unsure/did not answer	19%	22%	+3%

100. In response to the question, 'Do you have any suggestions how the fund should be spent?' 123 comments were received. Responses mainly reiterated negative views towards the project, rather than practical suggestions for how the fund should be spent. There were 38 comments which were generally critical and opposed to the project, with a common theme being that the fund won't compensate the community for the impact of the project. A further 18 people stated they felt the fund was a bribe and six felt that the fund is not large enough.

101. A strong theme was that the benefit should be for all members of the community. Several people stated concerns that if the fund is allocated to organisations, not all individuals in community will benefit. Some suggested dividing the fund between each person in the community. As during the first consultation, many people stated they would want the fund to be used to reduce energy bills for residents. This was raised 22 times.

102. How the fund is administered was mentioned 14 times. It was felt that the fund should benefit local projects in Crynant and Seven Sisters only, and its allocation should be decided by local people through a vote or committee.

103. Twenty-two practical suggestions for how the fund should be spent were received. Suggestions focused on community projects, for example extending the forest walks project, improving the community centres, parks and sports facilities. Schools, education, sport, installing solar on roofs, making local buildings more energy efficient, rugby clubs, children's groups, and support for the Dulais Valley Silver Band.

104. The following comments are illustrative of feedback received:

"No money could bring back our mountain."

"Community projects are nice but don't help everyone. Every resident should be given discounted bills."

"Local projects only. Not to be distributed around the County Borough."

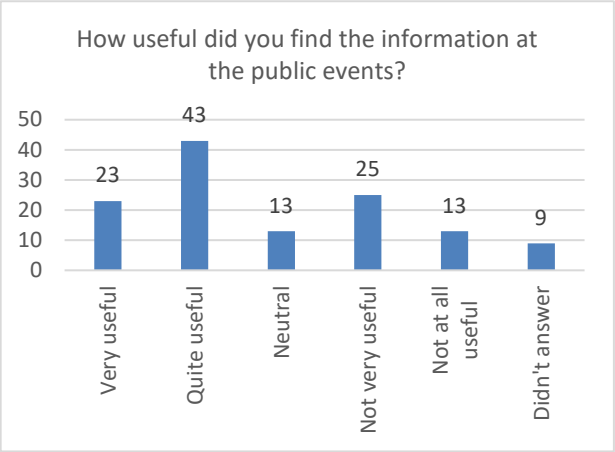
"Community projects - extend forest walks project developing/facilities for sport. Better understanding/education at local centre of the benefits of renewable energy."

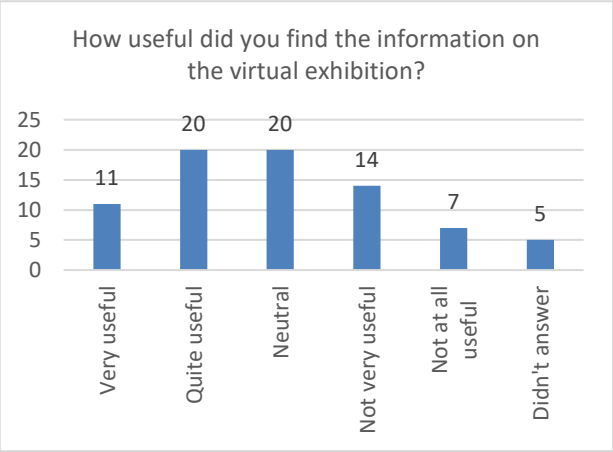
About the Public Information Days

105. The feedback form distributed at the public events asked, 'How useful did you find the information at the public events?' The online form asked a parallel question, 'How useful did you find the information on the virtual exhibition?'

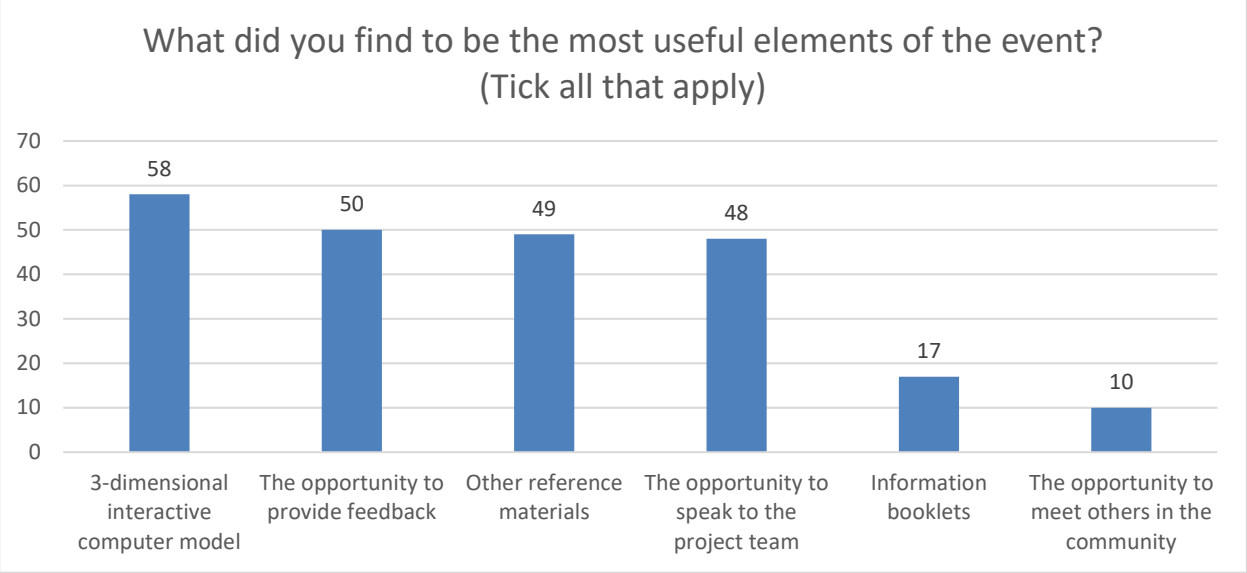
106. 52% of respondents found the information at the public events quite useful or very useful. 30% found it not very useful or not at all useful. 10% were neutral.

107. Feedback about the information on the virtual exhibition was more mixed, with 30% of respondents finding the information quite useful or very useful. 27% found the information not very useful or not at all useful. 26% were neutral.





108. The feedback form provided at the events asked, 'What did you find to be the most useful elements of the event?' The 3-dimensional interactive model provided by 3DW was the most popular element, as was the case during the first consultation.



109. The feedback form further asked, 'Do you have any thoughts on how we could improve the way that the information is presented?' Forty-one comments were received criticising the information provided, stating the information provided was dishonest, that there was a lack of information and answers to questions, and that not much information was different from the first round of consultation.

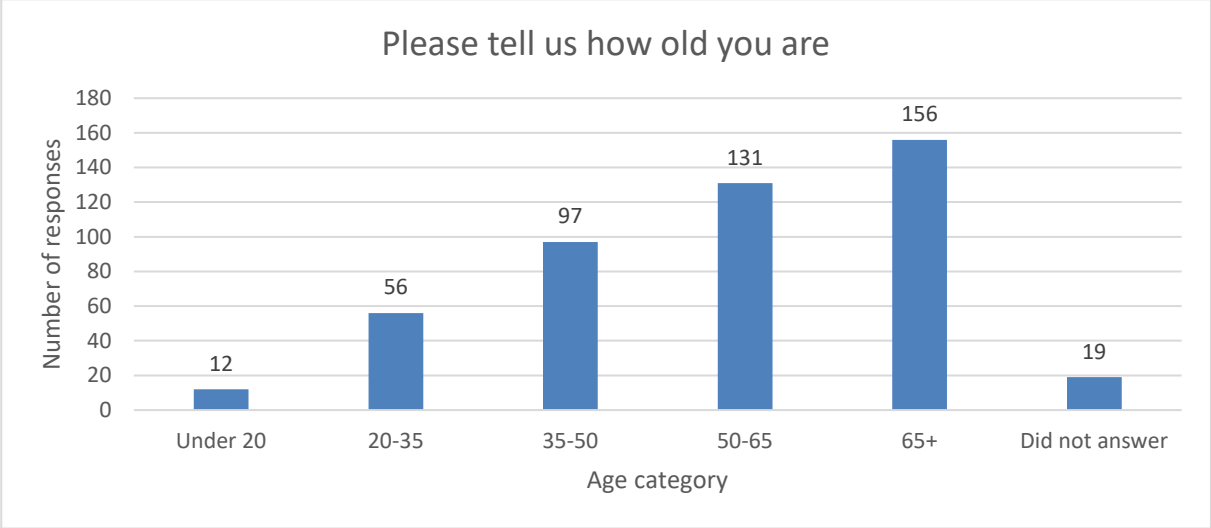
110. Two people provided positive comments that the information was detailed and the maps were helpful. Two people asked why the information boards are not recyclable. (NB: The information boards are recyclable and are reused at other events. When no longer needed they are returned to the printer and recycled).

111. The online feedback form asked, 'What did you find to be the most useful elements [of the virtual exhibition]?' 48% stated the opportunity to provide feedback as the most useful element, followed by the information boards (19%).

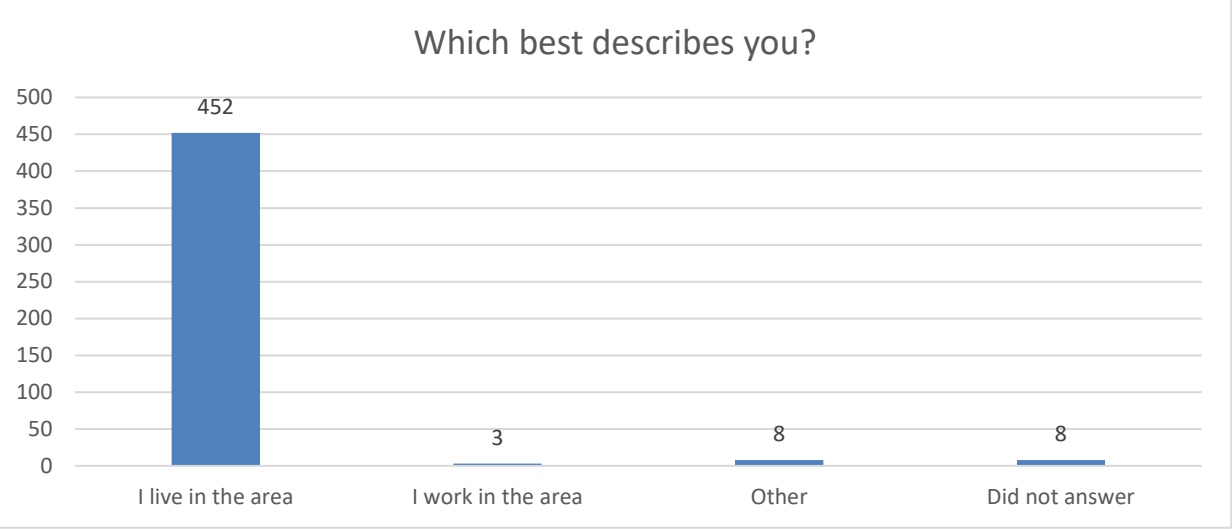
112. The online feedback form also asked how the information can be improved. Twenty-eight comments were received, again citing dishonest information and a lack of answers to questions.

