Uwchraddio'r Grid
Pentir i Drawsfynydd

The Great Grid Upgrade
Pentir to Trawsfynydd



PTNO-AEC-ZZZZ-ZZZZZZ-RPT-ES-000038

Prosiect i Atgyfnerthu'r cysylltiad rhwng Pentir a Thrawsfynydd

Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement Project

Glaslyn Cables Works: Planning Statement
November

nationalgrid

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application made by National Grid Electricity Transmission (plc) (NGET) ('the Applicant') for full planning permission for the extension of the existing Wern Cables Sealing End Compound (CSEC) including a new permanent access; a new Minffordd CSEC and Tunnel Head House (THH) with permanent access; the removal of the existing Garth CSEC; installation of new 400 kV cables to replace redundant 400 kilovolt (kV) and 132 kV cables; and other associated infrastructure and ancillary works.

1.1.2 The proposed works are between the existing Wern cable sealing end compound (CSEC) and the existing Garth CSEC. They span approximately 6 kilometres (km) and generally follow the corridor of the A487 Porthmadog bypass in an east to west direction. Replacement of the Glaslyn Cables is a component of the Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement Project (the 'Project'). Details on the need case for the proposed works and the Project are set out in Section 2 of this Planning Statement.

1.1.3 The proposed works constitute 'major development', as defined in article 2 of the Town and County Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (Ref. 1-1), as it constitutes development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare (ha) or more. The proposed works site is defined by the red line boundary in **Plate 3-1** below and covers an area of 102 ha. An application for full planning permission will be submitted to Gwynedd Council ('the Council'), in its capacity as the relevant Local Planning Authority (LPA).

1.1.4 In accordance with section 61Z of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (Ref. 1-2), the Applicant has undertaken statutory pre-application consultation for the proposed works. The purpose of the consultation is to provide adjoining landowners and occupiers, community consultees (including local members), specialist consultees and any non-statutory consultees (as necessary) with an opportunity to review and comment on the proposals and work undertaken to date, prior to the submission of the planning application to the Council.

1.2 Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement Project

1.2.1 The Project encompasses the reinforcement of overhead lines and cables on the existing circuits ('inland' A circuit and 'coastal' B circuit) between Pentir and Trawsfynydd substations in North West Wales. The Project is part of the wider network transmission upgrades required to facilitate the connection of 50 Gigawatt (GW) of offshore wind by 2030 (5.48 GW in the north-west region). This was confirmed in the National Energy System Operator (NESO) Network Options Assessment (NOA) 2022 (Ref. 1-3) and the Holistic Network Design (HND) 2022 (Ref. 1-4).

1.2.2 The Applicant requires other works to be consented that are integral to the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project. The consents associated with these other works are set out below and illustrated in **Plate 1-1** further below.

1.2.3 Full planning permission required from the relevant LPA:

- **Pentir** – Replacement of existing underground cables, installation of new cross site underground cables in the existing Pentir substation; and ancillary works.
- **Bryncir** – A new substation south of Bryncir village and associated infrastructure and ancillary works, including a new access road from the A487 and the upgrading of an existing agricultural access track, and new underground 132 kV cables connecting to the existing Electricity Networks overhead line.
- **Trawsfynydd** – Installation of new underground cables and cable sealing ends, shunt reactor and gantry and the widening of part of the existing access road in the fenced compound at Trawsfynydd substation and ancillary works

1.2.4 Section 37 consent under the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref. 1-5) from the Secretary of State:

- **Bryncir** – Replacement of Tower 4ZC067 and downleads into the proposed Bryncir substation. Installation of fibre optic cable.
- **Bryncir** – A new 132 kV overhead line (for part of the route) to connect the existing SPEN DB route to the Bryncir substation and removal of a redundant section of SPEN DB route.
- **Trawsfynydd** – Amendment to downleads from the existing Tower 4ZC005 to turn into a new gantry in the substation and changes to the alignment of substation compound south-western boundary fence.

1.2.5 The works contained in the Project are at locations between Pentir substation (SH 559677), approximately 4.5 km south-west of Bangor and Trawsfynydd substation (SH 691384), approximately 1.2 km south of Gellilydan the administrative areas of Gwynedd Council and Eryri National Park Authority. The location of the Project is illustrated on **ES Figure 7.2.1**.

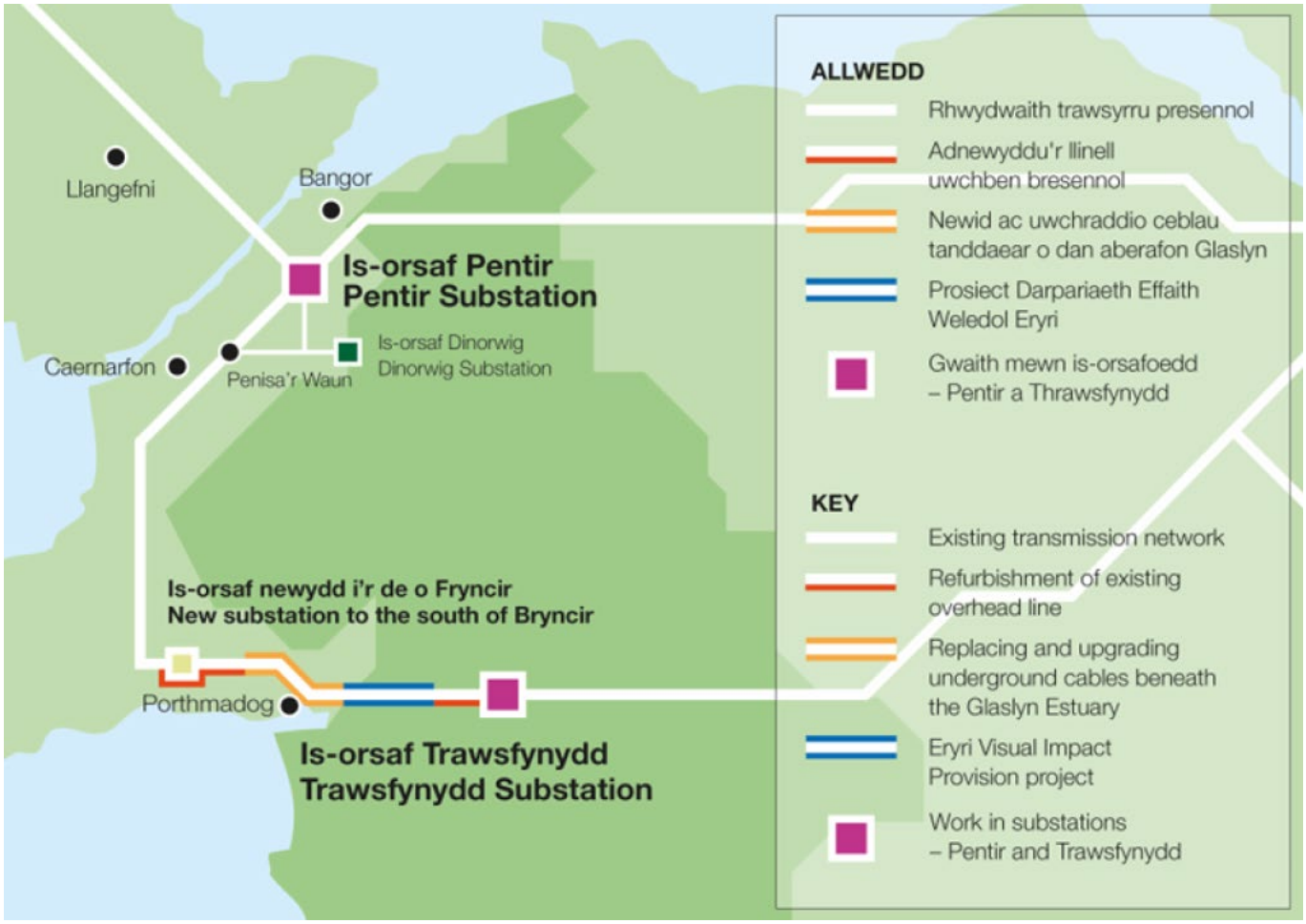


Plate 1-1 – Project schematic

1.2.6 The proposed works forming part of this planning application are set out in Section 1.3. Some other works associated with the wider Project set out and described in paragraphs 1.2.3 to 1.2.5 will require subsequent approvals either through the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) or the Electricity Act 1989. Development associated with the proposed works to Pentir substation, Bryncir, and Trawsfynydd substation, as described in paragraph 1.2.4, will be the subject of separate planning applications.

1.3 The Proposed Works

1.3.1 For the purpose of the planning application, the description of the proposed works is:

"The extension of the existing Wern Cables Sealing End Compound (CSEC) including a new permanent access; a new Minffordd CSEC and Tunnel Head House (THH) with permanent access; the removal of the existing Garth CSEC; installation of new 400 kV cables to replace redundant 400 kV and 132 kV cables; and other associated infrastructure and ancillary works ."

1.3.2 Further details of the proposed works are in Section 4 of this Planning Statement, and a description of the design and access arrangements are in the Design and Access Statement, which supports this planning application.

1.3.3 Full planning permission is being sought for the proposed works. Some of the proposed works, such as the cable installation, typically would benefit from deemed consent (commonly known as 'permitted development') under Schedule 2, Class G, Part 17 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) (GDPO 1995) (Ref. 1-6). However, section G.1 (b) (i) of the GPDO (as amended) states that development is not permitted in a site of special scientific interest. This is relevant as parts of the proposed works site crosses the Glaslyn Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ysbyty Bron y Garth SSSI. In addition, article 3 (10) of the GDPO 1995 (as amended) confirms that development is not permitted by the Order if it constitutes Schedule 2 development within the meaning of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (Ref. 1-7).

1.3.4 In view of the location of part of this proposal in the Glaslyn SSSI there is potential for the proposal to result in significant adverse effects on this sensitive area. An environmental impact assessment (EIA) screening request was submitted to Gwynedd Council on the 6th September 2024. Gwynedd Council provided its screening opinion on the 10th October 2024 confirming that it would be necessary to undertake an EIA in respect of the proposed works at Glaslyn. As the proposed works at Pentir, Bryncir and Trawsfynydd form part of the same Project they have been subject to EIA.

1.3.5 Due to the urgency of the infrastructure upgrades comprising the Project, the works have been identified as part of Ofgem's Accelerated Strategy Transmission Investment (ASTI) framework (Ref. 1-8), which includes decisions to streamline the regulatory approval process.

1.4 The Applicant

1.4.1 The Applicant operates the electricity transmission system in Great Britain and owns the system in England and Wales. Transmission of electricity in Great Britain requires permission by way of a licence granted under Section 6(1)(b) of the Electricity Act 1989 ("the Electricity Act"). The Applicant has been granted a transmission licence and is bound by the legal obligations, which are set out in the Electricity Act and in the transmission licence.

1.4.2 The Applicant is the only company licensed to transmit electricity in England and Wales. Under Section 9 of the Electricity Act, the Applicant is required, in this capacity, to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission to facilitate competition in the supply and generation of electricity.

1.5 Purpose and Structure of this Planning Statement

1.5.1 The structure of this Planning Statement is as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction – This chapter introduces the proposed works and the Project, provides context for the preparation of this Planning Statement and planning application, and provides an overview of the content of the planning application and EIA.
- Chapter 2: The Need and Benefit Case – Sets out the overarching needs case for the proposed works which form part of the wider Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement (PTR) project.

- Chapter 3: Site and Surroundings – Provides a description of the proposed works site and the surrounding area, including statutory and non-statutory designations, planning policy allocations, the spatial context in relation to the Project and an overview of relevant planning history associated with the proposed works site.
- Chapter 4: The Proposed Works – Details each element associated with the proposed works, the access arrangements and provides an overview of the construction works.
- Chapter 5: Pre-Application Consultation – Provides an overview of the pre-application consultation undertaken for the proposed works, including engagement with Gwynedd Council and relevant stakeholders and details of the statutory pre-application consultation.
- Chapter 6: Planning Policy Context – This chapter provides an overview of key legislation relevant to the proposed works, sets out the National Development Framework and Local Development Plan and considers any relevant policies contained in these documents. Policy and legislation that can be considered a material consideration when determining the application is also outlined in this chapter.
- Chapter 7: Planning Appraisal – This chapter presents an appraisal of the proposed works' compliance with the key planning policy identified in Chapter 6 of this Planning Statement.
- Chapter 8: Planning Balance and Conclusion – Provides a summary of the planning balance following the appraisal of the proposed works.

1.6 Form and Structure of the Planning Application

1.6.1 This Planning Statement should be read with the wider application documents outlined in **Table 1-1**.

Table 1-1 – Application documents

Application documents
Forms and certificates
Application Form
Plans and relevant information
Site Location Plan (1:10000)
Existing Site Plans (40 sheets) (1:500)
Temporary Site Plans (40 sheets) (1:500)
Proposed Permanent Site Plan (40 sheets) (1:500)
Minffordd CSEC and THH Proposed Site Plan (1:250)
Minffordd CSE Compound and THH Sections and Elevations (1:250)
Minffordd Tunnel Head House North and South Elevations (1:50 or 1:100)
Wern CSEC Proposed Site Plan (1:250)

Application documents
Wern CSEC Sections and Elevations (1:250)
Decommissioning Works 400 kV Stop Joints Plan/Detail (Not to Scale)
Decommissioning Works 400 kV Monitoring Pit Typical Detail (Not to Scale)
Decommissioning Works 400 kV Backfilling and Reinstatement Typical Detail (Not to Scale)
Decommissioning Works 132 kV Stop Joints Plan/Detail (Not to Scale)
Decommissioning Works 132 kV Monitoring Pit Typical Detail (Not to Scale)
Cable Crossings Open Cut Trench Typical Detail (1:100)
Cable Crossing Under Main River Typical Detail (1:100 or 1:500)
Cable Crossing Under Ditch Typical Detail (1:100 or 1:500)
Cable Crossing Under Road Typical Detail (1:100 or 1:500)
Cable Crossing at A487 Roundabout (1:100 or 1:500)
Cable HDD Typical Detail (1:100 or 1:500)
Cable Crossing Under Utility (1:100 or 1:500)
Cable Crossing Above Utility (1:100 or 1:500)
Temporary Road Typical Detail (1:20)
Permanent Road Typical Detail (1:20)
Permanent Road Bridge Crossing Detail (1:50 or Not to Scale)
Bellmouth and Road Widening Plan (11 sheets) (1:250 or 1:500)
Link Box Pillar Typical Detail (1:25, 1:50 or 1:250)
Technical documents
Planning Statement
Design and Access Statement
Pre-Application Consultation Report
Environmental Statement
Habitats Regulations Assessment
Green Infrastructure Statement
Welsh Language Statement

1.7 Environment Impact Assessment

1.7.1 EIA screening is the process of determining whether a project falls under the descriptions or thresholds in Schedule 1 and 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) 2017 (the '2017 TCP EIA Regulations') or the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales)

Regulations 2017 (2017 Electricity Works EIA Regs) (Ref. 1-9) and if there is a potential for significant effects on the environment.

