

04 June 2026

Dear

ATISN 26979 Anglesey Solar Farm Proposals

Information requested

Thank you for your request received on 17 May. You asked for information relating to any solar-farm proposals on Anglesey, including but not limited to the Wylfa Green Ltd application (DNS 3274702), in relation to the following:

1. The full and original text of any objections, technical advice, or assessments issued by the Soil Unit in relation to any solar-farm proposal on Anglesey.
2. All internal correspondence (emails, memos, briefings or notes) between the Soil Unit and any other Welsh Government departments, directorates or officials concerning any Anglesey solar-farm proposal.
3. Any correspondence between the Soil Unit and the Planning Inspectorate relating to these proposals.
4. Any drafts, earlier versions, or internal discussions of the Soil Unit's advice, including any changes requested or directed by other departments or officials.
5. Any risk assessments, technical evaluations, or policy guidance used or produced by the Soil Unit when forming its advice on these proposals.
6. Any instructions, requests, or directions issued to the Soil Unit to amend, soften, or revise its advice on any Anglesey solar-farm proposal.

Welsh Government Response:

A copy of the information released is enclosed:

ITEM 1 - [FOI release 24881: Maen Hir solar farm | GOV.WALES](#) - Any formal consultations responses the Welsh Government have made to Lightsource regarding the Maen Hir project (formerly known as the Môn Solar project).

ITEM 2 - Copies of representations made, recommendations and the decisions taken on applications for renewable energy projects may be found here - [Planning Casework](#) & [Search Developments of National Significance](#)

ITEM 3 - Soil Policy Evidence Programme - The impact of solar photovoltaic sites on agricultural soils and land quality:

- **Work Package 01: [The impact of solar photovoltaic sites on agricultural soils and land quality: literature review | GOV.WALES](#)**

- **Work Package 2a:** [The impact of solar photovoltaic sites on agricultural soils and land quality: industry overview | GOV.WALES](#)
- **Work Package 2b:** [The impact of solar photovoltaic sites on agricultural soils and land quality: solar photovoltaic sites | GOV.WALES](#)
- **Work Package 03:** [The impact of solar photovoltaic sites on agricultural soils and land quality: review of impacts | GOV.WALES](#)
- **Work Package 04:** [The impact of solar photovoltaic sites on agricultural soils and land quality: summary | GOV.WALES](#)

ITEM 4 - [Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12](#) - Chapter 3 Paragraphs 3.58 & 3.59.

ITEM 5 - [Best and most versatile agricultural land and solar PV arrays](#) - Letter to local planning authorities seeking to clarify planning policy regarding most versatile agricultural land and solar PV arrays.

ITEM 6 - Email Chain Beginning 30/10/2024 - DNS 3274702 - LQAS to PEDW - Procedural Clarification – Annex B - Redacted

ITEM 7 - Email Chain Beginning 29/01/2025 - DNS 3274702 - LQAS to Planning Division - Legal Challenge – Annex B - Redacted

Additional Information:

The Department considers three applications (DNS & NSIP) to be within scope of this request:

- [DNS3274702: Alaw Môn – Consented 26 August 2025](#)
- [DNS3217391: Parc Solar Traffwl – Consented 17 March 2023](#)
- [EN010156: Prosiect Maen Hir – withdrawn 13 May 2026](#)

Request 1: *The full and original text of any objections, technical advice, or assessments issued by the Soil Unit in relation to any solar-farm proposal on Anglesey.*

For the purposes of “technical advice”, the Department has interpreted this to be technical advice “issued” to PEDW or PINS. Such technical advice is a matter of public record under ITEM 2.

Survey validations including technical discussion of Agricultural Land Classification survey findings, usually between the applicant’s surveyor and LQAS’ senior ALC surveyor, are not deemed within scope. The Department would, however, be happy to discuss the survey validation process by making a request to LQAS@Gov.Wales along with the case DNS / NSIP reference.

Request 4: *Any drafts, earlier versions, or internal discussions of the Soil Unit’s advice, including any changes requested or directed by other departments or officials.*

Other Departments have neither directed nor attempted to direct Soil Unit officials. The Department does not hold draft representation responses for the cases in question.