About respondents

113. The majority of respondents were in the 65+ age category, and 60.9% of respondents were aged 50 or over. Only 2.5% of respondents were aged below 20 years of age. This is a similar demographic to the first consultation, where 66% of respondents were aged 50 or over and 3% were aged below 20.

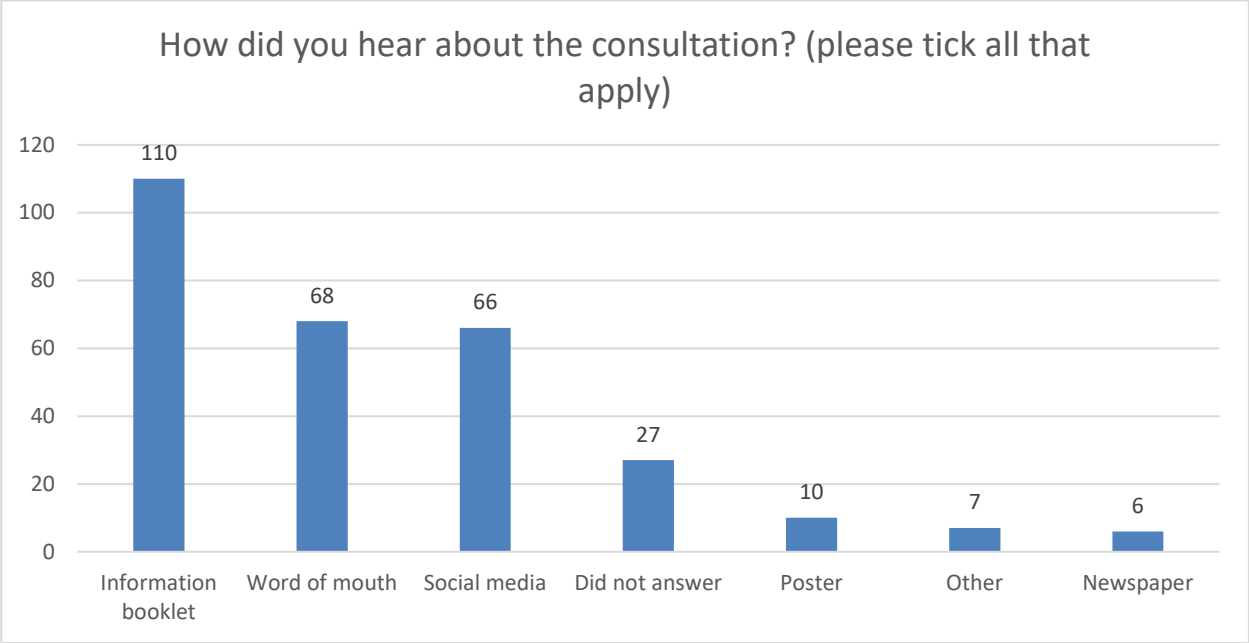


114. 95.6% are believed to live in the area. The feedback form at the events and online asked people if they live or work locally. It's assumed that the Freepost feedback cards were all returned by local residents having received them to their household.



115. Sixteen people stated they were responding on behalf of an organisation, namely Crynant Cattery, savegaerwen.org, PHC Stop Digging Projects, LKAB Minerals Ltd, Crynant Holiday Cottages and 'Castell-nedd Port Talbot'.

116. The information booklet sent to households was the most common way people heard about the consultation, followed by word of mouth and social media. This was a similar result to the first round of consultation where the postcard sent to households was the most common way people had heard about the consultation. During the first round the second most common way people had heard about the consultation was via social media, followed by word of mouth.



117. Of the six people who stated they had heard about the consultation via another way, three did not say where they had heard. Two people had heard about the consultation from a local councillor, and one had heard about it from the flyer for EDF Renewables UK's supply chain event, as distributed by Marine Energy Wales.

118. Eighty-eight people provided an email address and three people provided a postal address in order to receive updates on the project.

Key themes

119. This section analyses the key themes raised in the feedback form, organised by the frequency with which they were mentioned.

KEY THEMES RAISED, RANKED IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY MENTIONED	
Round 1: Sept/Oct 2022	Round 2: May 2023
Visual impact and proximity to homes	Visual impact, noise and impact on health
Environment and climate change	Wildlife and biodiversity
Wildlife and biodiversity	Preference for other forms of renewable energy
Community Benefit Fund	Community benefits
Archaeology	Traffic & access
Traffic and access	Environment and climate change
Public Rights of Way (PROWs)	House prices
Noise	Archaeology
Local energy bills	Mining
Local economy	Distrust
Mining	Other issues
Energy security	
Other issues	

Visual impact, noise and impact on health

120. As during the first informal consultation, visual impact, noise and impact on health were the most common issues raised and these issues are grouped here as they are commonly linked by respondents. The potential visual impact was mentioned by 173 respondents. Comments focused on a feeling that the wind turbines in particular will “destroy the village” and “blight the community”. There was a sense that the area has “done its time” as an energy provider and should not be developed. The location of Turbine 1 was mentioned three times as being of particular concern.

121. Within the responses, concerns about shadow flicker were mentioned 23 times. Concern of intrusive light from the turbines at nighttime was mentioned eight times.

122. Concern about noise arising from the construction and operation was raised by 61 people.

123. Health and safety was mentioned by 28 people. Health was mentioned as a general term without elaborating on what their specific health concern is. Some specified the battery could pose a risk to health from fire. Five people explicitly mentioned that the project could negatively impact autistic people by the introduction of noise, shadow flicker and changes to the environment.

124. During the first consultation, proximity to homes was a strong theme. This didn’t feature as much during the second round, instead the focus was on visual, noise, health and shadow flicker.

Wildlife and biodiversity

125. Concerns about the potential impact on wildlife, biodiversity and ecology were mentioned 120 times. Comments typically related to wildlife, watercourses, flooding peat and CO2 and preference for other forms of renewable energy.

Preference for other forms of renewable energy

126. Respondents advocated for other forms of renewable energy 62 times, stating tidal, offshore or solar on roofs of buildings would be preferable.

Community benefits

127. Forty-five people mentioned community benefits, including the community benefit fund. The majority of those who commented stated their belief that 'there are no benefits at all to the local community' and concern that the fund would not benefit individuals.

128. The local economy was mentioned 14 times. Whilst a few people mentioned potential job opportunities and green investment in a positive way, there was cynicism about claims of job creation, believing that there will be few jobs, that any jobs will be short term, and that the project would lead to the loss of mining jobs. (NB: The Hirfynydd Renewables Energy Park will not impact on any existing mining jobs. The existing Aberpergwm coal mine can continue operations should the Hirfynydd proposal be consented and become operational. This fact was stated clearly on the information boards, in the information leaflet, online, in the FAQs, and communicated verbally to attendees at the PIDs).

129. Twenty-six people stated they felt a benefit should be for local people to receive free or lower cost electricity. This reflected a general sense that community benefits should be granted on an individual basis, not given to community groups, which benefit sections within the community.

130. The following comments are illustrative of feedback received on the Community Benefit Fund:

"Very small community fund but vast profit for EDF."

"A benefit to every household - i.e. - money of electric bills. Community funds are good but don't benefit everyone."

Traffic and access

131. Forty-two comments focused on concerns about potential disruption, increased traffic and pollution caused by transport.

132. During the exhibition a map clearly showing the access route was on display and to highlight that construction traffic would not be travelling through the villages.

Environment and climate change

133. Forty-one responses agreed with the need to address climate change and were supportive of the project's aim to provide renewable energy and

134. The following comments are illustrative of feedback received on environment and climate change:

"Clean green energy is much better than the coal mines of the past. I do not think we should rely on other countries for our energy."

"Need cleaner energy."

House prices

135. Concern about potential reduction of house prices was mentioned 37 times.

136. The following comments are illustrative of feedback received on house prices:

"Depreciation of nearby house prices, despite what supposedly surveys in other locations have shown."

"Are you going to subsidise the lost value in my home?"

Archaeology

137. Concern about potential impacts on existing archaeological sites was mentioned 32 times.

138. The following comments are illustrative of the feedback on archaeology:

"The proposed area not only holds natural beauty, but contains a number of historical land marks. It would be unusual to place such huge constructions near areas of historical significance in most scenarios where there are other areas in which conservation efforts could take place."

"Small amendment on solar panels to avoid the Cairns at the top end of the green fields."

Mining

139. Concerns about that developing on the site could affect old mining infrastructure was raised 25 times. Comments focused on concerns that developing the area would disturb the area, cause collapse due to old mine shafts, impact on watercourses and cause flooding. The previous application and reasons for its refusal were queried several times. (NB: An information board – included in the information booklet sent to households – dealt with this issue directly. Consultant experts from Yellow Sub Geo – contracted to advise on these issues – were also present at the PIDs to answer questions from attendees).

Distrust

140. Distrust was raised 15 times as well as people stating the planning consent is a "done deal" and the project is going ahead, regardless. It was highlighted that EDF Renewables are still developing the project and things are still being worked on currently which is why the team does not have all the answers and that the community are involved at this early stage in order to influence these plans where applicable.

Other

141. Public Rights of Ways (PROWs) had been mentioned 22 times at the first consultation. During the second consultation, PROWs was only mentioned by eight people. The feedback stated that the area is used by walkers and horse riders currently and expressed concern that they may be prevented from using the area if Hirfynydd is developed.