1.7.2 No element of the Project falls within the developments identified in Schedule 1 of the 2017 TCP EIA Regs or the 2017 Electricity Works (EIA) Regs and none are a type of development described in Schedule 2 of the 2017 TCP EIA Regs. However, NGET is mindful that the Regulations have been found to have a *"wide scope and broad purpose"* and that the Glaslyn Cables section of the Project could be deemed an urban development project under Schedule 2, category 10(b) due to the overall area of the development exceeding 5 hectares (ha).

1.7.3 A Screening Opinion for the Glaslyn Cables element of the Project was requested from Gwynedd Council on 6 September 2024 and a Screening Opinion was received on 10 October 2024 confirming an EIA would be required. An EIA has been undertaken for the whole Project as described **Chapter 3** of **ES Volume 1: Project Introduction**. Due to the urgency of the infrastructure upgrades associated with the Project, the works have been identified as part of Ofgem's ASTI framework. To maintain an accelerated programme, a Scoping Opinion has not been requested from the competent authorities that will receive consent applications. Instead, the Scoping stage of the EIA process has been incorporated into the Environmental Statement (ES).

1.7.4 The ES sets out the findings of an EIA. The ES will accompany all the consent applications required by the Project and addresses requirements under both the 2017 TCP EIA Regs and the 2017 Electricity Works EIA Regs. There are no material differences between these two sets of regulations in terms of the required information for inclusion in an ES.

2. The Need and Benefit Case

2.1 Policy and Legislative Background

2.1.1 The Paris Agreement (Ref. 1-10) was adopted in December 2015 at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21). It introduced a common goal and commitment of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and limiting global temperature rises to combat climate change. It was a landmark agreement in the multilateral climate change process as it brought into force internationally binding emission reduction targets and legally binding targets for developed counties (including the United Kingdom) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions bringing UN members together to combat climate change and adapt to its effects.

2.1.2 The UK has since made several legal commitments to address climate change and meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. This includes introducing the Net Zero target for greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and updating legally binding carbon budgets to cap emissions over five-year periods. The UK Government has also developed and published a number of policy documents and strategies to drive the transition to net zero and provide opportunities to increase energy efficiency.

2.1.3 The Energy White Paper (Ref. 1-11), published in December 2020, outlined a strategy to transform the energy system, tackling emissions while continuing to ensure secure and reliable electricity supply, and affordable bills for households and businesses. This was built on by the Net Zero Strategy (Ref. 1-12), published in October 2021, which set out a long-term plan for the economy-wide transition to net zero that will take place over the next three decades. The British Energy Security Strategy (BESS) (Ref. 1-13), published in April 2022, and the Growth Plan (Ref. 1-14), published in September 2022, further reinforced ambitions and the importance of addressing the UK's underlying vulnerability to international oil and gas prices and reducing the UK's dependence on imported oil and gas. Powering Up Britain (Ref. 1-15), published in March 2023, set out how the government will enhance the UK's energy security, seize the economic opportunities of the transition, and deliver on the UK's net zero commitments.

2.1.4 The 'Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: a new era of clean electricity' (Ref. 1-16) published in December 2024 sets out the UK Government's targets for the 2030 capacities of key technologies at national and regional level including an ambition to achieve 43-50 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind by 2030. The latest consultation draft NPS' published in April 2025 explicitly refer to the Government's 2030 Clean Power Action Plan and the need for significant new energy infrastructure.

2.1.5 The Welsh Government also has ambitious targets for renewable energy and the electricity transmission network to make substantial contributions to decarbonisation and energy security. Wales's net zero target highlights the Welsh Government's commitment to achieving net-zero by 2050, and for Wales to meet the equivalent of 100% of its annual electricity demand from renewable energy sources by 2035. Additionally, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (Ref. 1-17) sets out the Welsh Government's interim carbon budgets, which are legally binding targets to reduce emissions compared to 1990 levels.

2.1.6 Wales and UK Governments have set ambitious legally binding targets for developing new homegrown sources of renewable energy at scale over the next decade. In 2017, the Welsh Government set a target to meet the equivalent of 70% of Wales's electricity demand from renewable energy sources by 2030 as part of its commitment to a more sustainable future for Wales. The latest Energy Generation in Wales Report (Ref. 1-18) is based on 2022 statistics and was published in October 2023. This confirmed that the equivalent of approximately 59% of Wales' annual electricity consumption came from renewables, working towards the 70% target by 2030. This target was upscaled in July 2023 to meet 100% of the demand for electricity from renewable energy sources by 2035 following a consultation on Wales' Renewable Energy Targets in January 2023.

2.1.7 The National Infrastructure Commission for Wales published its report 'Preparing Wales for a Renewable Energy 2050' (Ref. 1-19) in October 2023. This report notes *'that the Welsh Government has set targets to meet the equivalent of 100% of its annual electricity demand from renewable sources by 2035 and to achieve net zero by 2050'.* However, it also notes that *'the current levels of renewable energy generation…suggest that significant additional interventions will be necessary to achieve the target'*. It highlights the importance of ensuring that Wales has a grid system that is fit for the future of renewable energy generation and recommends that, by 2025, Ofgem should reform the system that plans for and delivers grid access for renewable energy to enable rapid deployment.

2.2 The Need and Benefits of the Project and Proposed Works

2.2.1 The Energy Act 2023 (Ref. 1-20) established an independent system planner and operator to help accelerate Great Britain's energy transition, creating the National Energy System Operator (NESO). NESO is built on the previous experience as the National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO). In July 2022, ESO recommended a new electricity network design called the 'Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design', which will connect 23 GW of offshore wind power. The aim of the Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design is to help to unlock the Government's ambition of 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030 by setting out a single, integrated approach to support large scale delivery of electricity from offshore wind, which is required across the UK.

2.2.2 The NESO annually reviews the network capabilities requirements, which include the following:

- Future Energy Scenarios – are developed annually by NESO with input from industry and other stakeholders. The Scenarios represent a range of different, credible ways in which the energy could evolve taking account of policy and legislation, including net zero targets.
- Electricity Ten Year Statement – is an annual assessment by NESO which, by using data from the Future Energy Scenarios, identifies points on the transmission system where more network capability is needed to ensure that energy is delivered efficiently and reliably to where it is needed.
- Network Options Assessment – sets out the NESO's recommendation for which reinforcement projects should receive investment during the coming year. These are assessed by the NESO so that the most economic and efficient solutions are recommended to proceed, and others told to hold or stop. The Assessment uses the

latest methodology approved by Ofgem, and outputs from the Future Energy Scenarios and Electricity Ten Year Statement.

2.2.3 One of the documents that was published as part of the Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design is National Grid's 'Network Options Assessment' (NOA). This identifies which network reinforcement projects should receive investment, and when. The latest National Grid NOA is the 'NOA 2021/22 Refresh' (Ref. 1-21), which identifies 94 schemes that are required to meet the Government's ambition for 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030; it demonstrates that there is insufficient transmission capacity in the existing electricity transmission network in North Wales to connect additional consented, forecasted and foreseeable large scale power generation developments, notably from renewable offshore energy in the Irish Sea off the north coast of Wales and west coast of England. The 'Pentir to Trawsfynydd cable replacement' is one of the projects identified as the Holistic Network Design's essential options to deliver Pathway to 2030. The Earliest in Service Date (EISD) for the Project is 2027, with the earliest optimal delivery date being 2028 having regard to regulatory and consenting requirements, including the need to secure planning permission and section 37 consent.

2.2.4 Building on this ambition, in March 2024 NESO published the 'Beyond 2030' (Ref. 1-22) report mapping the way to a clean, secure and affordable energy future by facilitating the connection of an additional 21 GW of offshore wind, laying the foundations for a decarbonised electricity system in the UK. The upgrade to the Pentir to Trawsfynydd electricity network was highlighted in the NESO 'Beyond 2030' report. The Project would play an important part in achieving this as it would help to improve the Grid network and help to facilitate the connection of this additional offshore wind.

2.2.5 The 'Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: a new era of clean electricity' aims to tackle the three major energy challenges: the need for a secure and affordable energy supply, the creation of essential new energy industries and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Clean Power 2030 Action Plan recognises that around twice as much new transmission network infrastructure will be needed in the nation's grid by 2030 than has been built in the past decade. The Action Plan recognises the need to reduce the end-to-end delivery time for new transmission infrastructure to deliver necessary infrastructure in a timely manner to support the development of clean energy generation projects.

2.2.6 The proposed works will provide additional transmission capacity in North Wales that is essential to distribute and make use of both new and existing energy generation in the area. The existing 400 kilovolt cables are near the end of their operational life and as installed could not operate at the capacity now required. These cables need replacing and it is considered that there is no suitable alternative to the replacement of the existing cables. The existing 132 kilovolt cables cannot be upgraded to operate at 400 kilovolts nor meet the capacity now required by the circuit. These cables will be replaced with new 400 kilovolt cables. If the cables are not upgraded their operational efficiency will continue to decrease and it would not be possible for the electricity that is generated to be transferred to areas where it is needed. The additional capacity will allow energy generated by renewable sources to be transferred around the region and will assist the government in meeting targets for reducing carbon emissions and achieving Net Zero. The proposed works form part of the wider Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement (PTR) project and without the replacement of the existing underground 400 kilovolt (kV) and 132 kV cables (Glaslyn Cables) and associated infrastructure reinforcement then this section of the PTR project will form a bottle neck and the

objectives of the PTR project will not be achieved. Government policy recognises that additional transmission capacity is necessary, and outlines support specifically for the Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement as a strategic project that will reinforce and increase capacity of the grid. The proposed works will benefit the region by providing a secure and reliable supply of electricity.

2.2.7 The documents outlined above demonstrate that there is clear policy support for the provision of an efficient and effective electricity transmission network. There is a clear need for the Proposed Work to replace old and inefficient transmission lines and equipment to deliver capacity in the transmission network recognised by national policy.

2.3 Grid Connection Capacity Requirements

2.3.1 The NESO has also published a suite of documents under the 'Pathway to 2030: A holistic network design to support offshore wind deployment for net zero' (July 2022) in response to the UK Government' ambitions concerning offshore wind (see below). The Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design (HND) Executive Summary recognises that as the scale of offshore wind deployment increases so does the need for additional transmission infrastructure to deliver the electricity generated to customers. It states that:

'A significant step change is required to move from the current capacity of 11.3 GW to 50 GW by 2030, both in the roll out of the additional offshore wind farms themselves and the network required to connect and transport the electricity to where it can be used. Therefore, innovative thinking in network design has never been more important to ensure delivery of affordable, clean and secure power and meet the UK Government's ambitions…. Publication of the innovative HND is just the start of the delivery of the transmission network required to facilitate 50 GW offshore wind by 2030…. Specifically, the time taken to build onshore transmission network infrastructure will need to be significantly reduced in order to meet the offshore wind ambitions and net zero targets.'

2.3.2 The Network Options Assessment published in July 2022 forms part of the Pathway to 2030 suite of documents. In relation to Wales, this notes that the HND recommends a coordinated network on the west coast of the country resulting in a significant power import to North Wales and a requirement to export this power to areas of the country with greater demand and to satisfy boundary transfer requirements. Table 3.10 of the Assessment identifies that 'Pentir to Trawsfynydd cable replacement' and 'A second transmission circuit on the existing Pentir to Trawsfynydd route' are HND essential options for Wales and South West. These are the components central to the Project, which includes cables that were installed in the 1960s, are a limiting factor on the circuit, and are now coming to the end of their operational life. The replacement of the cables is essential to enable an increase to the network capacity that is required to contribute towards the Welsh Government renewable energy targets summarised above.

2.3.3 The need for the Project is elevated further by Ofgem identifying it as one of the Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) projects (Ref. 1-22). ASTI projects form part of a new regulatory approval and funding framework for onshore transmission projects that Ofgem sets out are required to deliver the Government's 2030 Net Zero ambitions. To help meet those ambitions, Ofgem has identified that significant upgrades to the capacity of the electricity network in North Wales are required to allow the connection of new offshore windfarms.

3. Site and Surroundings

3.1 Description of the Proposed Works Site

3.1.1 The proposed works site is defined by the red line boundary shown in **Plate 3-1** below and is in the administrative district of Gwynedd Council. The proposed works site covers an area of approximately 106.4 ha running between the existing Wern CSEC and existing Garth CSEC, north, west and east of Porthmadog.

3.1.2 The proposed works site is approximately 6 km in length, of variable widths and follows approximately the corridor of the A487 Porthmadog bypass, which runs in a roughly east to west direction. The proposed works site starts at Wern CSEC, to the western extent of the route. Continuing east, the proposed works site passes across the Porthmadog Roundabout, beneath the A487 Porthmadog Bypass, across the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway (WHHR) and Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway (FfWHR), north of the Clwb Chwaraeon Madog before turning south and beneath the A487 Porthmadog Bypass again. The proposed works site then passes through the Glaslyn SSSI, in an easterly direction towards the existing Garth CSEC.

3.1.3 The proposed works site comprises undulating land is characterised by predominately rural land uses with scattered woodland. A large proportion is land of Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Grade 5 (very poor quality), with small patches of Grade 3a (good to moderate quality) west of Porthmadog Roundabout and surrounding the proposed Minffordd CSEC.

3.1.4 There is one listed building in the proposed works site, which comprises the Gates to Wern Manor Grade II Listed Building, in the western extent. One Registered Park and Garden lies in the proposed works site: the Wern Registered Park and Garden, also in the western extent (illustrated on **ES Figure 4.6.A.1**).

3.1.5 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) that cross and partially run within the proposed works site including the Dolbenmaen No 107, Porthmadog No 6 ,8 and 11 footpaths and Porthmadog No 10 and 37 bridleways. The National Cycle Route 8, which runs through the centre of Porthmadog, partially runs within the proposed works site (illustrated on **ES Figure 4.12.3**).