Request 6: Any instructions, requests, or directions issued to the Soil Unit to amend, soften, or revise its advice on any Anglesey solar-farm proposal.

Other Departments, civil servants, ministers and advisors have neither directed nor attempted to direct Soil Unit officials to “*amend, soften, or revise its advice on any Anglesey solar-farm proposal*”.

Exceptions:

Some of the information is exempt from disclosure under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Information Regulations and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying these exceptions are set out below as well as further consideration of the public interest test in Annex A to this letter.

The information to be withheld is:

ITEM 6 - Email Chain Beginning 30/10/2024 - DNS 3274702 - LQAS to PEDW - Procedural Clarification – Annex A

- Personal data has been withheld under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The information withheld comprises names, contact details and identifying job titles of junior officials.

ITEM 7 - Email Chain Beginning 29/01/2025 - DNS 3274702 - LQAS to Planning Division - Legal Challenge – Annex A

- Personal data has been withheld under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The information withheld comprises names, contact details and identifying job titles of junior officials.

Next Steps:

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government’s handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government’s Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ
or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above. You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

ANNEX A

Public Interest Test

Regulation 13– Personal data

Regulation 13(1) together with the conditions in Regulation 13(2)(a)(i) and 13(2)(a)(ii) provides an absolute exemption if disclosure of the personal data would breach any of the data protection principles.

‘Personal data’ is defined in sections 3(2) and (3) of the Data Protection Act 2018 (‘the DPA 2018’) and means any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual. An identifiable living individual is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of the individual.

We have concluded that, in this instance, the information requested contains third party personal data.

Under Regulation 13(1) of the EIRs, personal data is exempt from release if disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the GDPR. We consider the principle being most relevant in this instance as being the first. This states that personal data must be:

“processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject”

The lawful basis that is most relevant in relation to a request for information under the FOIA is Article 6(1)(f). This states:

“processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by a third party except where such interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject which require protection of personal data, in particular where the data subject is a child”.

In considering the application of Article 6(1)(f) in the context of a request for information under FOIA it is necessary to consider the following three-part test:-

- **The Legitimate interest test:** Whether a legitimate interest is being pursued in the request for information;
- **The Necessity test:** Whether disclosure of the information/confirmation or denial that it is held is necessary to meet the legitimate interest in question;
- **The Balancing test:** Whether the above interests override the interests, fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject.

Our consideration of these tests is set out below:

1. Legitimate interests

We recognise there is a general legitimate interest in openness and transparency around the handling of official business by public authorities. Disclosure can assist public understanding of how decisions are made and who is involved.

2. Is disclosure necessary?

However, disclosure of the personal identifiers of junior staff is not necessary to meet that legitimate interest. The substance of the correspondence can be understood without revealing the identities or direct contact details of more junior officials. Transparency about the conduct of public business can be achieved by disclosing the content of the information, with personal data redacted where appropriate.

3. The balance between legitimate interests and the data subject's interests or fundamental rights and freedoms

We consider that the legitimate interest in disclosure is outweighed by the rights and freedoms of the individuals concerned. ICO guidance recognises that employees' seniority, role and reasonable expectations are relevant factors in this balancing exercise. Junior officials would not ordinarily expect their names and direct contact details to be disclosed into the public domain in response to an EIR request, particularly where they are not the decision-maker or public-facing representative.

Disclosure of this information would be more intrusive for junior staff and could expose them to unwanted contact or otherwise interfere disproportionately with their privacy. This applies particularly to direct email addresses and telephone numbers, which are personal contact data in the context of disclosure to the world at large. In these circumstances, disclosure would be unfair and would not satisfy the requirements of Article 6(1)(f). Accordingly, the information has been withheld under Regulation 13(1) of the EIR.

ANNEX B:

ITEM 6:

From: R13 REDACTED (LGHCRA - Land, Nature & Food - Landscapes, Nature & Forestry) <R13 REDACTED> **On Behalf Of** LQAS
Sent: 30 October 2024 16:13
To: PEDW – Seilwaith / Infrastructure
Cc: LQAS
Subject: RE: DNS_3274702 - Alaw Mon Solar Farm

Hi R13 REDACTED,

Thank you for the Examination Notice.