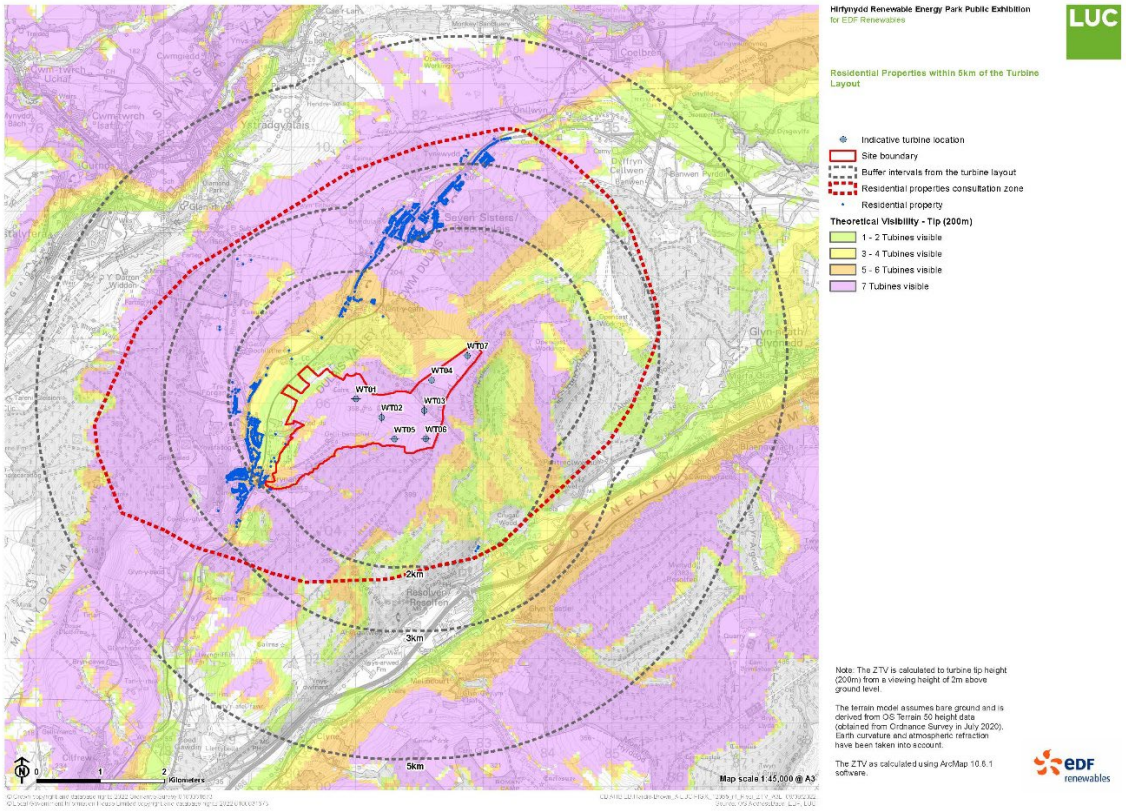
142. Nine people stated concerns that Hirfynydd may negatively impact on tourism to the area. (NB: A research paper looking at the impact of wind farms on tourism was available for reference at the PIDs).

143. How Hirfynydd will connect to the National Grid was raised by eight people, querying lack of detail about the proposed grid connection and citing the overloaded grid network as a concern.

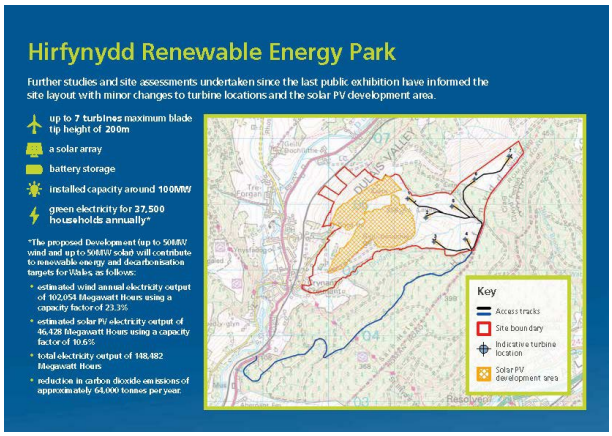
144. Energy security was raised five times. This is less that the first consultation, which was held when the global energy crisis was high profile in the news.

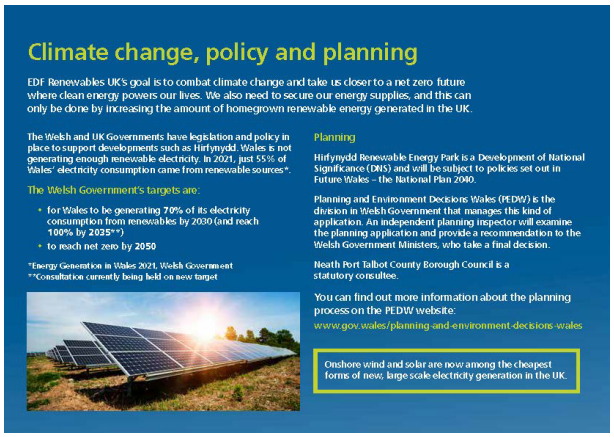
Appendices

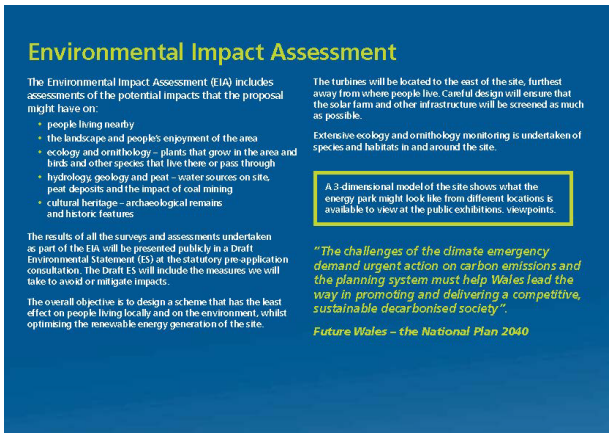
Appendix A: Consultation zone



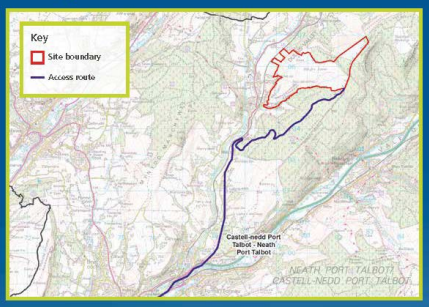
Appendix B: Information leaflet







Transport and access



No turbine delivery traffic will travel through Crynant or Seven Sisters, and there is no impact on the Sarn Helen Roman Road.

The turbines will be transported from Swansea Port to the south of Crynant along the A4109.

Hydrology - peat and watercourses

A detailed assessment of the watercourses and peat on site will be presented in the Environmental Statement.

The site is located on the Hirfynydd Ridge which forms the watershed between the catchments of the Rivers Neath and Dulais.

Most of the site is open grassland used for grazing, with some sections of peat and bogland. The west is mainly clay with a shallow layer of soil, whereas a band of peat runs through the centre of the site, north to south.

Where possible, construction on peat will be avoided, but where excavation is required, the peat will be re-used on site to create new habitats elsewhere or to add to existing degraded peat deposits. Appropriate design (i.e. maintaining existing hydrological pathways) and construction techniques will avoid drying out of peat. Mitigation and restoration measures to the peat resource will be implemented through a Peat Management Plan (PMP) in consultation with Natural Resources Wales and the Local Authority. This will ensure that the renewable energy park will deliver biodiversity enhancement that will create long-term benefits to the habitat.

Peatlands support a variety of habitats and species. They capture and store carbon, regulate greenhouse gases, maintain biodiversity and regulate water.

How the electricity will be used – grid connection

Electricity generated at power stations is typically connected to the grid network to take the electricity to where it is needed – homes, businesses, industry and public buildings.

For Hirfynydd we are assessing two grid connection options:

- we have secured a grid connection into the Swansea North substation
- we are also delighted to be in discussions with the Global Centre for Rail Excellence (GCRE) to directly provide the electricity to them to deliver their net zero ambition. Located at the Nant Helen surface mine and Onllwyn coal washery at the head of the Dulais and Tawe valleys GCRE will become a leading rail innovation centre, providing world class research, testing and certification of rolling stock, infrastructure and innovative new rail technologies

In both cases, the cables connecting the renewable energy park will be underground to the onsite substation. The connection from the onsite substation to Swansea North or GCRE will involve either underground cables, an overhead line on wooden poles, or a combination of the two.

Geology and local mine workings

The area has a significant history of mining going back centuries, and there is a working mine near to site at Aberpergwm.

Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park will be designed to co-exist with this active mine, and EDF Renewables UK is in discussions with Energy Build Ltd and The Coal Authority to identify and mitigate any risks. It is important to note that Aberpergwm mine is around 500m below ground level where the turbines are proposed.

A Coal Mining Risk and Subsidence Risk Assessment is being undertaken across the entire site, which will also consider other historic mine workings in the area.

Ecology and ornithology

Survey work for habitats was completed in summer 2022, and those for water vole, newts, and bats have been completed during the active seasons for each respective species.

Bird survey work completed at the end of March 2023, and includes two breeding seasons and two winter seasons. All survey reports will be completed by mid-2023 in readiness for the Ecological and Ornithological chapters of the Environmental Statement. The results of the surveys have fed into our site designs.

Cultural heritage

The earliest evidence of human activity at Hirfynydd dates from the Bronze Age (2200 to 700 BCE). Coed Ddu ring cairn and Onllwyn cairn are located here. The Romans built Sarn Helen Road along what is now the eastern edge of the site. More recent historic assets dating from the Middle Ages and early industrialisation are also found here.

To understand these assets, archaeologists use techniques such as aerial photography, LiDAR data (Light Detection and Ranging), historic maps, and results from walk over surveys. Geophysical survey, trenching and excavation may also be undertaken.

The project is being designed in consultation with Cadw, the Welsh Government's historic environment service, and the local archaeological trust.

Sarn Helen Roman Road

Community

EDF Renewables UK is committed to delivering local benefits and working in partnership with communities. Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park could deliver:

Community Benefit Fund based on:

- £5,000/MW wind
- £400/MW solar
- overall – up to £270,000 every year for the lifetime of the project

Local/shared ownership

- up to 10% of the project

Local businesses

- contracts and opportunities for local suppliers

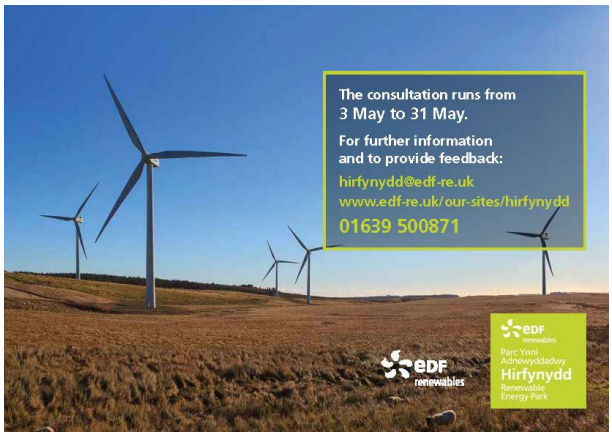
Case study

Porth Wen is an EDF Renewables UK solar farm on Anglesey where over 60% of the workforce during the enabling and civils works have been local. To achieve this, we held a supply chain breakfast and a careers fair in partnership with the local authority, business groups, Careers Wales, the Department for Work and Pensions, and Ambition North Wales.