3.1.6 The proposed works site lies in areas of river and sea flood zones 2 and 3 and surface water and small water courses flood zone 2 (**ES Figure 4.8.9)**. The east and west of the proposed works site lie in areas classified as at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea however the proposed works site is classified as an area benefiting from flood defences.

3.1.7 Mineral Safeguarding Areas are present and include an Aggregate Safeguard Area for high specification aggregate comprising sandstone and igneous rock located within the eastern end of the proposed works site. A separate Aggregate Safeguarding Area for slate and igneous rock is located within 250 m of the proposed works site (**ES Figure 4.7.7**).

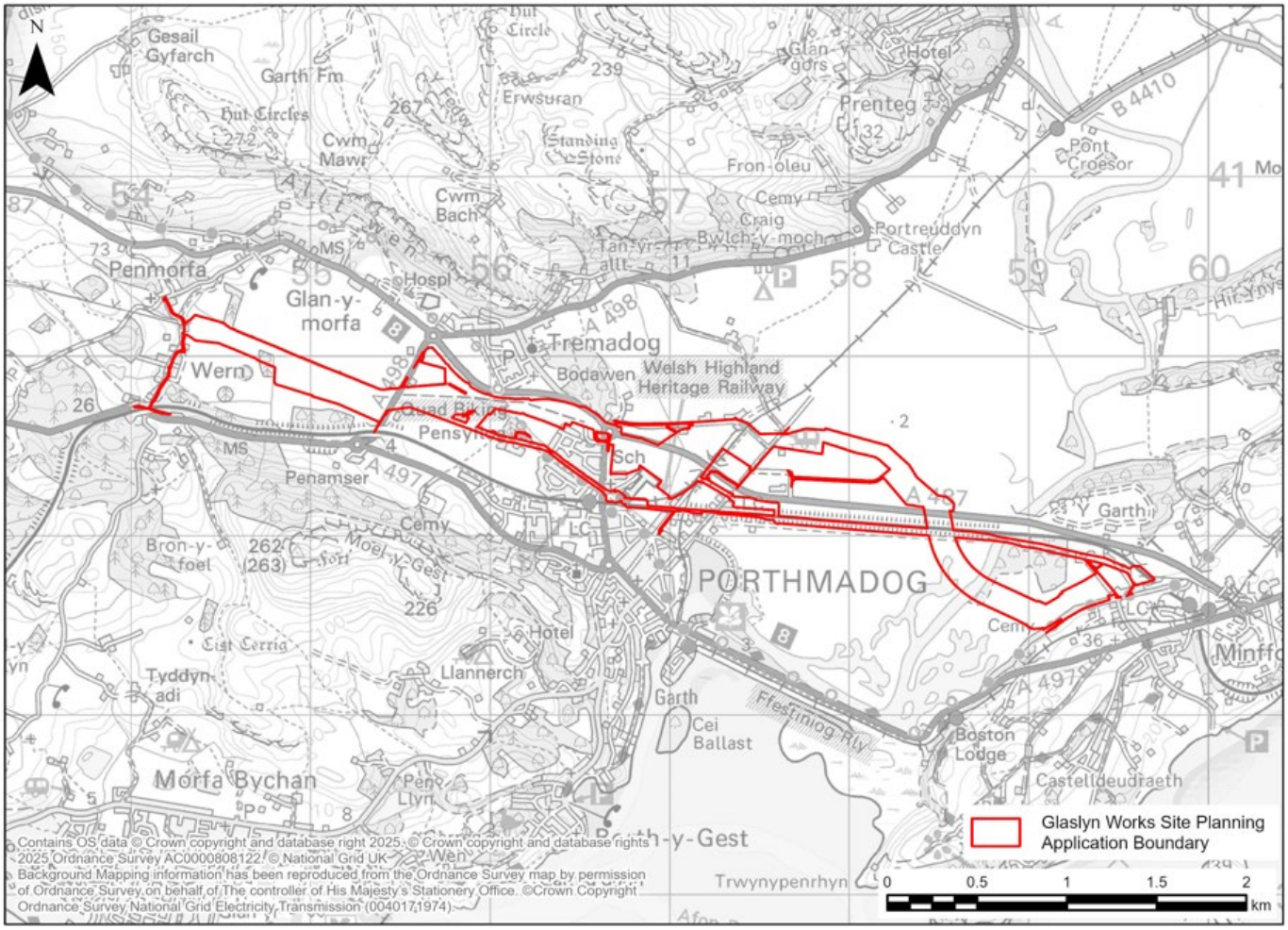


Plate 3-1 – Red line boundary

3.2 Description of Surrounding Area

3.2.1 Residential properties lie within 500 metres (m) of the proposed works site, predominantly in the town of Porthmadog to the south, Minffordd to the east, Tremadog to the north, and Penmorfa to the north-west. There are a further 32 PRoW within 500 m of the proposed works site, and 18 dedicated open spaces. In terms of the local road network, the A487 partially crosses the proposed works site and further connectivity is brought by the A497 and the A498. PRoW are shown on **Plate 3-2** below.

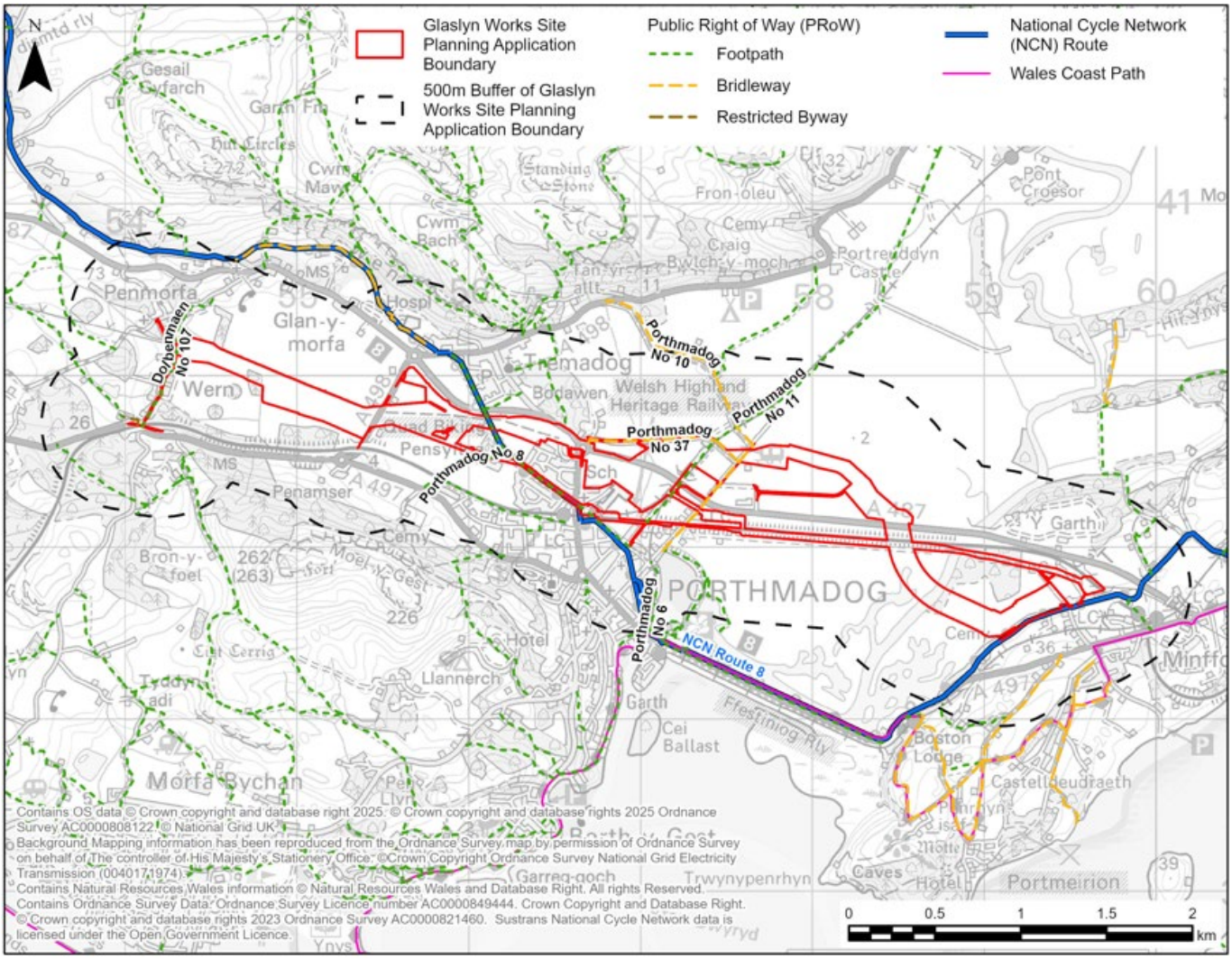


Plate 3-2 – Public Rights of Way

3.2.2 The proposed works site lies in the Aberglaslyn 'Registered Historic Landscape', which comprises Traeth Mawr (the former tidal estuary at the mouth of the Afon Glaslyn, which flows south from Snowdonia into Tremadog Bay).

3.2.3 The area surrounding the proposed works site is primarily comprised of Grade 5 ALC agricultural land, although there are some areas of Grade 3a and 3b land, which are mainly concentrated to the east and south.

3.2.4 There are a number of heritage assets near the proposed works site. These include two Grade II* Listed Buildings within 700 m, seventeen Grade II Listed Buildings within 370 m, two Registered Parks and Gardens within 500 m and a UNESCO World Heritage Site 70 m south-east.

3.3 Environmental designations

3.3.1 Part of the proposed works site is near Eryri National Park, with the National Park boundary approximately 0.25 km to the north of the eastern extent.

3.3.2 The proposed works site crosses the Glaslyn SSSI west of Minffordd, with approximately 1.6 ha directly impacted temporarily to accommodate a horizontal directional drilling (HDD) compound at the edge of the SSSI on slightly drier ground. The Glaslyn SSSI is designated for its biological interest, including floodplain grassland,

riverine habitat, vascular plant and breeding bird assemblage, and broadleaved woodland, particularly alluvial wet woodland. A small area of Ysbyty Bron y Garth SSSI is also crossed by the proposed works. There are 4 other SSSIs within 2 km of the proposed works:

- Coed Tremadog SSSI, approximately 0.37 km north-east;
- Morfa Harlech SSSI, approximately 0.54 km south;
- Tiroedd a Glannau Rhwng Cricieth ac Afon Glaslyn SSSI, approximately 0.80 km south-west; and
- Afon Ddu SSSI, approximately 1.41 km north.

3.3.3 There are a further 10 SSSIs located between 2 and 5 km of the proposed works.

3.3.4 The proposed works site also intersects part of the Coedydd Derw a Safleoedd Ystlumod Meirion/Merionnydd Oakwoods and Bats Sites Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for a variety of habitats including woodland, heath and rivers, and the lesser horseshoe bat. There are 3 further SACs and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) within 5 km of the proposed works site:

- Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau/Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau SAC, approximately 0.54 km south;
- Northern Cardigan Bay/Gogledd Bae Ceredigion SPA, approximately 2.94 km south-west; and
- Morfa Harlech a Morfa Dyffryn SAC, approximately 3.18 km south.

3.3.5 The Coed Tremadog National Nature Reserve (NNR) lies approximately 0.38 km north of the proposed works site boundary at Tremadog while Morfa Harlech NNR is approximately 0.84 km south-east from the proposed works site at Minffordd, within the Afon Dwryd. Two Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Parc y Borth LNR and Pen y Banc LNR, lie approximately 1.31 km to the south of the proposed works site, south of Porthmadog.

3.3.6 The statutory sites are shown on **ES Figure 4.5.1** and **Figure 4.5.2.**

3.3.7 There are 41 non-statutory sites designated for conservation identified within a 2 km radius of the proposed works site. Two of these lie in the western extent of the proposed works site, Ty'n-y-berllan and Coed Bryn-twr. These are both designated as candidate Wildlife Sites ('cWS') and are identified for their biodiversity value at a local level, being known to or having potential to support a wide variety of protected and ecologically important species and/or habitats.

3.3.8 There are 9 Wildlife Sites (WS) that are within 2 km, with none of these located in the proposed works site. There are 30 other cWS within 2 km, with the majority being concentrated to the south and west of the proposed works site. Two of these (Ty'n-y-berllan and Coed-Bryn-twr/Wern) are in the western extent of the proposed works site.

3.3.9 There are two areas of Ancient Woodland in the proposed works site, one at the western end close to Wern CSEC, and the other close to the centre.

3.3.10 The locations of these non-statutory sites designated for nature conservation are shown on **ES Figure 4.5.3**.

3.3.11 As the proposed works pass beneath the Afon Glaslyn, they route through an area of high flood risk from rivers and low risk of flooding from the sea as per the Natural

Resources Wales (NRW) Flood Map for Planning (Ref. 1-2423). There are also isolated areas of high, medium and low risk of flooding from surface water and small watercourses along the route of the proposed works.

3.4 Local Planning Policy Allocations and Designations

3.4.1 As the proposed works site falls in the administrative boundary of Gwynedd Council, the Joint Anglesey and Gwynedd Local Development Plan (Ref. 1-24) ('the LDP') and Proposals Map have been reviewed.

3.4.2 Immediately north of Porthmadog Roundabout, and to the east of the proposed works site between Porthmadog and Minffordd, the proposed works lie in the Glaslyn & Dwyryd Estuary Special Landscape Area (SLA). The western extent of the proposed works site also partly lies within the Porthmadog and Tremadog Bay SLA. These are designated as SLAs under LDP Policy AMG2: Special Landscape Areas.

3.4.3 The proposed works pass approximately 50m north of an area of Protected Open Space in Porthmadog south of the railway line that is known as 'Rhandiroedd', designated under Local Plan Policy ISA4: Safeguarding Existing Open Space. This Protected Open Space is currently in use as allotments.

3.4.4 The existing Garth CSEC, located at the eastern extent of the proposed works site, is in a Mineral Site Buffer Zone, allocated under Policy MWYN 5: Buffer Zones around Mineral Sites.

3.4.5 There are no housing or employment allocations in the proposed works site.

3.5 Relevant Planning History

3.5.1 A review of Gwynedd Council's online planning register (Ref. 1-25) was conducted on 6 June 2025 to establish the planning history associated with the proposed works and land within 2 km of the proposed works site. The planning history search includes applications for major development that were submitted and are currently awaiting determination or those that were approved in the last five years, or those that are similar in nature to the proposed works. Applications such as changes of use or householder applications have been excluded from the search. **Table 3-1** below provides details of these applications.