Would it be possible to ask for further clarity on what the Inspectors are seeking to explore for each of the matters below, so contributions are helpful to the Inspectors, in Hearing Statements and on the day (if parties choose to attend)?

Thank you and Kind regards,

R13 REDACTED

Hearing 1: Use of best and most versatile agricultural land

The provisional list of matters to be discussed:

1. Policy context
2. Food security
3. Site selection
4. The present and likely future agricultural use of the land (with and without the proposed development)
5. The reversibility of the proposed development in terms of agricultural land quality
6. The cumulative effects in association with other large solar farm development on local agricultural businesses and associated employment opportunities

From: R13 REDACTED (CSI - Planning & Environment Decisions Wales - Planning & Environment Decisions Wales) **On Behalf Of** PEDW – Seilwaith / Infrastructure
Sent: 30 October 2024 15:00
Subject: DNS_3274702 - Alaw Mon Solar Farm

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a copy of an Examination Notice confirming a number of important matters relating to the examination of the above DNS application.

Interested parties, please note, this Examination Notice is for information purposes only, no response is being invited.

Kind regards,

R13 REDACTED

R13 REDACTED

Penderfyniadau Cynllunio a'r Amgylchedd Cymru | Planning and Environment Decisions Wales

Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government

PCAC Ymholiadau Cyffredinol Ffôn | PEDW General Enquiries Tel: 0300 123 1590



<https://llyw.cymru/penderfyniadau-cynllunio-ac-amgylchedd-cymru> |

<https://gov.wales/planning-and-environment-decisions-wales>

ITEM 7:

From: **R13 REDACTED** (LGHCCRA - Landscapes, Nature & Forestry)

Sent: 29 January 2026 09:15

To: **R13 REDACTED** (LGHCCRA - Planning) <**R13 REDACTED**>

Subject: RE: Legal Challenge - Alaw Môn DNS/3274702

Hi **R13 REDACTED**,

Sorry to chase, did you have a chance to consider my e-mail below?

Happy to have a chat if helpful?

Thanks

R13 REDACTED

R13 REDACTED

R13 REDACTED

Is-adran Tirweddau, Natur a Choedwigaeth / Landscapes, Nature and Forestry
Division

Adran dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig / Department for Climate Change &
Rural Affairs

Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government

Ffôn / Tel: **R13 REDACTED**

E-bost: **R13 REDACTED**

Ar y We / Internet: www.llyw.cymru/priddoedd / www.gov.wales/soils

CYMRU

From: R13 REDACTED (LGHCCRA - Landscapes, Nature & Forestry)
Sent: 21 January 2026 15:18
To: R13 REDACTED (LGHCCRA - Planning) <R13 REDACTED >
Cc: R13 REDACTED (LGHCCRA - Landscapes, Nature & Forestry) <R13 REDACTED >;
LQAS <LQAS@gov.wales>
Subject: Legal Challenge - Alaw Môn DNS/3274702

Prynhawn da R13 REDACTED, hope all is well?

I heard on the news yesterday that the legal challenge by IOACC against the Alaw Môn DNS decision was unsuccessful following oral renewal.

Would you be happy to share with us a copy of the grounds of challenge by IOACC, grounds of defence by GLD/Counsel (for both the claim and oral renewal hearing) and a copy of the judgement please?

I think this will be important to us to review and digest, as it will impact how we respond and frame our advice to PEDW on future cases involving BMV agricultural land (there are a number coming forward soon).

More than happy to discuss if you wish.

Many thanks.

R13 REDACTED
R13 REDACTED
R13 REDACTED

Is-adran Tirweddau, Natur a Choedwigaeth / Landscapes, Nature and Forestry
Division

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E-bost: R13 REDACTED

Ar y We / Internet: www.llyw.cymru/priddoedd / www.gov.wales/soils

The logo for the Welsh language, 'CYMRAEG', is written in a stylized, bold, black font. The letters are slightly slanted and have a textured, hand-drawn appearance.