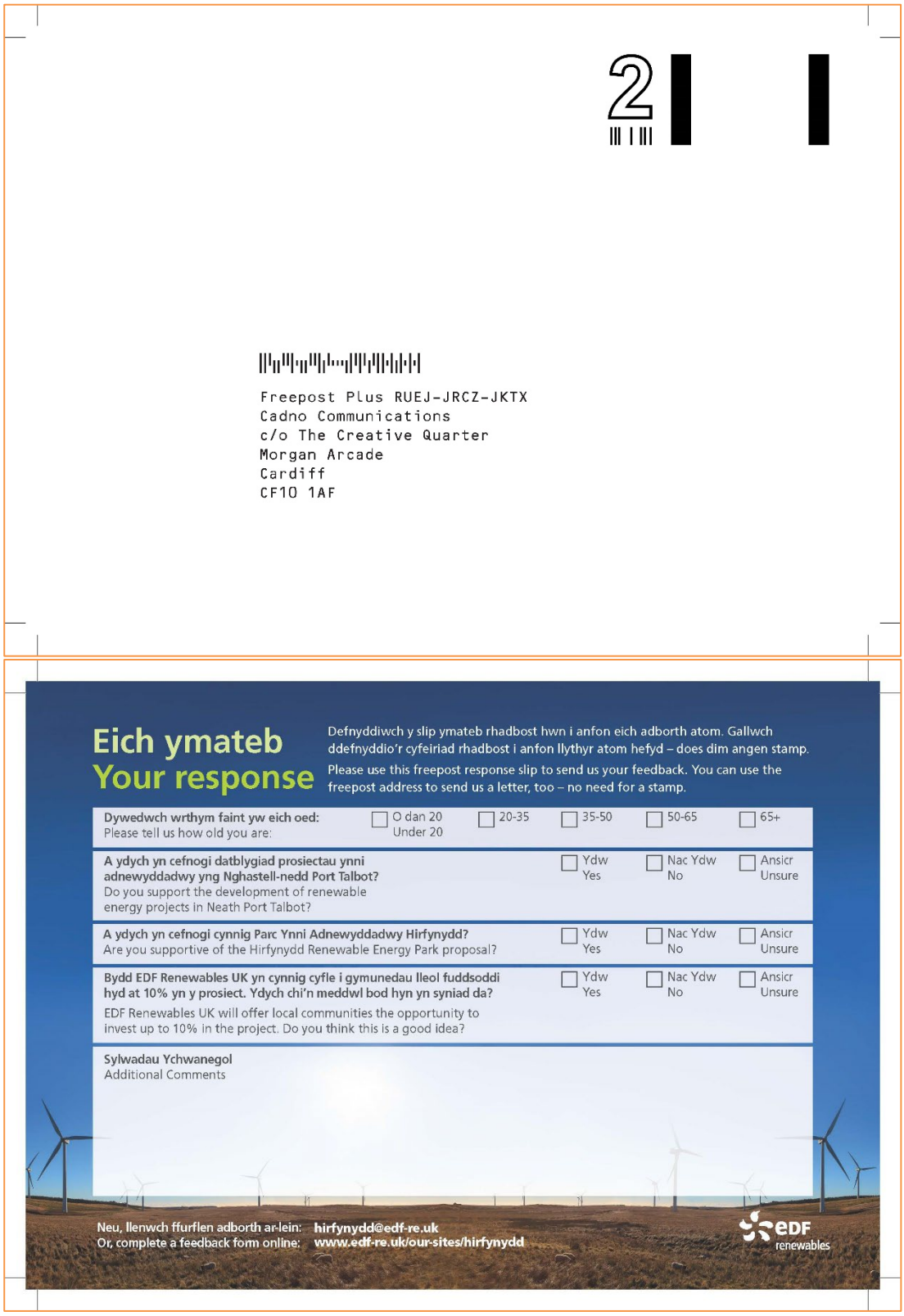
What's more, once complete, the 49.9MW, 190 acre site, can continue to be used for sheep grazing, and a mile long wildlife corridor, hedgerow, wildflower and woodland planting will help us reach our biodiversity net gain target.

Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park will benefit the wider Wales and UK community by providing clean, green electricity that can help secure our energy supplies and over time bring down costs to the consumer.


Next steps
2023
Continue to engage with the local community
Draft the Environmental Statement
Statutory pre-application consultation
Submit the planning application
2024
An independent inspector examines the application
The examination will take the form of written representations, a hearing or inquiry
Recommendations are made to the Welsh Government Minister who takes the final decision


The consultation runs from 3 May to 31 May.
For further information and to provide feedback:
hirfynydd@edf-re.uk
www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd
01639 500871
Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy
Hirfynydd
Renewable Energy Park

Appendix C: Freepost feedback card



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Freepost Plus RUEJ-JRCZ-JKTX
Cadno Communications
c/o The Creative Quarter
Morgan Arcade
Cardiff
CF10 1AF

Eich ymateb
Your response

Defnyddiwch y slip ymateb rhadbost hwn i anfon eich adborth atom. Gallwch ddefnyddio'r cyfeiriad rhadbost i anfon llythyr atom hefyd – does dim angen stamp.
Please use this freepost response slip to send us your feedback. You can use the freepost address to send us a letter, too – no need for a stamp.

Dywedwch wrthym faint yw eich oed: / Please tell us how old you are: ☐ O dan 20 / Under 20 ☐ 20-35 ☐ 35-50 ☐ 50-65 ☐ 65+

A ydych yn cefnogi datblygiad prosiectau ynni adnewyddadwy yng Nghastell-nedd Port Talbot? / Do you support the development of renewable energy projects in Neath Port Talbot? ☐ Ydw / Yes ☐ Nac Ydw / No ☐ Ansicr / Unsure

A ydych yn cefnogi cynnig Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd? / Are you supportive of the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park proposal? ☐ Ydw / Yes ☐ Nac Ydw / No ☐ Ansicr / Unsure

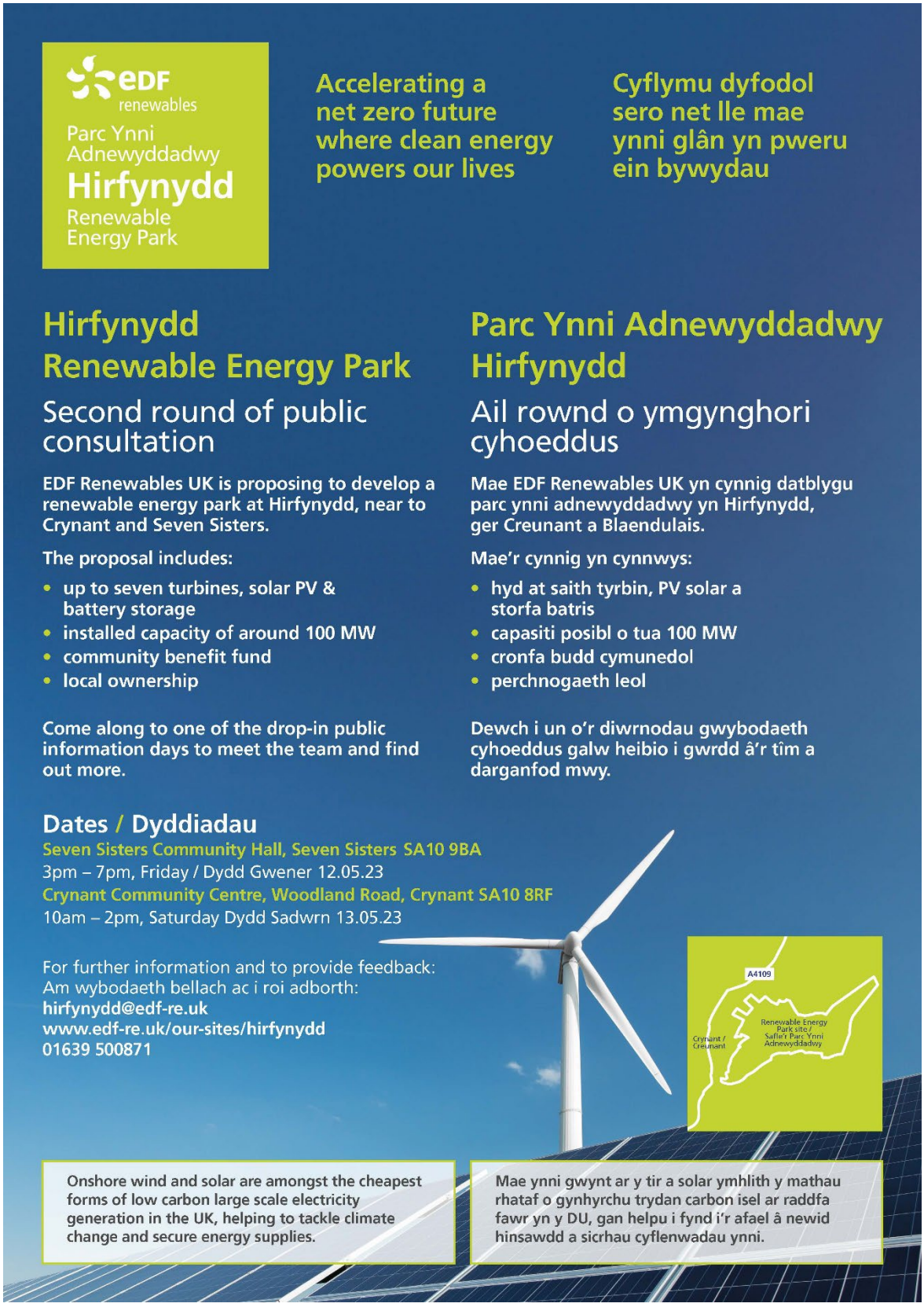
Bydd EDF Renewables UK yn cynnig cyfle i gymunedau lleol fuddsoddi hyd at 10% yn y prosiect. Ydych chi'n meddwl bod hyn yn syniad da? / EDF Renewables UK will offer local communities the opportunity to invest up to 10% in the project. Do you think this is a good idea? ☐ Ydw / Yes ☐ Nac Ydw / No ☐ Ansicr / Unsure

Sylwadau Ychwanegol / Additional Comments

Neu, llenwch ffurflen adborth ar-lein: **hirfynydd@edf-re.uk**
Or, complete a feedback form online: **www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd**

EDF renewables

Appendix D: Poster



Appendix E: Press release 3rd May 2023

EDF Renewables UK holding second round of public consultation events for Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

3 May 2023

EDF Renewables UK is holding its second round of public consultation on the proposed Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park, a hybrid project in South Wales which would include up to seven turbines, a solar array and battery storage.