Table 3-1 – Planning history

Application reference	Description	Status	Site location	Distance from the proposed works site
C18/0520/44/LL	Application for the demolition of existing building and erection of hotel with ancillary restaurant and bar together with associated works including alterations to existing vehicular access, creation of parking spaces, landscaping and provision of bin store (revised scheme).	Approved (31/05/2021)	(Mapeley Steps Ltd & Premier Inn Hotels Ltd) (Mapeley Steps Ltd & Premier Inn Hotels Ltd)	0.6 km south of the proposed works site.

Application reference	Description	Status	Site location	Distance from the proposed works site
C19/0212/44/LL	Full application to develop an existing site into 5 new fuel depots by remaining existing tanks and installing 5 new tanks, re-structure site to create parking spaces, creation of new access and other associated developments.	Approved (31/08/2020)	Penamser Industrial Estate, Porthmadog, LL49 9NZ	0.24 km south of proposed works site, in Porthmadog
C20/0244/08/LL	The following development is located within the boundaries of Gwynedd Council Local Planning Authority: 1) Construction of Western Tunnel Head House (including the associated construction compound) at Garth and the permanent access track. The following development is located within the boundaries of Snowdonia National Park Local Planning Authority: 2) Construction of Eastern Tunnel Head House (including the associated construction compound), sealing end compound and permanent access at Cilfor. 3) A new sealing end compound on the eastern side of the Dwyryd Estuary to connect the underground cables to the overhead line. The following development does not require formal planning permission: These proposals would allow for the construction of an underground tunnel housing electricity cables and the removal of 10 existing pylons and associated overhead lines from across the Dwyryd Estuary.	Approved (18/12/2020)	Tir Ger Garth Sealing End Compound, Minffordd, Penrhyndeud raeth	In proposed works site at Minffordd
C23/0083/44/LL	Demolition of Madog Surgery building to redevelop for 8 over 55s independent living apartments (2 to be affordable) with extra care services	Pending Consideration (Validated 09/02/2023)	Porthmadog Health Centre, Porthmadog, LL49 9NU	0.3 km south of proposed works site, in Porthmadog

Application reference	Description	Status	Site location	Distance from the proposed works site
C23/0201/08/LL	Erection of 41 affordable dwellings and associated development	Approved (24/04/2023)	Land Adjacent To Trem Y Moelwyn, Penrhyndeud raeth. Gwynedd,	1.1 km east of proposed works site, at Minffordd
C23/0549/08/LL	Erect 8 new flexible business/ industrial units (Use class B1, B2, B8) with associated parking and landscaping	Approved (06/09/2023)	Land At Parc Busnes Eryri, Penrhyndeud raeth, LL48 6LD	0.5 km southeast of Wern CSEC
C24/0876/44/LL	Proposed 30-space public car park	Pending Consideration (Validated 22/10/2024)	25 Smith Street, Porthmadog, Gwynedd, LL49 9NN	0.4 km south of proposed works site in Porthmadog

3.5.2 The majority of applications listed in **Table 3-1** are outside the proposed works site and do not impact on, nor would they be impacted by, the proposed works. Application reference 'C20/0244/08/LL' is in the proposed works site boundary at Minffordd and comprises National Grid's Eryri Visual Impact Provision (EVIP) Project. The interface between EVIP and this Project is explained in more detail in Sections 4.4 and 4.5 of this Planning Statement.

3.5.3 There are no Developments of National Significance (DNS) or Applications with Development Consent Orders (DCO's) within a 5 km radius of the proposed works site area.

4. The Proposed Works

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 As outlined in Chapter 1 of this Planning Statement, planning permission is sought for the following proposed works:

"The extension of the existing Wern Cables Sealing End Compound (CSEC) including a new permanent access; a new Minffordd CSEC and Tunnel Head House (THH) with permanent access*; the removal of the existing Garth CSEC; installation of new 400 kV cables to replace redundant 400 kV and 132 kV cables; and other associated infrastructure and ancillary works."*

4.1.2 These works are summarised below and described in more detail in **Chapter 2** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**.

4.2 Wern CSEC

4.2.1 The existing Wern CSEC would be modified to accommodate 12 replacement cables comprising two cable circuits each containing three phases, with two cables per phase.

4.2.2 Works to the Wern CSEC include new foundations for high voltage plant and support steelwork, high voltage electrical equipment, a surge arrestor, earth switches and cable sealing ends. This work would require an extension to the existing CSEC, including an extension to the earth mat (a mesh of metallic conductors shallowly buried). Drainage, access and hard standing would also form part of the works. The compound would be extended to the east, increasing the size from approximately 50 m by 23 m, to 52 m by 49 m. The existing fence line would be removed and a new 2.4 m high fence would be installed around the larger footprint. Some trees would need to be removed to the east of the current CSEC to accommodate the extension.

4.2.3 A new permanent access road would be built from the west of the A498, approximately 1.26 km long and 5 m wide. The new road would provide access to the CSEC along the eastern boundary via a 6 m wide, manually operated gate. The access road would pass around the northern boundary of the CSEC, to the west of the CSEC where it would split into two short sections creating a 'hammerhead', allowing for vehicle turning. Four gates would be erected along the access road, the first being near the entrance from the A498, one after the first ditch crossing and two further gates after the second ditch crossing. The new access road would connect with two existing accesses, 180 m and 280 m east of the extended CSEC, that provide access to the fields north of the Nant yr Afon-oer. A filter trench would run in parallel to the access road from the CSEC to the A498 and would comprise headwalls at ditch crossings and periodic 450 mm inspection chambers.

4.3 Glaslyn Cables

4.3.1 The redundant 132 kV cables and 400 kV cables would be removed in part with some sections being left in situ due to amenity and ecological sensitivities detailed below and shown on **ES Figure 4.2.2**.

4.3.2 The existing cables use oil-impregnated paper as thermal and electrical insulation and the oil is kept under pressure from tanks installed along the route. Removing redundant cables requires full excavation of the cables in the ground and so is avoided in areas where this could cause damage to sensitive habitats, such as in designated sites, or would cause disturbance to protected species where this can be reasonably avoided. Where existing cables are to be left in situ, they will be cut at predetermined locations (low points and joint bays), drained of oil and purged by flushing with nitrogen to extract as much oil as possible before being capped. These cut and capped cables are then housed in monitoring pits. Monitoring pits will be installed with sumps to collect any oil that escapes. Periodic monitoring visits will be made to remove oil that has collected, initially quarterly, reducing to every six months, then yearly. The results of the monitoring will serve to establish the monitoring regime for a period of approximately 10 years.

4.3.3 The replacement cables route is approximately 6 km long and is as direct as possible taking into account environmental and technical constraints. For the most part, the cable route crosses agricultural fields, although it also crosses roads, railway and watercourses.

4.3.4 The replacement cables would be installed in ducts via either open cut or trenchless technology. The proposed open cut technique would be trenching and backfill, which would be employed for approximately half of the cable route. The proposed trenchless technology would be Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD), which would be used in for the other half of the cable route including the Afon Glaslyn. Small sections of cable leading into the joint bays and Wern and Minffordd CSECs would be installed through direct burial.

4.3.5 The replacement 400 kV cables will be cross-linked polyethylene (XLPE) cables, which do not contain oil-impregnated paper or oil. They do not require oil tanks and there is no risk of oil escape during installation, operation or when they are redundant.

4.3.6 Lengths of replacement cables will be transported to the installation sites on drums. Each section of cable will be ‘jointed’ to the next. Cable jointing is a carefully controlled work activity that requires very clean conditions to avoid contaminating the cable and risking failure and compromising operation. Cable jointing is carried out in joint bays in which the joints are sealed on completion and then buried. The design has taken cable length, accesses and transportation restrictions into consideration in the placing of joint bays along the route.

4.3.7 Further details of the cable decommissioning and installation works are outlined in **Section 2.3 of ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**.

4.4 Garth CSEC

4.4.1 The Garth CSEC will become redundant when the Eryri Visual Impact Provision (EVIP) project cables connect to the replacement cables at Minffordd CSEC. In the absence of this Project, the EVIP project would include the removal of the tall gantry at Garth CSEC but the CSEC would be retained and extended.

4.4.2 As part of the proposed works, all the infrastructure within the Garth CSEC compound would be removed up to a depth of 1 m, including underground services, foundations, earthing and platform granular material, and the area would be reinstated. Landscaping works would include woodland, woodland edge, scrub and grassland planting.

4.5 Minffordd Tunnel Head House and CSEC

4.5.1 The Minffordd Tunnel Head House (THH) forms part of the EVIP project at Minffordd, accessed by an unnamed road to the west of the Quarry Lane and Osmond Terrace junction. When the EVIP project commenced, the EVIP cables were proposed to connect to the existing Glaslyn Cables at Garth CSEC.

4.5.2 The Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement Project presents an opportunity to rationalise and reduce the amount of electricity infrastructure in the locale of Minffordd and Garth. Initially, the EVIP project was to connect its Minffordd THH with underground cables to the Garth CSEC, where the existing Glaslyn Cables terminate. However, by replacing the Glaslyn Cables, the new cables can connect to the EVIP underground cables close to the Minffordd THH. When comparing this method to a proposal to replicate the existing Glaslyn Cables' connection at Garth CSEC, the following benefits can be secured:

- The replacement Glaslyn Cables can terminate close to Minffordd THH, meaning that a shorter overall length of underground cables is required between Wern and the connection with the EVIP underground cables.
- The EVIP cables can connect to the replacement Glaslyn Cables close to Minffordd THH, meaning that a shorter overall length of EVIP underground cables is required from the THH and Garth CSEC becomes redundant and can be removed.

4.5.3 The two types of cables are fully compatible in electrical performance and characteristics but cannot be connected (jointed) underground in the way described for sections of the replacement Glaslyn Cables. The replacement Glaslyn Cables will connect to the EVIP underground cables via a new CSEC close to the Minffordd THH. This will be part of a single National Grid installation comprising the CSEC and the Minffordd THH.

4.5.4 The proposed Minffordd CSEC will be constructed on land that was previously identified for landscape works to the north of the consented EVIP Minffordd THH. This means that this landscaping as part of the existing planning permission for the Minffordd THH cannot be implemented as approved. A revised landscape proposal has been included with the Planning Application for the Glaslyn Cables works.

4.5.5 Separately, there are two main design differences between the now proposed Minffordd THH and that previously consented. The first is that the now proposed ground level is 1 m higher, which corresponds with the ground level for the proposed Minffordd CSEC to account for changes in flood levels The change is necessary since the THH planning permission was granted results from modelling by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) indicate a greater level of flood risk than was previously advised and approved.

4.5.6 The second design change is that the shape of the top of the tunnel shaft shown on the approved drawing PDD-33494-ARC-206 in the Minffordd THH planning application was circular, but now is proposed to be rectangular. The tunnel and shaft comprise permitted development but the tunnel shaft cover and an access to the shaft is shown on the Minffordd THH planning drawings.

4.5.7 There has also been a minor correction to the building height to address previous drawing inconsistencies, and a minor change to the direction of the roof drainage. The rest of the design of the Minffordd THH remains as the previously approved proposal.

4.5.8 The dimensions of the proposed THH are 15.18 m x 12.17 m x 6.09 m high. The size of the Tunnel Head House is determined by the requirement for mechanical and electrical equipment to ventilate and access the tunnel and tunnel shaft.

4.5.9 The Minffordd CSEC works will include new foundations, cable sealing end structures, high voltage plant and steelworks and earth mat. Cables troughs will run from the THH to the eastern side of the CSEC to allow installation of the EVIP cables. Cable troughs will also run from inside the western boundary fence to the western side of the CSEC to allow installation of the Glaslyn Cables. Planning consent has previously been granted for a black/ brown colour fence at the Minffordd THH. This planning application seeks permission for a grey coloured fence around the entire site to match and blend with the proposed equipment and structures that will be at the Minffordd CSEC.

4.5.10 Further details on the Minffordd THH and CSEC are outlined in **Section 2.3** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**.

4.6 Access

Construction Access

4.6.1 The proposed works site, temporary access roads, site access points, compound access points, access point bell mouths and turning areas are shown on **ES Figure 4.2.3**.

4.6.2 During construction a range of vehicles would be accessing the proposed works site, including, but not limited to, excavators, large mobile cranes, large tippers, long and low loader vehicles, abnormal indivisible loads (AILs) for the delivery of large cable drums, cranes (for material handling along with the installation of the crossing points and the removal of the existing cable bridges), concrete lorries, drill rigs, slurry tankers, and pipe welding equipment.

4.6.3 On completion of the construction works, the temporary access roads would be removed, any stone walls, wildlife fencing and kerbing would be reinstalled, and any construction road markings or traffic signs would be removed.

4.6.4 Access to the Wern CSEC and Minffordd THH and CSEC during construction would be similar to the permanent arrangements described below.

Operational Access

4.6.5 At the Wern CSEC, a new permanent access road would be built from the west of the A498 to support the delivery of equipment and plant needed for the works.

4.6.6 The Minffordd THH and CSEC site will be accessed via a new permanent access road, from the unnamed road west of the Quarry Lane and Osmond Terrace junction, previously consented under the EVIP Project. The access will be approximately 30 m long and oriented in a general north-west direction. Farm style gates will be installed 6 m back from the access entrance. Access into the operational area will be via gates with access controls for use by authorised National Grid persons.

4.7 Construction Activities

Overview

4.7.1 This section provides an overview of the likely construction activities required as part of the proposed works. A further detailed description of the construction activities likely to be required are set out in Section 2.4 of **Chapter 2** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**.

4.7.2 Installation of new cables will use a combination of open cut and HDD methods. The areas where each technique would be utilised is illustrated on **ES Figure 4.2.2**.

4.7.3 During construction, the appointed Contractor will be required to operate under a detailed site-specific Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). It will, as a minimum, implement the mitigation measures identified in the Glaslyn ES. The CEMP will set out a variety of control measures for managing the potential environmental effects of construction works including control and management of noise, dust, surface water runoff, waste and pollution control and set out responsibilities for the preparation and implementation of the CEMP.

Construction Site Layout

4.7.4 The main construction compound would be to the west of the A498. It would be approximately 1.9 ha and split into two sections. The western section would comprise laydown areas and stockpiles. The eastern section would contain office buildings, health and welfare facilities, a laydown area and vehicle parking. The compound would be secured through open mesh fencing with timber posts and three gate houses, one at each end of the compound and one in the centre. The western section of the compound would be accessed via two 10 m double mesh fence gates, one at the western extent and one in the centre of the compound. Two 7 m double mesh gates would be installed for the eastern section and a one-way system would be implemented where staff would enter via the eastern gate and exit via the central gate.

4.7.5 The two gates into the laydown area would be used by HGVs for the delivery of materials and equipment. A one-way system would be implemented with exit and entry being via a temporary road from/to the A498.

4.7.6 Each section of HDD would require a hardstanding area compound at each end; one compound would be the drilling site and would comprise a launch pit, and the other would be an exit site and would comprise a receiver pit. To facilitate this work, 13 HDD compounds would be required. An odd number of compounds is required as the cables split into two groups at Ysgol Eifionydd requiring two separate reception sites, however they share a launch site to the north of the A487 Porthmadog Bypass.

4.7.7 The THH construction will take place within the existing construction compound, where works are currently being undertaken.

4.7.8 Six joint bay working areas are required for the proposed works.:

- Immediately north of the main construction compound between the compound access roads.
- The HDD compound located south of the A487 Porthmadog Bypass and north of Y Cyt.
- South-east of the Porthmadog Roundabout.

- Located between the Welsh Highland Railway and Clwb Chwaraeon Madog.
- North of the A487 Porthmadog Bypass and east of the Clwb Chwaraeon Madog.
- South-east of Minffordd CSEC.

4.7.9 Further detail on the construction site layout is detailed in **Section 2.4** of the **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** and **ES Figure 4.2.3**.

Construction Programme

4.7.10 The construction works would take place over a period of approximately three years to coordinate with the Project. The shaft and tunnelling works for EVIP, which are permitted development, are under construction already. Construction would occur in phases which will include activities outlined in **Table 4-1** below.

Table 4-1 – Glaslyn construction programme

	2026				2027				2028				2029				2030		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Construction																			
Commissioning																			
Cable Decommissioning																			
Decommissioning																			

4.7.11 A number of activities will be undertaken in the phases outlined above, including:

- Pre-construction – site mobilisation, management plans, procurement, design, notices, ecological mitigation and vegetation clearance.
- Construction – compounds (main and construction), temporary and permanent accesses, haul roads, HDD compounds, crossings, duct and cable installation, Wern and Minffordd CSEC's, Minffordd THH.
- Commissioning of the proposed cables.
- Cable decommissioning – removal of the existing 132 kV and 400 kV cables.
- Demobilisation – removal of all temporary structures, construction compounds, fencing and equipment, reinstatement of topsoil and landscape.

Construction Staff and Hours of Working

4.7.12 The number of staff on the Glaslyn works site will vary according to the construction phase and activities being undertaken. The average number of staff on the Glaslyn works site will be seven Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions, with 28 FTE positions at its peak. Please note this does not include the EVIP tunnelling works.

4.7.13 Construction activities will generally be undertaken from Monday to Friday 7am-7pm (inclusive of an hour to set up and an hour to shut down the site) and 8am-6pm on Saturdays. No work will take place on a Sunday unless there has been prior agreement with the local planning authority.

4.7.14 Emergency provision for 24-hour working will be required for critical activities such as HDD, cable pulling, jointing and terminating, however this will be agreed with the local planning authority in advance.

4.8 Operation

4.8.1 The CSECs would typically be unmanned. Maintenance of the CSECs would take place as determined necessary involving electrical isolation of equipment before it is worked on. Visual checks would be undertaken on a monthly inspection visit to the proposed works site. If the CSEC required refurbishment or replacement works, vehicles would be used to carry workers in and out of the proposed works site and suitable vehicles would be used to transport new materials and remove old equipment.

4.8.2 Maintenance checks will be undertaken at weekly intervals of the Minffordd THH and would cover elements including the fans, lighting, pumps and gas detection. The Minffordd THH will not require day to day access and will not be open to the public.

4.9 Electric and Magnetic Fields

4.9.1 All equipment that generates, distributes or uses electricity produces electric and magnetic fields (EMFs). An EMF report has been produced, which sets out the technical specifications of the proposed works and how the works comply with EMF exposure guidelines. This report can be found in **Volume 8, Appendix 7.1.A**: **Electric and Magnetic Field Assessment.**

5. Pre-Application Consultation

5.1 Pre-application engagement with Gwynedd Council

5.1.1 The Applicant has undertaken pre-application engagement with Gwynedd Council from 2023. This has included regular virtual meetings, e-mail correspondence and telephone conversations on a number of matters, such as the scope of the application, as well as a face-to-face meeting to discuss the incorporation of the THH into the Glaslyn Works application..

5.2 Pre-Application Engagement with Other Stakeholders

5.2.1 Throughout the design development of the proposed works, the Applicant has engaged with a number of other stakeholders through face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, letters, emails and telephone calls. Organisations and individuals consulted include Natural Resources Wales, Heneb, landowners and members of the public.

5.3 Statutory Pre-Application Consultation

5.3.1 In accordance with Section 61Z of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Part 1A of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016 (Ref. 1-26) all major developments are required to be subject to PAC. The report on the PAC undertaken is presented in the PAC Report which accompanies the planning application.

6. Planning Policy Context

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section sets out the key legislation and planning policy that is of relevance to the proposed works.

6.2 The Development Plan

6.2.1 Sections 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Ref. 1-27) and paragraph 1.18 of Planning Policy Wales emphasise that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the proposed works comprises:

a) Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (Ref. 1-28); and

b) Joint Anglesey and Gwynedd Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026.

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040

6.2.2 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 ('Future Wales') was adopted by the Welsh Government in 2021 and is the National Development Framework for Wales. Future Wales sets out the spatial strategy for growth and development in Wales. This includes providing a framework for the location of nationally significant development.

6.2.3 Chapter 2 of Future Wales provides an overview of opportunities and constraints to future growth. This includes progressing a reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions, which includes supporting the low carbon economy and the development of renewable energy (particularly wind) and resultant need for new strategic grid infrastructure to support the growth of renewable and low carbon electricity generation.

6.2.4 Policy 5: Supporting the rural economy, provides Welsh Government support for sustainable, appropriate and proportionate economic growth in rural areas. The supporting text also sets out strong support for the development of innovative and emerging technologies, including those that play a key role in helping to decarbonise Wales.

6.2.5 Policy 8: Flooding requires the consideration of flood risk management in development proposals while Policy 9: Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure seeks to ensure the enhancement of biodiversity.

6.2.6 Policy 17: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure confirms support for the principle of the development of renewable and low carbon energy from all technologies and at a scale to meet future energy needs. The policy recognises the importance of the provision of new grid infrastructure in delivering the growth in renewable energy provided that the infrastructure is *"designed to minimise visual impact on nearby communities"*, It goes on to state that the Welsh Government is committed to working with stakeholders including National Grid, and to reducing barriers to the implementation of new grid infrastructure.

6.2.7 The proposed works site is in North West Wales. Policy 24: North West Wales and Energy supports North West Wales as a location for new energy development confirming that *"On-shore developments associated with off-shore renewable energy projects will be supported in principle"*.

The Joint Anglesey and Gwynedd Local Development Plan

6.2.8 The Local Development plan ('LDP') in respect of the proposed works comprise the Joint Anglesey and Gwynedd Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (adopted July 2017).

6.2.9 The following planning policies from the Local Development Plan are relevant to the proposed works:

- Strategic Policy PS 1: Welsh Language and Culture
- Policy ISA 1: Infrastructure Provision
- Policy ISA 2: Community Facilities
- Policy ISA 4: Safeguarding Existing Open Space
- Policy TRA 4: Managing Transport Impacts
- Strategic Policy PS 4: Sustainable Transport, Development and Accessibility
- Strategic Policy PS 5: Sustainable Development
- Policy PCYFF 1: Development Boundaries
- Policy PCYFF 2: Development Criteria
- Policy PCYFF 3: Design and Place Shaping
- Policy PCYFF 4: Design and Landscaping
- Policy PCYFF 6: Water Conservation
- Strategic Policy PS 6: Alleviating and Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change
- Strategic Policy PS 7: Renewable Energy Technology
- Strategic Policy PS 19: Conserving and where appropriate enhancing the Natural Environment
- Policy AMG 2: Special Landscape Areas
- Policy AMG 3: Protecting and enhancing features and qualities that are distinctive to the Local Landscape Character
- Policy AMG 5: Local Biodiversity Conservation
- Policy PS 20: Preserving and where appropriate enhancing Heritage Assets
- Policy AT 3: Locally or Regionally Significant Non-Designated Heritage Assets
- Policy AT 4: Protection of Non-Designated Archaeological Sites and their setting
- Policy ADN 3: Other Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies
- MWYN 1: Safeguarding Mineral Resources
- Policy MWYN 5: Buffer Zones Around Mineral Sites

6.3 Material Considerations

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)

6.3.1 Planning Policy Wales (February 2024) (PPW) (Ref. 1-29) sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government with the primary objective of ensuring that *"the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation"*.

6.3.2 PPW establishes five key planning principles for the planning system, aimed at achieving the right development, in the right place (paragraph 2.13), three of which are relevant to the proposed works:

- Growing our economy in a sustainable manner – Enabling development which contributes to long-term economic wellbeing, making the best use of existing infrastructure and planning for new supporting infrastructure and services;
- Making best use of resources – Making development resilient to climate change, decarbonising society and developing a circular economy for the benefit of both the built and natural environment;
- Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact – Natural, historic and cultural assets must be protected, promoted, conserved and enhanced. Negative environmental impacts should be avoided in the wider public interest.

6.3.3 Chapter 3 Strategic and Spatial Choices expands on the benefits of effective strategic placemaking, including paragraph 3.6.1 which provides a *"need for supporting infrastructure that is "adequate and efficient", including electricity infrastructure which is recognised as being "crucial for economic, social and environmental sustainability"*.

6.3.4 In Chapter 5 Productive and Enterprising Places, the economic components of placemaking are covered. Paragraph 5.7.2 recognises that for future demand to be met, significant investment will be needed in energy generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure. It is acknowledged in paragraph 5.7.7 that to achieve overall commitments to tackling climate change the planning system should "integrate development with the provision of additional electricity grid network infrastructure".

6.3.5 Paragraph 5.7.8 sets out that an integrated approach should be adopted towards planning for energy developments and additional electricity grid network infrastructure to fulfil the Welsh Governments renewable and low carbon ambitions. It is recognised that additional electricity grid network infrastructure will be needed to support new energy generating developments more generally. The Welsh Government's position on new power lines is outlined in paragraph 5.7.9, and these, where possible, should be laid underground.

6.3.6 Paragraph 5.9.10 states that *"Planning authorities should plan positively for grid infrastructure"*, with appropriate grid developments being supported, and development plans facilitating grid infrastructure required to support renewable and low carbon energy.

6.3.7 Chapter 6 Distinctive and Natural Places covers the environmental and cultural components of placemaking and provides in-depth guidance relating to a wide range of environmental topics including but not limited to the historic environment, landscape, biodiversity and ecology, water environmental and air quality.

Technical Advice Notes

6.3.8 PPW is supplemented by topic-based Technical Advice Notes (TANs), of which there are 21 in total. These TANs provide detailed planning advice and are material considerations in the determination of planning application in Wales. The following TANs are of particular relevance to the proposed works:

- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5: nature conservation and planning (2009) (Ref. 1-30Ref. 1-30);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6: Sustainable rural communities (2010) (Ref. 1-31);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Noise (1997) (Ref. 1-32);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (2016) (Ref. 1-33);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Development, flooding and coastal erosion (2025) (Ref. 1-34);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (2017) (Ref. 1-35);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 23: Economic development (2014) (Ref. 1-36);
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The historic environment (2017) (Ref. 1-37).

National Policy Statement EN-1

6.3.9 The Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) (Ref. 1-38) was published by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and came into effect in January 2024. NPS EN-1 sets out national policy for energy infrastructure, including *"the electricity transmission and distribution system"*. It emphasises the need for new energy projects that will contribute towards a secure, diverse and affordable energy supply.

6.3.10 Paragraph 1.4.2 sets out that, *"… energy policy is generally a matter reserved to the UK Ministers and this NPS may therefore be a relevant consideration in planning decisions in Wales and Scotland".*

6.3.11 In view of this, NPS EN-1 and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (Ref. 1-39), which also came into effect in January 2024, may be material considerations in respect of the proposed works.

6.3.12 Paragraph 3.2.6 to 3.2.8 of NPS EN-1 establishes the need for the types of infrastructure covered by EN-1. These paragraphs set out that the Secretary of State has determined that substantial weight should be given to this need when considering applications. Paragraph 3.3.65 adds that *"there is an urgent need for new electricity network infrastructure to be brought forward at pace to meet our energy objectives"*. In addition, paragraph 3.3.68 acknowledges that *"the volume of onshore reinforcement works needed to meet decarbonisation targets is substantial"*.

6.3.13 Paragraphs 3.3.62 and 4.2.4 confirm that *"there is a critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure".* Paragraph 4.2.5 confirms that all power lines in the scope of NPS EN-5, including network reinforcement and upgrade works, are a CNP. Paragraph 4.2.15 confirms that where residual non-HRA or non-MCZ impacts remain after the mitigation hierarchy has been applied, that

these residual impacts *"are unlikely to outweigh the urgent need"*. It is only in all but the *"most exceptional circumstances"* that consent will be refused.

6.3.14 Paragraph 4.11.3 sets out the government's acceleration of the development of the grid network to facilitate the UK's net zero energy generation development and transmission.

6.3.15 Good design is a key consideration in the development of renewable energy infrastructure, with paragraph 4.7.2 outlining that energy projects expected to produce infrastructure sensitive to place. Paragraph 4.7.2 also highlights that the government acknowledge the limitations that an Applicant may have on the physical appearance of energy infrastructure. This is furthered by Paragraph 4.7.6 which states *"the applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the physical appearance of some energy infrastructure"*.

National Policy Statement EN-5

6.3.16 Paragraph 1.1.1 of EN-5 explains that an increased capacity in the UK's electricity network is fundamental to ensure the security and reliability of the current and future energy supply to provide the infrastructure necessary to facilitate the transition to net zero.

6.3.17 Paragraph 1.1.2 goes on to explain that a large amount of this new electricity network infrastructure is required in the near term, to support the Government's ambition of deploying up to 50GW of offshore wind capacity by 2030. Without a reliable and secure electricity network, EN-5 is clear that this ambition cannot be achieved (paragraph 1.1.3).