Local residents will have the chance to find out more and comment on plans with information days being held on Friday 12th May at Seven Sisters Community Hall (3pm – 7pm) and Saturday 13th May at Crynant Community Centre (10am – 2pm).

The first round of consultation took place last autumn, and since then the team have reflected on the feedback received and carried out more surveys and assessments on site to refine plans.

Simon Morgan, Principal Development Manager at EDF Renewables said:

"Climate change is the greatest challenge that we have ever faced and it's happening now. We need projects like Hirfynydd to decarbonise our future. We want to develop this project sensitively, in consultation with the local community, to minimise impacts and maximise benefits.

"We are excited about what this project could deliver, not only in terms of renewable energy but also the supply chain and employment opportunities as well as the potential £270,000 annual community fund.

"The feedback we received from the first consultation was valuable and I would urge people to continue to share their views, insights and local knowledge. We will continue to refine our plans as we move towards submitting our planning application."

These information days are the second round of informal consultation events with formal consultation planned for later this year. No booking is required to attend these events. Information and the opportunity to provide feedback will also be available online at www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd for those unable to attend in person.

Ends

About EDF Renewables UK

EDF Renewables UK and Ireland (www.edf-re.uk) is a subsidiary of EDF Group, one of the world's largest low carbon electricity companies, and our investment and innovation is reducing costs for consumers and bringing significant benefits for communities.

With our operating portfolio of 41 renewable energy sites including battery, solar PV, onshore and offshore wind (together totalling more than 1 GW) we are providing much needed affordable, low carbon electricity. We have an expanding portfolio with almost 10GW of projects in planning and development, including wind, battery and solar PV.

In Wales, EDF Renewables UK has big ambitions including the Garn Fach Wind Farm in Mid Wales and Hirfynydd Energy Park in South Wales.

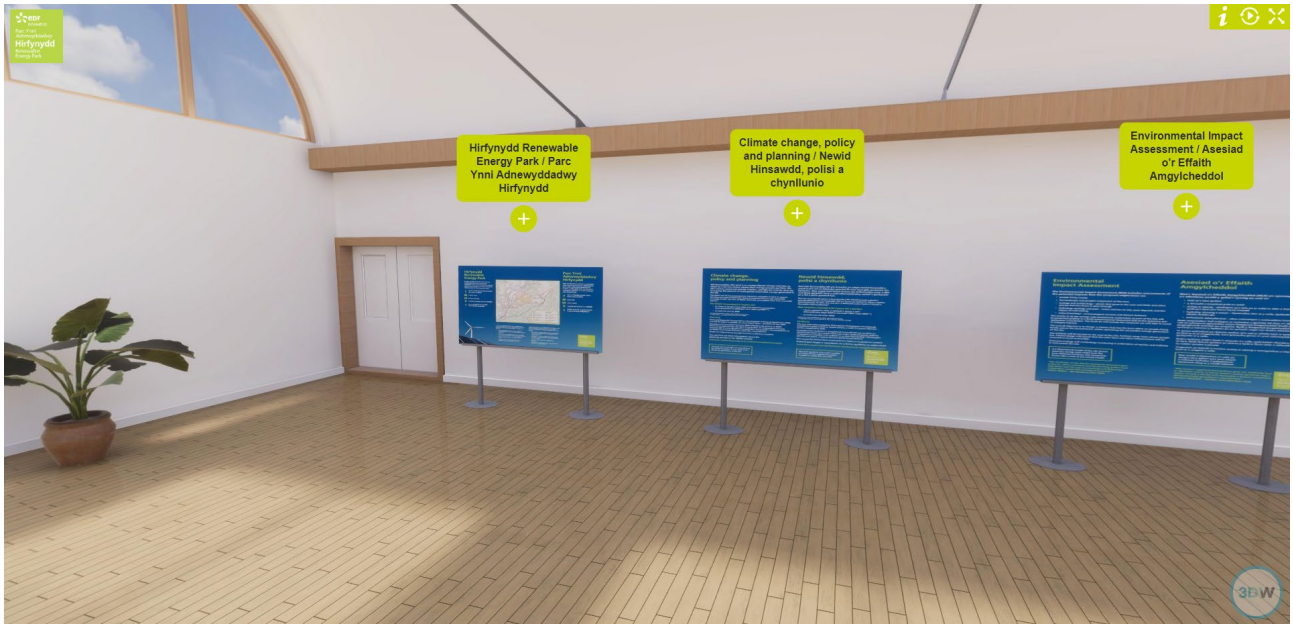
Our Welsh team has a wealth of experience in developing, building and operating renewable energy projects in Wales. We are proud to operate Llangwyryfon, our wind farm near Aberystwyth and the Cemmaes wind farm near Machynlleth as well as building Porth Wen solar project in North Anglesey.

EDF Renewables UK is also partnering with Octo Partners to develop Firlys Solar Farm in South Wales and with DP Energy to bring forward Gwynt Glas, a floating offshore wind farm in the Celtic Sea with a capacity of up to 1GW.

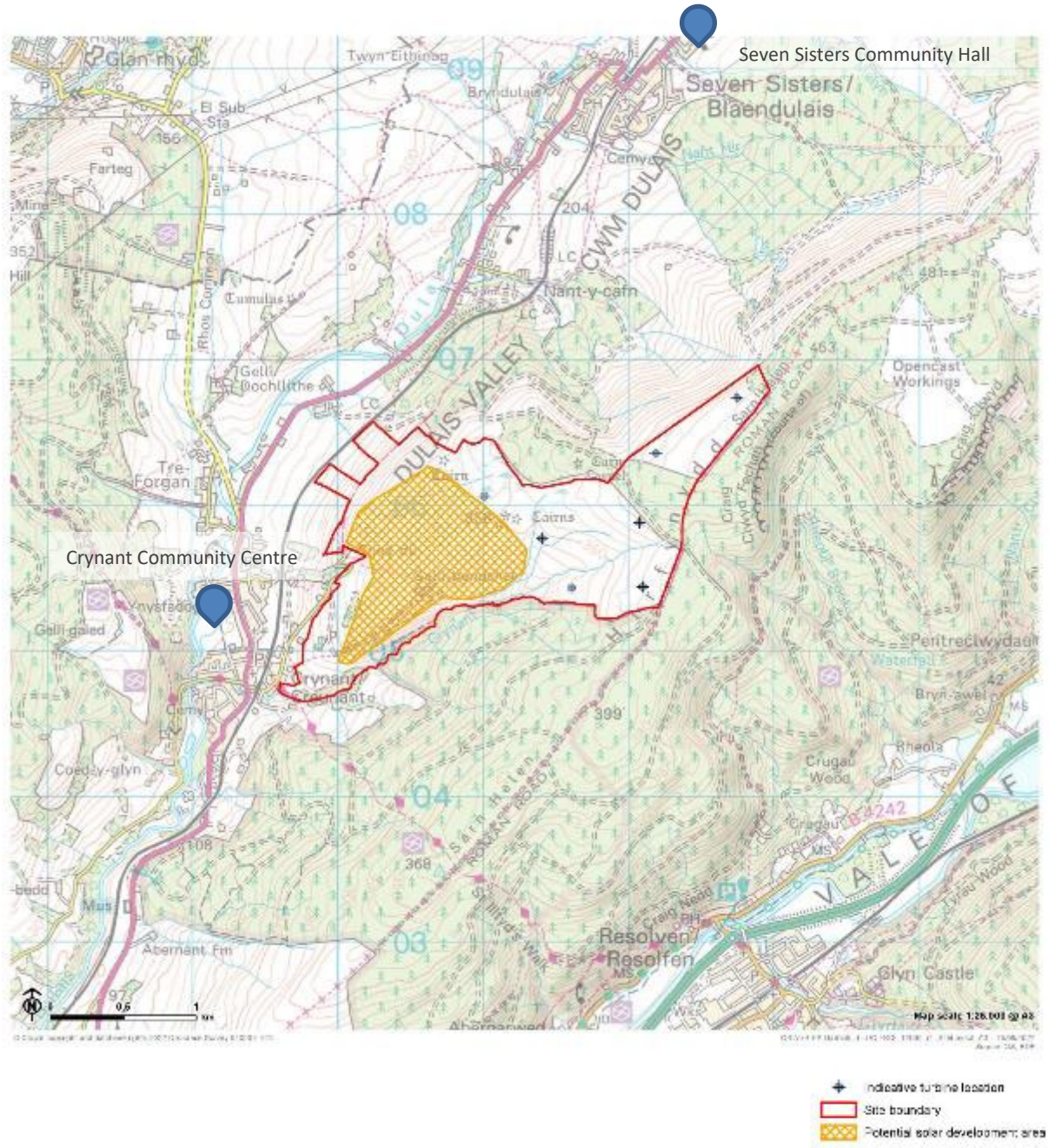
For more information:

Ffion Davies
External Affairs Manager for Wales
EDF Renewables UK, United Kingdom
E ffion.davies@edf-re.uk
T +44 7920 287728
www.edf-re.uk