Emerging Gwynedd Local Development Plan

6.3.18 Following cessation of the joint working agreement on Planning Policy matters in March 2023 between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Isle of Anglesey County Council, the Gwynedd Planning Policy Service was established. The process of preparing a new LDP for the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority area has commenced. It will cover a period between 2024 and 2039 and is currently at the Pre-Deposit Stage.

6.3.19 A Call for Candidate Sites consultation closed on 15 January 2025 to identify potential sites for a range of land uses including housing, employment and other uses such as recreation. The Candidate Site Register is available to view via the Gwynedd Local Development Plan (the new Plan) Portal.

6.3.20 Following the closure of the Call for Candidate Sites consultation, Gwynedd Council had planned a consultation period that was anticipated to take place between March 2025 and April 2025 on a Pre-deposit Plan, Preferred Strategy and Impact Assessments. However, this stage in the preparation of the Plan has not yet taken place. A Deposit Plan (Draft Local Plan) is expected between September 2025 and August 2026, with this submitted for examination in September 2026. The new Gwynedd LDP currently has an anticipated adoption date of September/October 2027. It is anticipated that these stages in the preparation of the Local Plan may now take place at a later date.

7. Planning Appraisal

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This section sets out how the proposed works are in accordance with the development plan as per section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Ref 1-27).

7.2 Principle of Development

7.2.1 There is strong national policy support for the strengthening and reinforcement of the electricity network in Wales, particularly to support the transition to net zero. The proposed works accord with Future Wales Policy 17 as they are required to increase the capacity of the electricity transmission network, of which Wales has international commitments to *"generate 70% of consumed electricity by renewable means by 2030"*. Policy 17 also explicitly earmarks the need for new, strategic grid infrastructure. The proposed works, as part of the Project, will play a key role in supporting the development of innovative emerging technologies to help decarbonise Wales in rural areas, in accordance with Future Wales Policy 5. In line with Future Wales Policy 24, the proposed works comprise onshore development that will provide a connection to offshore renewable energy infrastructure.

7.2.2 The proposed works will support the continued expansion of renewable energy generation in the UK, in particular, the growth of the offshore wind sector in Wales. In turn, this will contribute to the decarbonisation of the power sector as renewables increasingly replace higher-carbon generation sources. This aligns with the UK Government's goal of achieving a fossil fuel-independent electricity system by 2035 and the Welsh Government's aims of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to Net Zero by 2050, with the ambition of collectively reach net zero by 2030 in the public sector. This also aligns with Policy PS 5 and Policy PS 6 in the LDP which sets out criteria required to alleviate and adapt to the effects of climate change and outlines the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

7.2.3 LDP Policy PCYFF 1: Development Boundaries sets out that development within development boundaries will be approved in accordance with other LDP policies, national policies, and other material planning considerations. Development outside the boundaries will be resisted unless it is in accordance with specific LDP or national policies or that the proposal demonstrates that its location in the countryside is essential. It is acknowledged that the proposed works are outside identified Development Boundaries, on predominantly rural land. However, the principle of locating transmission infrastructure in this location is established due to the presence of existing electricity infrastructure. Due to the existing infrastructure in this location, it is demonstrated that, despite the rural nature of the area, this location has been considered necessary for a development of this type.

7.2.4 This also demonstrates accordance with Policy PCYFF 2 of the LDP and the requirement for proposals to "make the most efficient use of land", as the proposed works are in the area of the existing transmission network, will leave cables in situ where practicable, and utilise the EVIP project to reduce the amount of electricity

infrastructure in the Minffordd and Garth locale, thereby reducing and minimising potential environmental impacts and demonstrating the appropriate use of land.

7.2.5 Strategic Policy PS 7 supports the proposed works as they would provide infrastructure to support renewable energy infrastructure and would help to ensure the Plan area is a leading area for initiatives based on renewable or low carbon energy technologies. , The need for the proposed works as part of the wider Project has been demonstrated in Section 2 of this Planning Statement as well as the Project being identified in the NOA 2022 as a strategic project forming part of the national great grid upgrade to transition to net zero. Although the proposed works would fall outside of settlement and development boundaries, there is a significant need for them. Therefore, it is essential that they are in the countryside to function effectively and transmit electricity. There would not be a significant conflict with Policy PCYFF 1 and the proposed works would be acceptable in principle.

7.2.6 LDP Policy ISA 1 relates to infrastructure provision and supports proposals that provide infrastructure or public services, including electricity, provided there is no significant harm to the local environment, public amenities or public safety. The proposed works would comply with Policy ISA1 as they provide essential utilities infrastructure.

7.2.7 Policy PCYFF 5 of the LDP sets out that proposals will need to demonstrate how the energy hierarchy set out in LDP Policy PS 6 has been applied and how renewable or low carbon energy has been maximised. The Energy Hierarchy from Policy PS 6 is set out as follows:

"… i. *Reducing energy demand;*

ii. Energy efficiency;

iii. Using low or zero carbon energy technologies where practical viable and consistent with the need to engage and involve communities; protect visual amenities, the natural, built and historic environment and the landscape."

7.2.8 The proposed works would help to facilitate the expected increase in offshore wind that is expected in Wales, as set out in in Section 2 of this Statement. The proposed works would form essential infrastructure to allow for the renewable energy from offshore wind to be efficiently transmitted and provide a reliable source of electricity. This would help to reduce energy demand by providing an increase in reliable renewable energy and increase energy efficiency by upgrading and improving the electricity transmission network. The impacts on amenity, natural and built environment and the landscape from the proposed works have been assessed in this Statement and the accompanying ES Chapters. The proposed works would contribute to carbon management and reduce energy demand and increase efficiency in line with LDP Policies PCYFF 5 and PS 6.

7.2.9 PPW paragraph 3.61 recognises the need for electricity infrastructure as it is crucial for economic, social and environmental sustainability. The need for the significant investment in energy transmission and distribution infrastructure is also highlighted in paragraph 5.7.2, while paragraph 5.7.7 outlines that commitments to climate change will only be achieved if new energy development is integrated with the provision of additional electricity grid network infrastructure.

7.2.10 NPS EN-1 recognises that substantial weight should be given to the need for energy infrastructure such as that of the proposed works, and that it falls under CNP infrastructure where there is a presumption to grant consent.

7.2.11 Section 3 of TAN 6: Sustainable Rural Communities supports the diversification of the rural economy and that applications that enhance infrastructure networks in rural areas should be supported. areas. Section 3 of TAN 6 supports the proposed works which seek to enhance the infrastructure network.

7.2.12 TAN 23: Economic Development sets out that energy infrastructure can contribute to economic development and can help to improve and strengthen rural communities. The proposed works site is in a rural area and the proposed works would help to improve the electricity transmission network in North West Wales. This means that the rural community would also be able to benefit from an improved electricity network and the economic opportunities this brings, not just the larger urban developments in the region.

7.2.13 In conclusion, the principle of the proposed works would be in accordance with Policies PS 7 and Strategic Policy PCYFF 1 of the LDP, Policies 5, 17 and 24 of Future Wales and PPW and NPS EN-1. There is a clear and justified need for the proposed works and the principle of developing and upgrading transmission networks to facilitate the connection of 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030 and upgrading grid capacity is supported by both national (including the National Plan) and local policy.

7.3 Landscape and Visual Amenity

7.3.1 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed works has been undertaken and is set out in **Chapter 4: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of **ES Volume 4 Glaslyn Cables Works**, which confirms that the proposed works will have no significant adverse impacts on both landscape character and visual amenity following the implementation of mitigation measures.

7.3.2 Policy AMG 3 of the LDP sets out the measures that should be taken to ensure the features and qualities that are distinctive to local landscape character are protected. This includes taking measures to ensure development does not *"cause significant adverse impacts to the character of the built or natural landscape"*. Embedded mitigation measures, as outlined in the ES, would be implemented to assimilate the development into the landscape context and no adverse impacts would occur on the local landscape character in accordance with LDP Policy AMG 3.

7.3.3 Policy PCYFF 4 of the LDP states that all proposals for development should *"integrate into their surroundings"* and will be refused if they fail to show how landscaping (appropriate to nature, scale and location of the proposed development) has been considered from the outset. Proposals for landscaping within the proposed works boundary have been prepared and are included within the Environmental Statement **Chapter: 4 Landscape and Visual Amenity** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works.** The landscaping has been designed to reflect and integrate with the surrounding area and includes areas of marshy grassland, species-rich meadow and semi-improved grassland, scrub and ditches and hedgerow and woodland that will include local and native species to integrate with the surroundings and provide biodiversity value.

7.3.4 Policy AMG2 relates to Special Landscape Areas and identifies a need to appropriately consider the scale and nature of development, ensuring there are no significant adverse detrimental impacts on the landscape. The proposed works intersect SLA 03: Glaslyn & Dwyryd Estuary Landscape, while SLA 02: Porthmadog and Tremadog Bay is adjacent to the proposed works, to the west of the Wern CSEC. In accordance with Policy AMG 2, the LVIA undertaken and detailed in the ES has taken into account the Review of Special Landscape Areas by the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Planning Policy Unit (Ref. 1-40), including the Statement of Value and Significance that forms an appendix to

this. The LVIA in the ES demonstrates there will be no adverse impacts on these non-statutory landscape designations.

7.3.5 Construction activity associated with the Glaslyn Cables has the potential to impact on the landscape character of Landscape Character Area (LCA) 09 Porthmadog and Seascape Character Area 20 Porthmadog and Glaslyn Estuary. The LVIA contained in **Chapter 4: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the **ES Volume 4 Glaslyn Cables Works** finds that construction activity would represent an incongruous activity in the rural landscape, and vegetation clearance and the excavation and disturbance of soil from HDD, along with open trenching, would lead to direct impacts on these LCAs and SCAs. Indirect effects would result from the loss of tranquillity through the perceived increase of urban influence due to the construction. These impacts would be significant for the duration of the construction works, however they would be localised, temporary and reversible. No significant impacts on visual amenity have been identified during the construction of the Glaslyn Cables and additionally, impacts on landscape character receptors would reduce following construction, resulting in no significant residual effects during operation in accordance with LDP Policy AMG 3.

7.3.6 No significant effects have been identified for landscape and visual receptors during the construction or operational phases of the proposed works at Wern CSEC or Minffordd CSEC and THH. In accordance with LDP Policies AMG 2 and AMG 3, the operation of the proposed works would not cause significant adverse impacts to the character of the built or natural landscape. Embedded mitigation, as outlined in **Chapter 4 Landscape and Visual Amenity** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**, has been implemented to assimilate the development into the landscape context and minimise landscape and visual impacts on nearby communities in line with LDP Policy PCYFF 4, Future Wales Policy 17 and NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.7.6.

7.4 Design

7.4.1 LDP Policy PCYFF 3 provides criteria that development should meet, where relevant, to demonstrate high quality design that takes into account the natural, historic and built environment. The requirement for developments to respect the context of the site in which they are proposed and its place in the local landscape is particularly relevant. Future Wales Policy 17 requires the designing of new strategic grid infrastructure to minimise visual impact on nearby communities.

7.4.2 TAN 12 provides guidance on the design process and emphasises the importance of *'promoting sustainability through good design'*.

7.4.3 NPS EN-1 recognises that *"the applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the physical appearance of some energy infrastructure"*, emphasising the need to demonstrate good design in terms of siting relative to existing landscape character, landform and vegetation.

7.4.4 As set out in the **Glaslyn Design and Access Statement**, the design of the proposed works has sought to minimise the effects on the natural, historic and built environment by being appropriately sited, where there is a need for new and replacement infrastructure, and having appropriate scale, height and massing. Appropriate materials and incorporation of hard and soft landscaping measures contribute to the proposed works compliance with local policy PCYFF3.

7.4.5 The Glaslyn Cables will be underground and not visible following installation, avoiding visual impact on nearby communities in accordance with Future Wales Policy 17. While

the appearance of the CSECs and THH is primarily determined by the operational requirements of the infrastructure, the proposed works have been located where existing electrical infrastructure exists, demonstrating good design in terms of siting in accordance with PPW, TAN 12 and NPS EN-1. Landscaping proposals around the Minffordd THH and CSEC installation have sought to integrate the infrastructure into the landscape. Further information on design is contained in the **Glaslyn Design and Access Statement**.

7.5 Ecology and Nature Conservation

7.5.1 Under Strategic Policy PS 19 of the LDP, proposals that have a significant adverse effect on the Plan area's distinctive natural environment, countryside and coastline will be refused unless the need for and benefits clearly outweigh the harm, while Policy AMG 5 requires development proposals to protect and enhance biodiversity through sensitive location and enhancement of habitats. This is also reiterated by Future Wales Policy 9, which requires the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity including the provision of a "net benefit".

7.5.2 Section 6.4 of PPW and TAN 5 require proposals for development to deliver a net benefit for biodiversity.

7.5.3 An assessment of the likely significant effects on ecologically sensitive receptors is presented in **Chapter 5: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**. This concludes that no significant adverse impacts are anticipated through the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed works and compliance with Strategic Policy PS 19 of the LDP and Section 6.4 of PPW and TAN 5 is considered to have been achieved.

Arboriculture

7.5.4 An **Arboricultural Survey (ES Volume 8, Appendix 4.5.K)** recorded 810 trees in the Study Area. Eighteen were identified as being significant (ancient or veteran trees) and of those, 13 are in or immediately adjacent to the proposed works the Glaslyn Works Site.

7.5.5 An Arboricultural assessment has been undertaken and detailed in **ES Volume 8, Appendix 4.5.K: Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)** which assesses the likely impact of the proposed works on trees. In total, 74 individual trees, 56 groups, 4 woodlands and 8 hedgerows are to be removed or partially removed to facilitate the proposed works. This includes 2 individual trees and 1 part woodland classed as high quality (Category A); 22 individual trees, 7 groups, 9 part groups and 3 part woodlands classed as moderate quality (Category B); 44 individual trees, 21 groups, 18 part groups, 3 hedgerows and 5 part hedgerows classed as low quality (Category C); and the remaining 6 individual trees and 1 group classified as unsuitable for retention (Category U).

7.5.6 The works site includes the Root Protection Area (RPA) of one veteran tree (T71). At this location, there will be a localised narrowing of the easement, protective fencing of the full RPA and all spoil generated will be stored outside of the RPA. With mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are anticipated to any veteran trees.

7.5.7 Works have been designed to avoid ancient woodland as far as practicable, and as a result no ancient woodland will be removed to facilitate the proposed works. Tree removals are required due to a direct conflict with the proposed works. The majority of

the trees to be removed are in the agricultural fields where open-cut trenching is being utilised for the installation of the replacement cabling, where topsoil is being removed and where the joint bay compounds will be installed. There are a small number of tree losses associated with where access roads and access widening for visibility splays are required for construction traffic. Further loss of tree cover will be required due to the extension of the CSEC at Wern. Minor tree trimming will be carried out in an area mapped as ancient woodland at the junction with the A497, as described previously to maintain the existing visibility splay, however it is considered that this woodland area is, in fact, established on made ground adjacent to the railway line and is unlikely to comprise ancient woodland soils.

7.5.8 Decommissioning of the existing cables in other locations will leave sections of cable in situ and capped at each end to avoid direct effects on additional areas of Ancient Woodland. Minimum buffers have been designed into the proposed works to avoid important nature conservation and ecological features present in or adjacent to the proposed works site as far as practicable. This includes 15 m buffers from woodlands to prevent incursion into Root Protection Areas, and 15 m buffers from individual trees.

7.5.9 The proposed works have sought where possible to protect, retain or enhance trees of value in accordance with PS 19. All tree removal is in the proposed works site, and no ancient or veteran trees will be removed as a result of the proposed works. Any tree loss will be mitigated with a robust and high quality scheme of new tree planting. In line with PPW, replacement planting will be at a ratio of three for every one lost and in the case of woodland area lost, should be at a stocking density of 1600 per hectare for broadleaf woodland and 2500 per hectare for conifer plantation. This will represent an opportunity to increase the quality, impact, diversity and resilience of the local tree stock.

Net Benefits for Biodiversity

7.5.10 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 Section 6: 'Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty' states that public authorities "*must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions*".

7.5.11 Future Wales Policy 9: 'Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure' sets out that *"action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity (to provide a net benefit), the resilience of ecosystems and green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature-based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment."*

7.5.12 PPW expands on this by stating that the "*planning system has a key role to play in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increase the resilience of ecosystems. Recognising that development needs to take place and some biodiversity may be impacted, the planning system should ensure that…there is a net benefit for biodiversity…"*

7.5.13 PPW also states that *"all development must deliver a net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience from the baseline state (proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed)".*

7.5.14 PPW TAN 5: 'nature conservation and planning' sets out the key principles of positive planning for nature conservation, and states that the town and country planning system in Wales should *"…look for development to provide a net benefit for biodiversity*

conservation with no significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally."

7.5.15 A Net Benefit for Biodiversity (NBB) and Green Infrastructure (GI) Statement has been produced and is included in **Volume 8, Appendix 4.5.L** of the ES. The NBB and GI Statement has been produced in response to the approach to delivering NBB and GI in Wales, as mandated in PPW. This combined NBB and GI Statement demonstrates how the proposed works have applied the stepwise approach and DECCA framework, through habitat avoidance, mitigation, creation and/or enhancement to reduce the permanent and temporary impact of habitats within the planning application boundary and provide proportionate compensation where achievable. Mitigation measures are included in the CEMP to reduce the potential effects of on-site important ecological features. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed works has been undertaken and is set out in **Chapter 4: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**. Both reports should be read in conjunction with the NBB and GI Statement.

7.5.16 The majority of the proposed linear works will traverse land under third-party ownership and are therefore outside National Grid's direct control. However, where land is owned by National Grid, opportunities to deliver on-site NBB will be considered. These will be prioritised in areas also required for environmental or landscape mitigation, and where such enhancements would not compromise future site expansion or customer connection requirements.

7.5.17 The proposed works will affect several habitat features, including species-poor grassland, native hedgerows, individual trees, and woodland. A step-wise approach has been applied in line with best practice, ensuring that all impacted habitats have been either mitigated or compensated for on-site where feasible. Where full on-site replacement is not achievable, additional compensation will be secured off-site through a third-party funding mechanism. This ensures that residual losses are addressed and that the overall scheme delivers a measurable and proportionate net gain for biodiversity.

7.5.18 In conclusion, in line with the compensation and mitigation measures set out within the NBB and Green Infrastructure Statement, the proposed works would result in a net biodiversity benefit and would accord with the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, FW Policy 9 and the PPW.

Statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

7.5.19 In accordance with PPW, development should only be permitted in wholly exceptional circumstances and where it is considered appropriate and is not likely to impact a SSSI and where there is a broad agreement for mitigation and enhancement of these areas. Due to the location of the existing infrastructure in the SSSI, and the overriding need for the proposed works as detailed in Section 2 of this Planning Statement, there are considered to be no other alternatives as set out in **Chapter 3 Assessment and Alternatives** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**. The proposed works are also considered appropriate and the circumstances considered wholly exceptional. Mitigation measures have been embedded into the design of the proposed works in accordance with PPW, and the proposed works have evolved to avoid statutorily designated sites as much as practicable during construction, operation and maintenance. The majority of Glaslyn SSSI and Coedydd Derw a Safleoedd Ystlumod Meirion/Meirionnydd Oakwoods Bat Sites SAC will be avoided through the design of the installation of

replacement cables, which will use HDD to avoid direct impacts by passing beneath the SAC and most of the SSSI.

7.5.20 A small area of the Glaslyn SSSI (1.6 ha) will be directly impacted on a temporary basis to facilitate an HDD compound on the very edge of the SSSI. The loss of habitat would not have an adverse effect on structure, function or conservation status of the SSSI as it would affect less than 0.01% of the overall designated area. While the length of HDD that could be installed does not provide complete avoidance, this design eliminates the need for two HDD sections which would have required additional works, such as a site compound for re-entry in the SSSI. None of the rare plants for which the SSSI is designated were recorded in this area, which is comparatively drier than the majority of the SSSI. Works in Glaslyn SSSI will be minimised through retaining and decommissioning existing cables in situ.

7.5.21 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) **Volume 8, Appendix 7.1.B: Habitats Regulations of ES** has been prepared to support the application to assess the impact on Coedydd Derw a Safleoedd Ystlumod Meirion/Meirionnydd Oakwoods and Bat Sites SAC. The need for works in Coedydd Derw a Safleoedd Ystlumod Meirion/Meirionnydd Oakwoods and Bat Sites SAC have been minimised by retaining the existing cables which pass through the proposed works site and decommissioning them in situ rather than removing them. The only minor works in the SAC will be at the existing kiosks. Works in Ysbyty Bron y Garth SSSI have been avoided by retaining the existing cables, which bisect the proposed works site, and decommissioning them in situ, rather than removing them.

7.5.22 The construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed works are not anticipated to result in any significant impacts to any statutory designated sites. The design has also sought to have appropriate regard to and protect sites of international and national importance, in accordance with LPD policy PS 19 and PPW.

Non-statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

7.5.23 There are 41 non-statutory sites designated for nature conservation identified within 2 km of the proposed works site. Two of these comprise Ty'n-y-berllan cWS and Coed Bryn-twr/Wern cWS and are both located in the western extent at Wern. Table 5-7 in **Chapter 5: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** sets out the potential impacts of the proposed works on non-statutory sites for nature conservation.

7.5.24 Most of the 41 non-statutory designated sites in the 2 km study area of the proposed works will be avoided by the proposed works with the exception of Ty'n-y-berllan cWS and Coed Bryn-twr/Wern cWS. These are on the route of an existing access track and road respectively at the western end of the proposed works site, that will be temporarily used in advance of construction of the permanent access road to Wern CSEC (which does not cross either cWS). No other non-statutory designated sites will be directly impacted by the proposed works.

7.5.25 In accordance with LDP policy AMG 5, the development has sought to avoid significant impacts to local biodiversity. Due to the location of the existing cables and infrastructure, and the need for the proposed works, alternative sites are not appropriate. The design of the proposed works has had appropriate regard to protecting sites of regional and local importance, in accordance with LPD policy PS 19.

Protection of Other Habitat and Species

7.5.26 **Chapter 5: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** sets out the potential impacts of the proposed works on legally protected and notable species that are within 2 km of the proposed works site boundary.

7.5.27 Following the incorporation of embedded and additional mitigation measures and good practice, significant adverse impacts on Habitats of Principal Importance or protected species are unlikely to occur and the proposed works are in accordance with LDP Policies PS 19 and AMG 5.

7.6 Historic Environment

7.6.1 **Chapter 6 Historic Environment** of the **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** provides an assessment of the potential effects of the proposed works on designated, non-designated heritage and archaeological assets. During construction these effects comprise temporary short-term impacts to assets as a result of the change to their setting, or permanent physical impacts to below ground archaeological remains.

7.6.2 LDP Policies PS 5 and PS 20 require developments to preserve and enhance the quality of the historic environment assets, including their setting. The proposed works would not have a significant impact on the setting of any World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings and historic landscape during the construction or operation of the proposed works. Considerations of size, materials, distribution, lighting and screening in the final designs of the alterations to the existing Wern CSEC, the construction of the new Minffordd CSEC, the increased height of the EVIP Minffordd THH, and the removal of the Garth CSEC will ensure that impact on the setting of designated historic assets will be kept to a minimum.

7.6.3 A study area of 500 m from the proposed works site was assessed in relation to non-designated historic assets and for the assessment of archaeological potential.

7.6.4 LDP Policy AT 3 requires proposals for development to conserve non-designated heritage assets while Policy AT 4 requires the protection of non-designated archaeological sites and their setting. Ground-breaking works associated with the construction of the proposed works will impact non-designated heritage assets of post-medieval date. Where these cannot be avoided by design, a proportionate programme of archaeological investigation recording and reporting, while not avoiding physical impacts, would mitigate the impact by providing a greater understanding and appreciation of the evidential value of archaeological remains.

7.6.5 Following this additional mitigation, the proposed works will not result in any significant adverse impacts to non-designated heritage assets and archaeological remains in accordance with LDP Policies AT 3 and AT 4.

7.6.6 In conclusion, the proposed works will not result in significant impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets or unknown archaeological remains. The proposed works accord with LDP Policies PS 5, PS 20, AT 3 and AT 4, and PPW section 6.1 and TAN 24.

7.7 Ground Conditions

7.7.1 **Chapter 7 Geology, Hydrogeology, Land Use and Agriculture** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** provides an assessment of the likely significant effects on

ground conditions that could arise from the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed works.

7.7.2 LDP Policy PCYFF 2 requires development proposals to demonstrate they will not have unacceptable adverse impacts in terms of pollution. LDP Policy PS 19 requires all proposals to reduce effects on water resources and quality.

7.7.3 PPW seeks to ensure both land contamination and water quality are considered in development proposals and remedial measures implemented where appropriate.

7.7.4 Construction activity has the potential to impact on ground water and ground pollution however mitigation measures will be employed to prevent adverse effects on geology and hydrogeology during all phases of the proposed works, with the main measure being to ensure good site practice and management. The CEMP will also include a range of standard site management and construction techniques to minimise risk to construction workers, and pollution of uncontaminated strata and controlled waters. Further mitigation measures are detailed in Section 7.11 of **Chapter 7 Geology, Hydrogeology, Land Use and Agriculture** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**.

7.7.5 Following the implementation of mitigation measures, the proposed works are not anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts through pollution to soils and groundwater, in accordance with LDP Policies PCYFF 2 and PS 19. In accordance with PPW, the design of the proposed works has appropriately considered issues arising from potential land contamination and proposes the implementation of remedial measures should they be necessary.

7.7.6 Mineral Safeguarding areas cross the proposed works site, however the proposed works will not lead to the sterilisation of mineral resources or render minerals sites inaccessible for future use. Mineral resources are present at depth but are already primarily covered by existing land use. A mineral buffer zone crosses the proposed works site at Minffordd. Following the application of mitigation measures outlined in the **ES**, there would be no significant adverse impacts on mineral resources. The proposed works are in accordance with LDP Policy MWYN 1. As the development will lead to no adverse impacts to the mineral buffer site, or conflict with mineral operations, the proposed works are also in accordance MWYN 5.

7.8 Flood Risk and Drainage

7.8.1 **Chapter 8 Water Quality, Resources and Flood Risk** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** provides an assessment of the likely significant impacts to the water environment that could arise from the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed works. A Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA) has been prepared (**Volume 8, Appendix 4.8.C**).

7.8.2 An assessment of flood risk, water quality and resources has been undertaken. The assessment has demonstrated that the construction and operation of the proposed works, in combination with the identified mitigation measures, is not anticipated to have significant impacts on the aquatic environment or water resources in the ZOI.

7.8.3 The Flood Consequences Assessment reports on modelling undertaken to date and liaison with Natural Resources Wales to demonstrate that the proposals will be compliant with policy.

7.9 Traffic and Transport

7.9.1 **Chapter 9: Traffic and Transport** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** provides an assessment of the likely significant traffic and transport effects that could arise from the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed works.

7.9.2 During construction, it is anticipated there would be a peak of up to 100 two-way HGV movements per day (50 inbound and 50 outbound). Thirteen highway links, referred to as Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) locations, were assessed in accordance with IEMA Guidelines. During construction, two of the assessed links are anticipated to experience an increase in the number of HGVs of more than 30% during an average day. It was found ATC 4.1 (A487 west of A498) would experience a 32% increase in the number of HGVs while at ATC 4.6 (Brittania Terrace/A497), an increase in 36% is projected.

7.9.3 ATC 4.1 is anticipated to experience the largest proportional increase in daily traffic levels, albeit only a 1% increase. ATC 4.1 is also predicted to experience the highest level of additional traffic associated with the proposed works during construction. It is expected that 93 construction related vehicles, including private vehicles and HGVs, will travel along the local road network to arrive at the proposed works site on an average day. It is expected that an additional 77 construction related vehicles will travel along ATC 4.11 (A487 west of Porthmadog High Street Junction) also resulting in a 1% increase in overall traffic at this link.

7.9.4 Following the implementation of embedded mitigation, no significant impacts are anticipated at all assessed links. Despite high increases in HGV volumes at ATC 4.1 (31.6%) and ATC 4.6 (35.5%), the impact is not expected to be significant. The proposed works would not materially affect traffic conditions or road safety across the assessed network.

7.9.5 Operation, including maintenance, is anticipated to create much less traffic than during the construction phase and no adverse impacts are anticipated.

7.9.6 The proposed works would not lead to unacceptable harm to the safe and efficient operation of the highway and the assessment of transport impacts in **Chapter 9** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** confirms no adverse impacts are anticipated, in accordance with LDP Policy TRA 4. The proposed works accord with PPW as the assessment covers the construction, operation and maintenance and concludes no adverse impacts will arise during any of the phases of development.