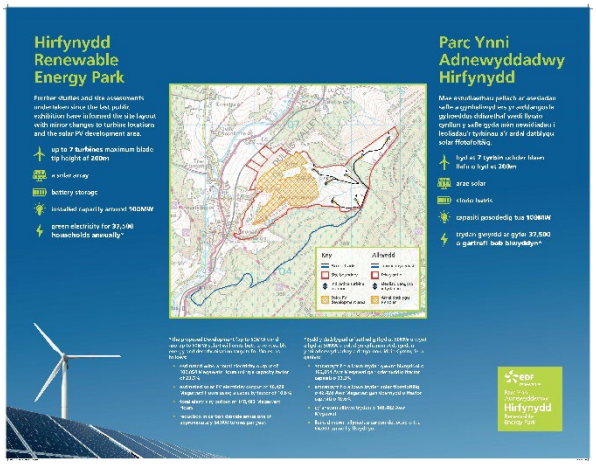
Appendix F: Virtual exhibition

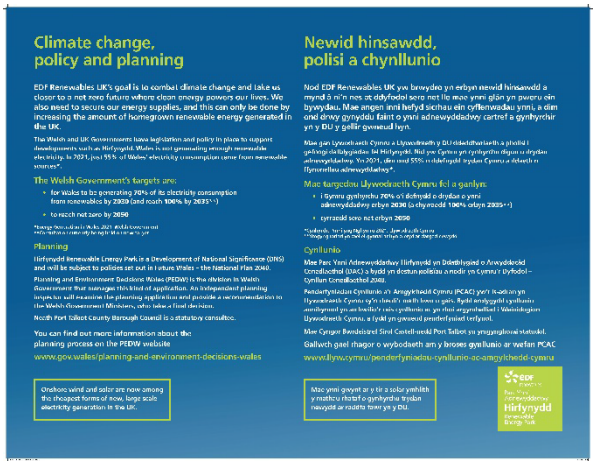


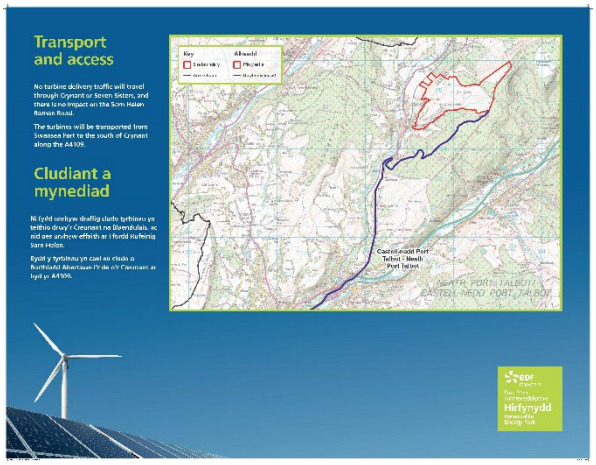
Appendix G: Map of PIDs venues

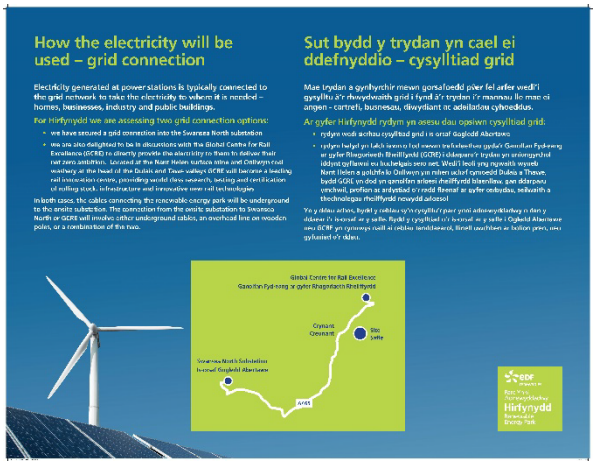


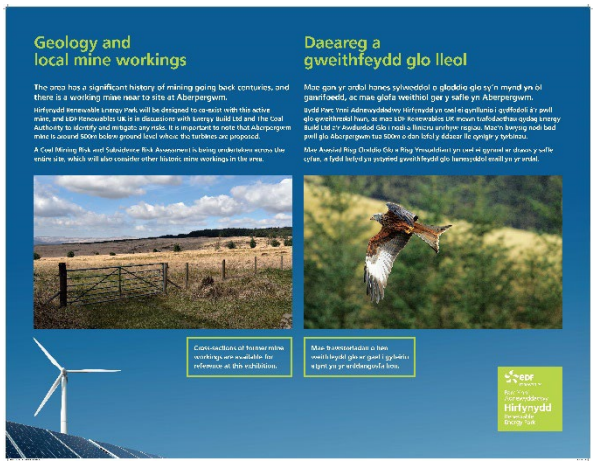
Appendix H: Information boards

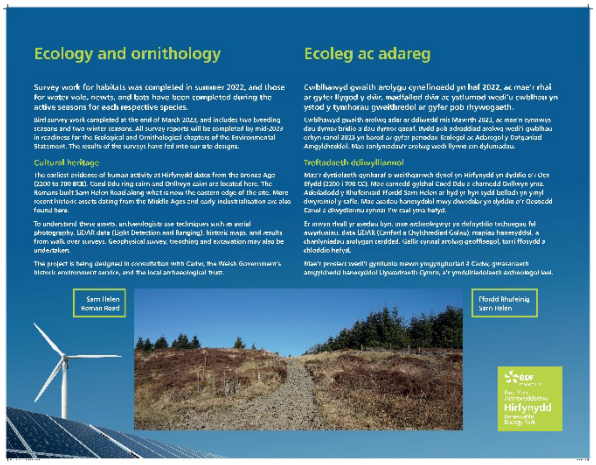


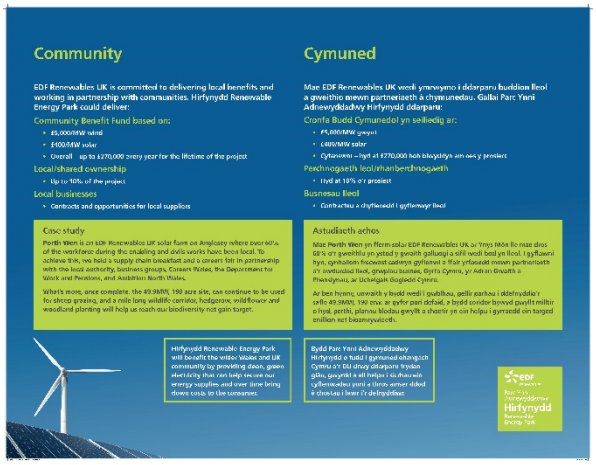






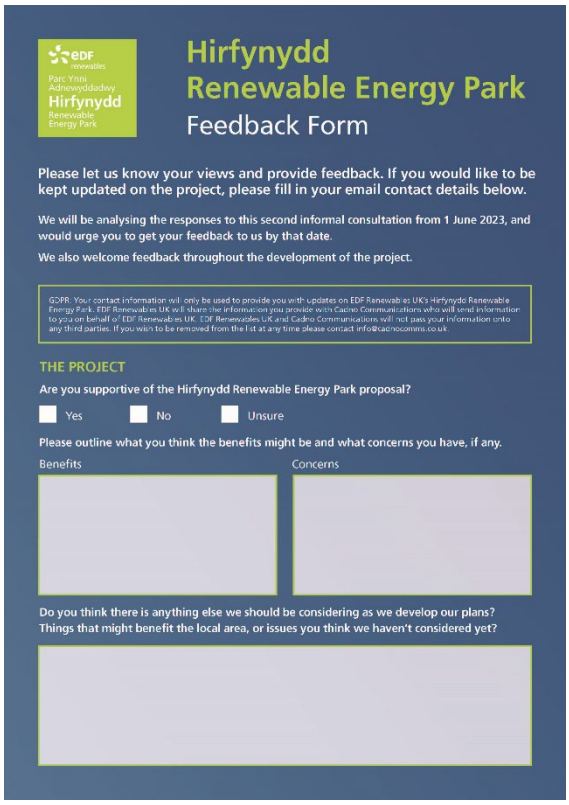

Geology and local mine workings
Daeareg a gweithfeydd glo lleol
The area has a significant history of mining going back centuries, and there is a working mine near to site at Aberpergwm.
Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park will be designed to co-exist with this active mine, and EDF Renewables UK is in discussions with Kentray Build Ltd and the Coal Authority to identify and mitigate any risks. It is important to note that Aberpergwm mine is around 500m below ground level where the turbines are proposed.
A Coal Mining Risk and Subsidence Risk Assessment is being undertaken across the entire site, which will also consider other historic mine workings in the area.
Mae gan yr ardal hanes sylweddol o gloddio glo sy'n mynd yn ôl ganrifoedd, ac mae glofa weithiol gyr y safle yn Aberpergwm.
Bydd Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd yn cael ei gynllunio i gydfodoli â'r pwll glo gweithredol hwn, ac mae EDF Renewables UK mewn trafodaethau gyda Kentray Build Ltd a'r Awdurdod Glo i nodi a lliniaru unrhyw risgiau. Mae'n bwysig nodi bod pwll glo Aberpergwm tua 500m o dan lefel y ddaear lle cynigir y tyrbinau.
Mae Asesiad Risg Cloddio Glo a Risg Ymsuddiant yn cael ei gynnal ar draws y safle cyfan, a fydd hefyd yn ystyried gweithfeydd glo hanesyddol eraill yn yr ardal.
Cross-sections of former mine workings are available for reference at this exhibition.
Mae traws-doriadau o hen weithfeydd glo ar gael i gyfeirio atynt yn yr arddangosfa hon.
Hirfynydd


Ecology and ornithology
Ecoleg ac adareg
Survey work for habitats was completed in summer 2022, and those for water voles, newts, and bats have been completed during the active seasons for each respective species.
Bird survey work completed at the end of March 2023, and includes two breeding seasons and two winter seasons. All survey reports will be completed by mid-2023 in readiness for the Ecological and Ornithological chapters of the Environmental Statement. The results of the surveys have fed into our site designs.
Cultural heritage
The earliest evidence of human activity at Hirfynydd dates from the Bronze Age (2200 to 700 BCE). Coal Level ring cairn and Drillways cairn are located here. The Romans built Sarn Helen Road along what is now the eastern edge of the site. More recent historic assets dating from the Middle Ages and early industrialisation are also found here.
To understand these assets, archaeologists use techniques such as aerial photography, LiDAR data (Light Detection and Ranging), historic maps, and results from walk over surveys. Geophysical survey, trenching and excavation may also be undertaken.
This project is being designed in consultation with Cadw, the Welsh Government's historic environment service, and the local archaeological trust.
Cwblhawyd gwaith arolygu cynefinoedd yn haf 2022, ac mae'r rhai ar gyfer llygod y dŵr, madfallod dŵr ac ystlumod wedi'u cwblhau yn ystod y tymhorau gweithredol ar gyfer pob rhywogaeth.
Cwblhawyd gwaith arolwg adar ar ddiwedd mis Mawrth 2023, ac mae'n cynnwys dau dymor bridio a dau dymor gaeaf. Bydd pob adroddiad arolwg wedi'i gwblhau erbyn canol 2023 yn barod ar gyfer penodau Ecoleg ac Adareg y Datganiad Amgylcheddol. Mae canlyniadau'r arolwg wedi llywio ein dyluniadau.
Treftadaeth ddiwylliannol
Mae'r dystiolaeth gynharaf o weithgarwch dynol yn Hirfynydd yn dyddio o'r Oes Efydd (2200 i 700 CC). Mae cerrydd cylchol Cerrd Dda a cherrydd Drillways yma. Adeiladodd y Rhufeiniaid Ffordd Sarn Helen ar hyd yr hyn sydd bellach yn ymyl dwyreiniol y safle. Mae asedau hanesyddol mwy diweddar yn dyddio o'r Oesoedd Canol a diwydiannu cynnar i'w cael yma hefyd.
Er mwyn deall yr asedau hyn, mae archeolegwyr yn defnyddio technegau fel awyrluniau, data LiDAR (Canfod a Chylchredeg Golau), mapiau hanesyddol, a chanlyniadau arolygon cerdded. Gellir cynnal arolwg geoffisegol, torri ffosydd a chloddio hefyd.
Mae'r prosiect wedi'i gynllunio mewn ymgynghoriad â Cadw, gwasanaeth amgylchedd hanesyddol Llywodraeth Cymru, a'r ymddiriedolaeth archeolegol leol.
Sarn Helen Roman Road
Ffordd Rufeinig Sarn Helen
Hirfynydd