7.10 Amenity

7.10.1 This section appraises the impact of the proposed works on air quality and emissions and noise and vibration.

Air Quality and Emissions

7.10.2 **Chapter 10: Air Quality and Emissions** of the **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** provides an assessment of the likely significant air quality and emissions effects that could arise from the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed works.

7.10.3 The source of potential air quality and emissions effects during the construction phase includes construction dust emissions and site plant emissions. Much of the land in and around the Glaslyn works site is rural. There are some dust and air quality sensitive

receptors in or close to the Glaslyn works site that could be adversely impacted by the construction of the proposed works.

7.10.4 The assessment of likely significant air quality and emissions effects has followed IAQM guidance on assessing construction site air quality impacts. Following implementation of the mitigation measures identified in **Chapter 10** of the **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**, there will no significant adverse impact on air quality from the proposed works, in accordance with LDP Policy PCYFF 2.

7.10.5 The impact of Non Road Mobile Machinery emissions during construction are not anticipated to result in adverse impacts and there is no potential for them to contribute to any significant adverse impacts on local air quality, also in accordance with LDP Policy PCYFF 2.

7.10.6 Increases in road traffic during both the construction and operational phases will be such that there is no potential for them to contribute to significant impacts on local air quality.

7.10.7 By implementing identified mitigation measures secured through the CEMP, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed works in terms of air quality and emissions. This is in accordance with LDP Policy PCYFF 2 as the amenity of local residencies and other land and property uses will not be adversely impacted by the proposed works. Compliance is also demonstrated with PPW as areas of poor air quality will not be created.

Noise and Vibration

7.10.8 **Chapter 11 Noise and Vibration** of the **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** provides an assessment of the likely significant noise and vibration effects that could arise from the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed works.

7.10.9 A number of receptors that may be impacted by the construction of the proposed works have been identified. These include residential properties, educational and medical facilities, hotels and places of worship.

7.10.10 Construction work that may result in potential significant adverse noise and vibration effects at sensitive receptors have been identified as Noise Generating Activities (NGA). Significant impacts are anticipated at numerous residential receptors due to works associated with NGA1, NGA2, NGA6 and NGA 7, while significant impacts are anticipated on a number of residential and hotel receptors due to works associated with NGA4. Detailed results of construction noise predictions are presented in **ES Volume 8**, **Appendix 4.11.A: Construction Noise and Vibration Calculations and Results**.

7.10.11 In terms of construction vibration, the highest levels of Peak Particle Velocity vibration generated would be from vibratory rollers. Two receptors are identified within 25 m of a haul road where vibratory rollers may be used during NGA1 and/or NGA6. These receptors are close enough that medium ground-borne impacts may occur, resulting in a significant adverse impact. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated at other NGA locations from construction vibration.

7.10.12 Traffic noise associated with the construction of the proposed works is anticipated result in a 0.3 decibel (dB) increase, which would not result in any significant adverse impacts. The operation of the proposed works would also not result in significant adverse impacts through traffic noise.

7.10.13 Following the implementation of mitigation measures and Best Practice Measures (BPM) as detailed in **Section 11.9** of **Chapter 11 Noise and Vibration** of the **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** and secured through the CEMP, the proposed works are not anticipated to result in any significant adverse impacts on noise and vibration. The use of screening outlined in BS 5228-1 will be implemented to mitigate significant effects where appropriate. It is assumed that temporary barriers could screen line-of-sight from construction activities to sensitive receptors and would provide at least 5 dB attenuation. Significant adverse impacts identified during NGA1, NGA2, NGA4, NGA6 and NGA 7 would be reduced and no longer significant, in accordance with LDP Policy PCYFF 2.

7.10.14 Following the application of mitigation measures to be secured through the CEMP, the proposed works would not result in any significant noise and vibration effects. The proposed works have also sought to protect the amenity of local residents through incorporating mitigation and BPM, while also avoiding significant adverse impacts from vibration in accordance with LDP Policy PCYFF 2. In accordance with PPW and TAN 11 the proposed works have sought to incorporate measures which will reduce overall exposure to noise pollution, to avoid inappropriate soundscape.

7.11 Socio-economics

7.11.1 **Chapter 12 Socio-Economics** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** provides an assessment of the socio-economic impacts of the proposed works.

7.11.2 During construction of the proposed works, the majority of PRoWs in the Glaslyn works site will be retained and will not be diverted. In general, where a PRoW crosses the proposed works site, it will be fenced off with temporary Heras type fencing to create a designated crossing point. Due to the complexity of the crossing point associated with Cycle Route 8, a more extensive diversion will be required in the form of a temporary surface track to the west of its current location over the cable corridor. Given the large network of PRoW that could be used as substitutes in the case of closures, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated to PRoWs during construction. No PRoWs will be affected during operation. The proposed works are in accordance with LDP Policy PS 4 as PRoWs are safeguarded during construction and operation.

7.11.3 No significant adverse impacts are anticipated on permanent or temporary land take as a result of the proposed works, although temporary land take is required at a number of receptors.

7.11.4 The Bodawen playground, owned and managed by Porthmadog Town Council, is immediately south-west of the Porthmadog Roundabout. The existing 400 kV cables run in a south-east/north-west direction beneath the Bodawen Playground and would need to be removed to facilitate the proposed works. The proposed works would necessitate the closure of the playground for two years. National Grid have considered locations in the area surrounding the Bodawen playground to provide alternative playground facilities. However no suitable alternatives are available in the local area as land identified was either too far from the current facilities, too remote or could not be safely accessed due to lack of footpath provision or road crossing.

7.11.5 National Grid has liaised with the Town Council on the required playground closure and mitigation. It was agreed that following the construction of the proposed works, the playground would be reinstated, including seating, play equipment and appropriate safety surfacing, when it reinstates the land. Porthmadog Park is approximately 1 km

from both the Bodawen Playground and Stone Circle Park and provides an alternative playground for use during the proposed works.

7.11.6 Sections of the Porthmadog Stone Circle Park next to the Bodawen playground will need to be temporarily closed during construction. If the stones can be left in place during the proposed works, they will be fenced to prevent access. If removal is necessary, only the stones close to the works will be removed. They will be carefully stored and subsequently reinstated post construction. The existing cables run beneath this area and due to residential development to the south and the A487 and ancient woodland to the north, works in this area are unavoidable.

7.11.7 The playing field on the north side of the Ysgol Eifionydd Secondary School will be closed for a maximum of 2.5 years during the construction period to accommodate excavating works to install cables. After construction, the field will be returned to its previous use. National Grid have discussed the proposed works with the School management team and board of governors. The playing fields on the south side of the school will remain available for physical education lessons. Porthmadog Football Club grounds are within 450 m of Ysgol Eifionydd Secondary School field.

7.11.8 In accordance with LDP Policy ISA 2 and ISA 4, Porthmadog Park provides suitable alternative provision in the same settlement for the temporary period that the Stone Circle Park and Bodawen Park are unavailable, with access provided by existing paths. In accordance with Policy ISA 2 National Grid have reviewed playground facilities in the local area and no other alternatives for new temporary playground during the proposed works are available. Other receptors that experience temporary land take will be suitably mitigated in line with **Chapter 12 Socio-Economics** of **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** to prevent any significant adverse impacts.

7.11.9 The operation of the proposed works will not result in any significant adverse impacts.

7.11.10 In conclusion, the construction and operation of the proposed works will not result in any significant adverse impacts on socio-economic receptors. In accordance with LDP Policy ISA 2 and ISA 4, the temporary closure of impacted recreational facilities will not result in permanent loss, with suitable alternatives and mitigation provided as detailed in **Chapter 12 Socio-Economics of ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works**. This demonstrates there will be no detrimental impact to the health and well-being of local communities in accordance with Future Wales and PPW.

7.12 Cumulative Effects

7.12.1 Local policy, including Policy ADN 3 of the LDP require cumulative impacts of development to be considered including in relation to landscape, visual impact, noise, ecology and ground and surface water.

7.12.2 Consideration of the cumulative impact of development is also required in National policy, including PPW. PPW emphasises the need for potential cumulative effects of proposals to be considered and outlines how these will be a consideration in making planning decisions. Paragraph 5.9.8 of PPW states that planning authorities should “take into account the cumulative impacts of renewable and low carbon energy development and their associated infrastructure”.

7.12.3 **Chapter 5** of **ES Volume 7: The Project and Cumulative Effects** provides an assessment of cumulative effects associated with the proposed works. Only one development of note has been identified within 2 km of the proposed works site, which comprises Gwynedd Council reference ‘C23/0548/08/LL’ for the erection of eight new

flexible business / industrial units with associated parking and landscaping. **ES Volume 7: The Project and Cumulative Effects** provides assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposed works and provides consideration of the cumulative effects of the EVIP and Natural Resource Wales – Porthmadog Flood Defence Works.

7.12.4 Significant adverse cumulative effects are anticipated during the construction phase as a result of the proposed works and EVIP. These are anticipated on the following common receptors:

- LCA 09: Porthmadog.
- Viewpoint 9: Wales Coast Path – The Cob (eastern end), Porthmadog.
- Viewpoint 10: ffordd Tan-y-Glannau, Minffordd.

7.12.5 No significant cumulative effects are anticipated during operation.

7.12.6 The potential cumulative effects of the proposed works have been assessed in relation to landscape, visual, noise, ecology and ground and surface water impacts in accordance with LDP Policy ADN 3. PPW also requires consideration of cumulative impacts of development and an assessment of these impacts is set out in **ES Volume 7: The Project and Cumulative Effects**.

7.13 Welsh Language

7.13.1 In accordance with LDP Policy PS 1 and TAN 20, a Welsh Language Statement has been submitted as part of the application, which demonstrates that the proposed works will not lead to adverse impacts on the character and language balance of local communities (**Glaslyn Welsh Language Statement).** Despite no adverse impacts, measures will be implemented to ensure that use of the Welsh language is preserved. Measures will include the use of bi-lingual signage on affected road routes and PRoW, and where possible, ensuring local people are employed who may speak or have knowledge of the Welsh language. As identified in the **Section 6** of the **Glaslyn Welsh Language Statement: Key Considerations**, the project could provide resources for workers, such as key phrase lists, to help those who cannot speak Welsh.

8. Planning Balance and Conclusion

8.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany an application for full planning permission for replacement of existing underground 400 kV and 132 kV Glaslyn Cables and associated works between the Wern CSEC and Garth CSEC.

8.1.2 The planning application is necessary as part of the Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement (PTR) Project. The Project is a transmission upgrade scheme to increase the capacity of the network between Pentir and Trawsfynydd substations in North West Wales. The Project is part of the wider network transmission upgrades required to facilitate the connection of 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030.

8.1.3 The replacement of the cables is essential to enable an increase to the network capacity that is required to contribute towards the Welsh Government renewable energy targets summarised above. There is strong national policy support for strengthening and reinforcing the electricity network in Wales, particularly to support the transition to net zero. New, strategic grid infrastructure is explicitly earmarked by the Welsh Government, along with a commitment to work with stakeholders, including National Grid, to transition to a multi-vector grid network and "*reduce the barriers to the implementation of new grid infrastructure".*

8.1.4 Planning Policy Wales outlines in chapter 5 that an effective electricity grid network is required to fulfil the Welsh Government renewable and low carbon ambitions, and furthermore that additional electricity grid network infrastructure should be provided. The proposed works will reinforce the electricity network helping to meet the demand in North West Wales, including through the distribution of electricity from offshore renewable energy projects.

8.1.5 There is an identified and established need for the proposed works as set out in the Energy White Paper (2020) that outlines a strategy to transform the energy system, tackling emissions while continuing to ensure secure and reliable supply, and affordable bills for households and businesses. The Welsh Government has also set ambitious targets for renewable energy and the electricity transmission network to decarbonise and provide energy security.

8.1.6 NESO recognise the PTR Project as essential for the transmission of electricity in Wales. The need for the Project is elevated further by Ofgem identifying it as one of the Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) projects. ASTI projects form part of a new regulatory approval and funding framework for onshore transmission projects which Ofgem sets out are required to deliver the Government's 2030 Net Zero ambitions. To help meet those ambitions, Ofgem has identified that significant upgrades to the capacity of the electricity network in North Wales are required to allow the connection of new offshore windfarms.

8.1.7 The existing 400 kilovolt cables are near the end of their operational life and as installed could not operate at the capacity now required. These cables need replacing and it is considered that there is no suitable alternative to the replacement of the existing cables. The existing 132 kilovolt cables cannot be upgraded to operate at 400 kilovolts nor meet the capacity now required by the circuit. These cables will be replaced with new 400 kilovolt cables. If the cables are not upgraded their operational efficiency will continue to

decrease and it would not be possible for the electricity that is generated to be transferred to areas where it is needed.

8.1.8 The additional capacity will allow energy generated by renewable sources to be transferred around the region and will assist the government in meeting targets for reducing carbon emissions and achieving Net Zero. The proposed works form part of the wider Pentir to Trawsfynydd Reinforcement project and without the replacement of the existing underground 400 kilovolt (kV) and 132 kV cables (Glaslyn Cables) and associated infrastructure reinforcement then this section of the PTR project will form a bottle neck and the objectives of the PTR project will not be achieved.

8.1.9 The proposed works have been the subject of environmental surveys and assessments to identify, avoid by design and mitigate adverse effects. The proposed works have been assessed against their compliance with policies in the Development Plan and regard has been had to other material considerations. The appraisal in Section 7 sets out how the proposed works are in accordance with relevant policies forming part of the Development Plan with respect to landscape and visual, ecology, the historic environment, ground conditions, flood risk and drainage, traffic and transport, air quality, noise and vibration, socio-economic and cumulative effects.

8.1.10 Substantial positive weight should be given to the urgent need for the proposed works as demonstrated in this Planning Statement, along with the other associated benefits including the contribution towards a reliable, secure electricity system. The **ES Volume 4: Glaslyn Cables Works** and appraisal in this Planning Statement demonstrate that adverse impacts have been minimised where possible.

8.1.11 In conclusion, there is a compelling urgent need for the proposed works and the principle of developing and upgrading transmission networks to facilitate the connection of new renewable energy generation, and upgrading grid capacity is supported by both the Development Plan and National Policy. Further, this Planning Statement and the accompanying ES has demonstrated that there would be minimal adverse impacts with the proposed works being fully in accordance with the Development Plan. Moreover, the proposed works deliver substantial public benefits and, planning permission should be granted without delay.

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