Community
Cymuned
EDF Renewables UK is committed to delivering local benefits and working in partnership with communities. Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park could deliver:
Community Benefit Fund based on:
£5,000/MW wind
£400/MW solar
Overall up to £270,000 every year for the lifetime of the project
Local/shared ownership
Up to 10% of the project
Local businesses
Contracts and opportunities for local suppliers
Case study
Parth Wen is an EDF Renewables UK solar farm on Anglesey where over 60% of the workforce during the enabling and civils works have been local. To achieve this, we held a supply chain breakfast and a careers fair in partnership with the local authority, business groups, Careers Wales, the Department for Work and Pensions, and Ambition North Wales.
What's more, once complete, the 49.9MW, 190 acre site, can continue to be used for sheep grazing, a mile long wildlife corridor, hedgerow, wildflower and woodland planting will help us reach our biodiversity net gain target.
Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park will be-nefit the wider Wales and UK community by providing clean, green electricity that can help secure our energy supplies and over time bring down costs to the consumer.
Mae EDF Renewables UK wedi ymrwymo i ddarparu buddion lleol a gweithio mewn partneriaeth â chymunedau. Gallai Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd ddarparu:
Cronfa Budd Cymunedol yn seiliedig ar:
£5,000/MW gwynt
£400/MW solar
Cyfanswm – hyd at £270,000 bob blwyddyn am oes y prosiect
Perchnogaeth lleol/rhanberchnogaeth
Hyd at 10% o'r prosiect
Busnesau lleol
Contractau a chyfleoedd i gyflenwyr lleol
Astudiaeth achos
Mae Parth Wen yn fferm solar EDF Renewables UK ar Ynys Môn lle mae dros 60% o'r gweithlu yn ystod y gwaith galluogi a sifil wedi bod yn lleol. I gyflawni hyn, cynhalion frecwast cadwyn gyflenwi a ffair yrfaoedd mewn partneriaeth â'r awdurdod lleol, grwpiau busnes, Gyrfa Cymru, yr Adran Gwaith a Phensiynau, ac Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru.
Ar ben hynny, unwaith y bydd wedi'i gwblhau, gellir parhau i ddefnyddio'r safle 49.9MW, 190 erw, ar gyfer pori defaid, a bydd corridor bywyd gwyllt milltir o hyd, perthi, plannu blodau gwyllt a choetir yn cael helpu i gyrraedd ein targed enillion net bioamrywiaeth.
Bydd Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd o fudd i gymuned ehangach Cymru a'r DU drwy ddarparu trydan glân, gwyrdd a all helpu i sicrhau ein cyflenwadau ynni a lleihau amser dros y cyfnod i fwrw'r defnyddwr.
Hirfynydd


Next steps
Y camau nesaf
2023
Continue to engage with the local community
Draft the Environmental Statement
Statutory pre-application consultation
Submit the planning application
Parhau i ymgysylltu â'r gymuned leol
Drafftio'r Datganiad Amgylcheddol
Ymgynghoriad statudol cyn ymgeisio
Cyflwyno'r cais cynllunio
2024
An independent inspector examines the application
The examination will take the form of written representations, a hearing or inquiry
Recommendations are made to the Welsh Government Minister who takes the final decision
Arolygydd annibynnol yn archwilio'r cais
Bydd yr archwiliad ar ffurf sylwadau ysgrifenedig, gwrandawiad neu ymchwiliad
Gwneir argymhellion i Weinidog Llywodraeth Cymru sy'n gwneud y penderfyniad terfynol
For further information and to provide feedback:
Am ragor o wybodaeth ac i roi adborth:
hirfynydd@edf-re.uk
www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd
01639 500871
Hirfynydd

Appendix I: Printed feedback form



Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park
Feedback Form

Please let us know your views and provide feedback. If you would like to be kept updated on the project, please fill in your email contact details below.

We will be analysing the responses to this second informal consultation from 1 June 2023, and would urge you to get your feedback to us by that date.

We also welcome feedback throughout the development of the project.

GDPR: Your contact information will only be used to provide you with updates on EDF Renewables UK's Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park. EDF Renewables UK will share the information you provide with Cadno Communications who will send information to you on behalf of EDF Renewables UK. EDF Renewables UK and Cadno Communications will not pass your information onto any third parties. If you wish to be removed from the list at any time please contact info@cadnocomms.co.uk

THE PROJECT

Are you supportive of the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park proposal?

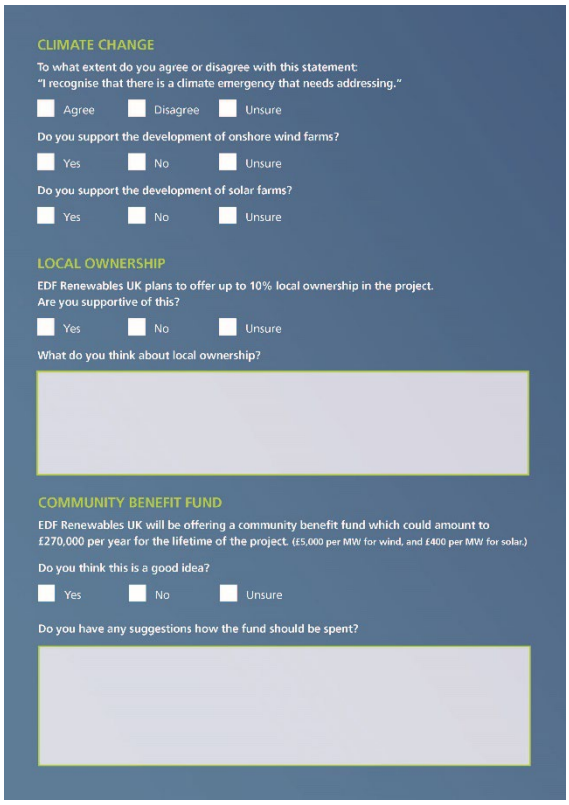
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Please outline what you think the benefits might be and what concerns you have, if any.

Benefits

Concerns

Do you think there is anything else we should be considering as we develop our plans? Things that might benefit the local area, or issues you think we haven't considered yet?



CLIMATE CHANGE

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement:
"I recognise that there is a climate emergency that needs addressing."

☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Unsure

Do you support the development of onshore wind farms?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Do you support the development of solar farms?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

LOCAL OWNERSHIP

EDF Renewables UK plans to offer up to 10% local ownership in the project.
Are you supportive of this?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

What do you think about local ownership?

COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

EDF Renewables UK will be offering a community benefit fund which could amount to £270,000 per year for the lifetime of the project. (£5,000 per MW for wind, and £400 per MW for solar.)

Do you think this is a good idea?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Do you have any suggestions how the fund should be spent?

ABOUT THE PUBLIC INFORMATION DAYS

How useful did you find the information?

☐ Very useful ☐ Quite useful ☐ Neutral
☐ Not very useful ☐ Not at all useful

What did you find to be the most useful elements of the event? (Tick all that apply)

☐ The 3-dimensional interactive computer model
☐ The opportunity to provide feedback
☐ The opportunity to speak to the project team
☐ The information boards
☐ The information booklet
☐ The opportunity to meet others in the community
☐ Other reference materials

Do you have any thoughts on how we could improve the way that the information is presented?

ABOUT YOU

How old are you?

☐ Under 20 ☐ 20-35 ☐ 35-50 ☐ 50-65 ☐ 65+ ☐ Prefer not to say

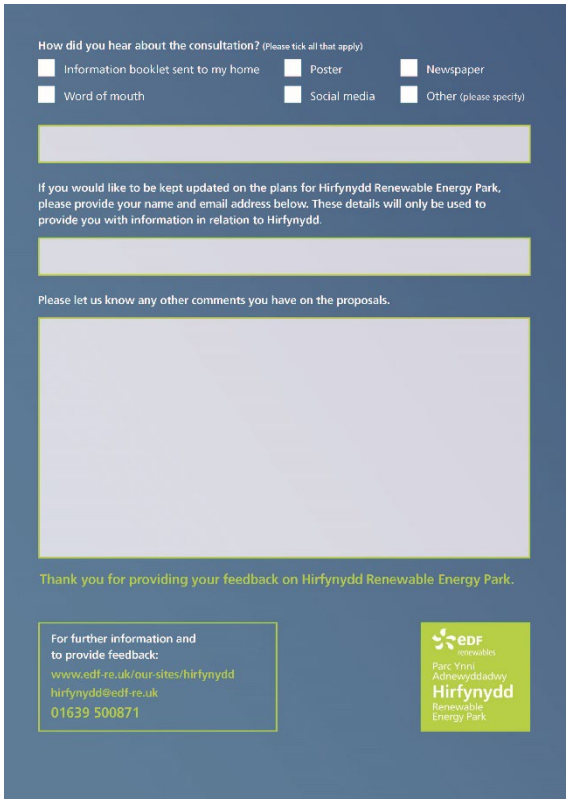
Which best describes you?

☐ I live in the area ☐ I work in the area ☐ Other (please specify)

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

☐ No ☐ Yes (please state which organisation)

Please provide your postcode to allow us to identify where respondents are located



How did you hear about the consultation? (Please tick all that apply)

☐ Information booklet sent to my home ☐ Poster ☐ Newspaper
☐ Word of mouth ☐ Social media ☐ Other (please specify)

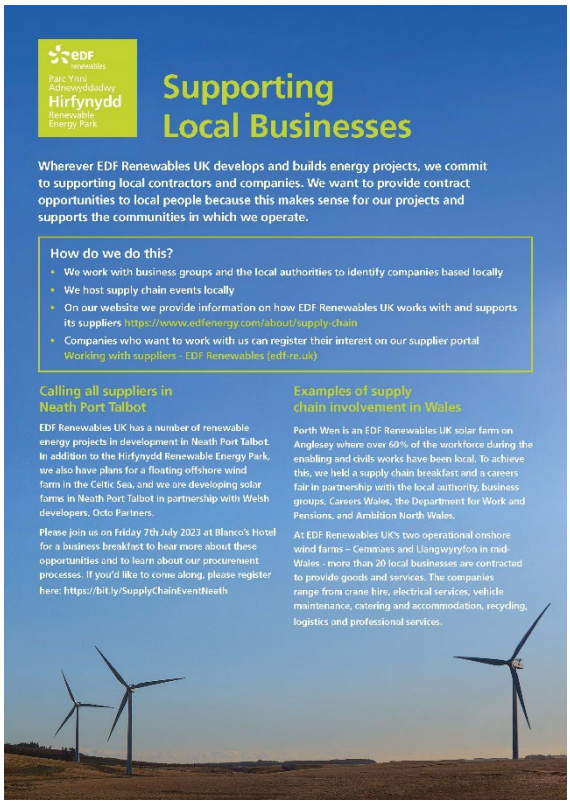
If you would like to be kept updated on the plans for Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park, please provide your name and email address below. These details will only be used to provide you with information in relation to Hirfynydd.

Please let us know any other comments you have on the proposals.

Thank you for providing your feedback on Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park.

For further information and to provide feedback:
www.edf-re.uk/our-sites/hirfynydd
hirfynydd@edf-re.uk
01639 500871

Appendix J: Fact sheets



EDF renewables
Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

Supporting Local Businesses

Wherever EDF Renewables UK develops and builds energy projects, we commit to supporting local contractors and companies. We want to provide contract opportunities to local people because this makes sense for our projects and supports the communities in which we operate.

How do we do this?

- We work with business groups and the local authorities to identify companies based locally
- We host supply chain events locally
- On our website we provide information on how EDF Renewables UK works with and supports its suppliers https://www.edfenergy.com/about/supply-chain
- Companies who want to work with us can register their interest on our supplier portal Working with suppliers - EDF Renewables (edf-re.uk)

Calling all suppliers in Neath Port Talbot

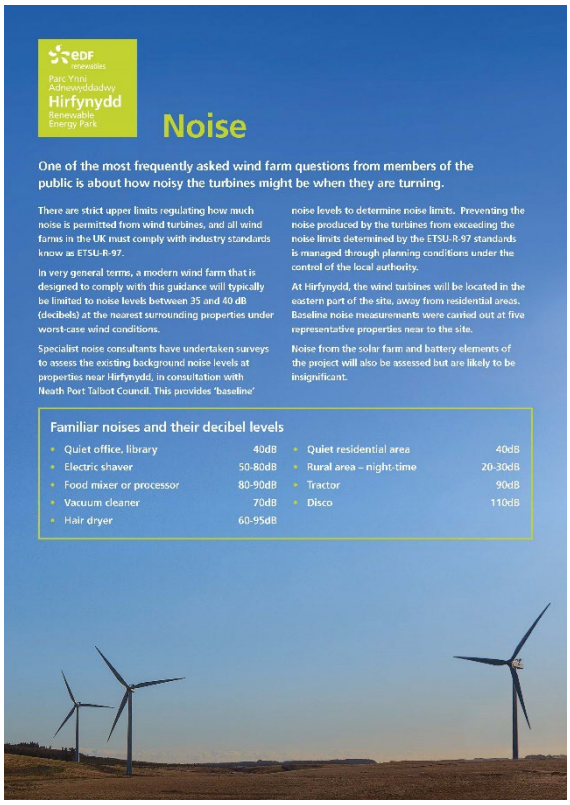
EDF Renewables UK has a number of renewable energy projects in development in Neath Port Talbot. In addition to the Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park, we also have plans for a floating offshore wind farm in the Celtic Sea, and we are developing solar farms in Neath Port Talbot in partnership with Welsh developers, Octo Partners.

Please join us on Friday 7th July 2023 at Blanco's Hotel for a business breakfast to hear more about these opportunities and to learn about our procurement processes. If you'd like to come along, please register here: https://bit.ly/SupplyChainEventNeath

Examples of supply chain involvement in Wales

Porth Wen is an EDF Renewables UK solar farm on Anglesey where over 60% of the workforce during the enabling and civils works have been local. To achieve this, we held a supply chain breakfast and a careers fair in partnership with the local authority, business groups, Careers Wales, the Department for Work and Pensions, and Ambition North Wales.

At EDF Renewables UK's two operational onshore wind farms – Cemmaes and Llangwyryfon in mid-Wales - more than 20 local businesses are contracted to provide goods and services. The companies range from crane hire, electrical services, vehicle maintenance, catering and accommodation, recycling, logistics and professional services.



EDF renewables
Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

Noise

One of the most frequently asked wind farm questions from members of the public is about how noisy the turbines might be when they are turning.

There are strict upper limits regulating how much noise is permitted from wind turbines, and all wind farms in the UK must comply with industry standards know as ETSU-R-97.

In very general terms, a modern wind farm that is designed to comply with this guidance will typically be limited to noise levels between 35 and 40 dB (decibels) at the nearest surrounding properties under worst-case wind conditions.

Specialist noise consultants have undertaken surveys to assess the existing background noise levels at properties near Hirfynydd, in consultation with Neath Port Talbot Council. This provides "baseline" noise levels to determine noise limits. Preventing the noise produced by the turbines from exceeding the noise limits determined by the ETSU-R-97 standards is managed through planning conditions under the control of the local authority.

At Hirfynydd, the wind turbines will be located in the eastern part of the site, away from residential areas. Baseline noise measurements were carried out at five representative properties near to the site.

Noise from the solar farm and battery elements of the project will also be assessed but are likely to be insignificant.

Familiar noises and their decibel levels

Quiet office, library	40dB	Quiet residential area	40dB
Electric shaver	50-80dB	Rural area – night-time	20-30dB
Food mixer or processor	80-90dB	Tractor	90dB
Vacuum cleaner	70dB	Disco	110dB
Hair dryer	60-95dB		

EDF renewables
Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

Glint and Glare

What is shadow flicker and when does it happen?

Put simply, shadow flicker is the shadow of a turbine flicking on and off a surface as the blades rotate. The occurrence of shadow flicker is the result of several environmental conditions coinciding, it can therefore only occur in very specific circumstance. For example, the sun must be at a certain level in the sky, the sky must be clear enough for the sun to shine directly, and the sun must be shining onto a window of a building from behind a turbine rotor.

Should I be concerned?

Whilst shadow flicker can be nuisance, it is not considered to cause a significant risk to health[1].

A 2011 UK Government report concluded that shadow flicker had not been an extensive issue, and the small number of complaints had been effectively resolved using turbine shut down systems[2].

How is shadow flicker managed and mitigated?

The most direct way to mitigate shadow flicker is through the design process, such as positioning turbines to minimise its impact. If the design process cannot fully eliminate shadow flicker, software can be used to model its theoretical occurrence, this data can then be deployed to automatically stop turbines, this is deemed highly effective[3].

What about glint and glare from solar panels?

Solar panels are designed to absorb as much light as possible, however sometimes glint can be produced as a direct reflection of the sun from the surface of the solar panel. A glint and glare assessment is taken as part of the planning application to ensure there are no unacceptable effects. Screening from trees and other plants can be effective in blocking glare.

1 Update of UK Shadow Flicker Evidence Base, (2011), Parsons Brinckerhoff for the Department of Energy and Climate Change
2 Update of UK Shadow Flicker Evidence Base, (2011), Parsons Brinckerhoff for the Department of Energy and Climate Change
3 Update of UK Shadow Flicker Evidence Base, (2011), Parsons Brinckerhoff for the Department of Energy and Climate Change

EDF renewables
Parc Ynni Adnewyddadwy Hirfynydd Renewable Energy Park

Frequently Asked Questions

Does the development of wind power use a lot of energy? What is the 'carbon payback'?

Modern wind turbines pay back the energy used in manufacture within 5-8 months depending on the wind speed of the site and the type of turbine used. Wind turbines generate electricity without generating carbon dioxide or any other greenhouse gases, the fuel is cost free, and it will never run out.

Do renewable energy developments have a negative effect on tourism?

A report for the Welsh Government in 2014 concluded that effects of wind farms on tourism will be very limited, and the case studies did not reveal any evidence of significant impacts on tourism, with visitors saying they were positive or indifferent about wind farm development. Wales has relatively few wind farms compared to other European countries. Taking Scotland as an example, the evidence suggests that even though there is a far greater prevalence of wind farms there compared to Wales, tourism has not been negatively impacted, as evidenced in a 2021 report for the Scottish Government.

How will this proposal effect local house prices?

There is much research that concludes there is no corelation between the proximity of wind farms and property prices. A survey by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors on the potential impact of wind farms on house prices concluded that "proximity to a wind farm simply was not an issue". Estate agents in the case study areas analysed reported that there were generally other factors that had a more significant effect on property prices than a wind farm nearby. A more recent study looking at properties near to wind farms in Scotland found that there were no consistent negative effects on house price growth from being situated near to a wind farm.

Is it sunny enough here for solar panels to be effective?

Yes, solar panels work if there is light, so they can even work when it is cloudy. On an annual basis, solar power generation is extremely reliable, because the exact time of sunrise and sunset is known for each day, hence the number of daylight hours available, it is therefore possible to forecast the electricity generation ("yield") from a solar farm very accurately.

Why is battery storage needed?

To achieve net zero by 2050, we must end our reliance on coal and gas power stations and replace them with low carbon power sources. Battery storage plays a key role in securing this transition because they allow for the storage of energy when there is surplus, which can then be released onto the grid when there is demand. Batteries also provide energy security, as they can immediately release energy onto the grid, reducing the risk of blackouts. It is estimated that Britain will need 25+ GW of battery storage by 2050, up from around 1GW today.

Is there a risk of the batteries overheating?

Careful attention is paid to cell selection, module design and site layout, to ensure multiple levels of fire risk mitigation. A site-specific Emergency Response Plan (ERP) will be developed in conjunction with the local Fire and Rescue Service.

What happens when turbines are overproducing and turned off?

If the site has battery storage, surplus energy can be stored, and this can then be released onto the grid at a later date when demand is higher.

Do renewable energy projects benefit the local area?

EDF Renewables UK will always offer a community benefit package alongside its renewable energy projects. The fund is typically managed by an independent third party, not by EDF Renewables UK. There are also local economic benefits in terms of jobs and construction, operations and maintenance contracts for local companies. EDF Renewables UK will undertake a socio-economic report to estimate the level of the local socio-economic impact. Other benefits include biodiversity enhancements on site and business rates payments.

Is there support for renewable energy projects?

Whilst there can be some understandable apprehension towards the development of renewable energy, it is widely supported by members of the public. A RenewableUK survey conducted in 2022 found that 84% of those asked in Neath said they support onshore wind energy generation, and 91% said they support solar power as energy generation. Similar research on a national level, conducted on behalf of the UK Government in Winter 2022 found that 85% of people said that they supported the use of renewable energy such as wind power, solar energy and biomass to provide electricity, fuel and heat.