

Preliminary Environmental Information Report Volume III

Appendix 6-4: Amenity and Recreation Assessment

Prosiect Maen Hir - September 2024
EN010156





Prosiect Maen Hir

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Glossary

Cumulative effects	The additional changes caused by the Project in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together. A viewpoint chosen specifically to demonstrate a particular effect or specific issues, which might, for example, be the restricted visibility at certain locations.	
Illustrative Viewpoint.		
Landscape Character Areas	These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type.	
Landscape Character Type	These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, and historical land use, and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes.	
Landscape effects	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.	
Landscape character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.	
Landscape quality (or condition)	A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.	
Landscape receptors	Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.	
Landscape value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.	
Magnitude (of effect)	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term, in duration.	
Mitigation	Measures which are proposed to avoid, reduce and, if possible, offset any significant adverse effects (or to avoid, reduce and if possible remedy identified effects).	

Representative Viewpoint	A viewpoint selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptor, where larger numbers of viewpoints cannot all be included individually and where the significant effects are unlikely to differ.	
Sensitivity	A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.	
Specific Viewpoint	A viewpoint because it is key and sometimes a promoted viewpoint within the landscape, including for example specific local visitor attractions, viewpoints in areas of particularly noteworthy visual and/or recreational amenity such as landscapes with statutory landscape designations, or viewpoints with particular cultural landscape associations.	
Susceptibility	The ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific Project without undue negative consequences.	
Visual amenity	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.	
Visual effect	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.	
Visual receptor Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have potential to be affected by a proposal.		
A map, usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.		

Definitions from *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd Edition, Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Amenity and Recreation Assessment (ARA) relates to the disturbance of users of recreational resources comprising Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (BOAT)), permissive footpaths, permitted access land, cycle routes, outside public recreational facilities, open access land, common land, nature reserves, public open space and water bodies used for recreation.
- 1.1.2 Disturbance, or in EIA terms effects, to these resources may arise from:
 - Physical changes (e.g. diversions), and changes to views, intrusion from noise, dust and other emissions, traffic movements to users of these resources; and/or
 - The numbers of people using these resources as a result of the Project through displacement (e.g. users favouring certain resources over others because of the impact of the Project.
- 1.1.3 This preliminary ARA considers the potential effects to the recreational amenity of outdoor recreational resources that may be affected by the Project. The ARA has also sought to identify and unlock potential opportunities in relation to amenity and recreation as part of the design and masterplanning process, both within the Project and Study Area (3km radius of the Project) such as permissive paths or connecting missing links within the wider network.

2 Methodology

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 There is no established methodological guidance for ARA, therefore the methodology deployed is informed by relevant legislation and policy; and previous approaches to ARA undertaken by LDA Design. The approach follows that of the LVIA and has been tested at several Development Consent Order (DCO) examinations including for Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station and Mallard Pass Solar Farm DCO.
- 2.1.2 The ARA identifies the sensitivity of the amenity and recreational resources that may be affected by the Project, the potential magnitude of change to them and assess the likely resultant impact.
- 2.1.3 The experience of amenity and recreation involves a number of factors and the ARA borrows and builds on findings from other technical disciplines to inform its assessment. It does not seek to replicate those assessments and cross reference to the relevant assessments are made where appropriate. It is also why findings of the ARA may differ from those assessed in the other technical assessments despite relating to the same receptor.
- 2.1.4 The principal determinant of recreational amenity is character and visual and the ARA utilises the same methodology and Study Area used in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual and forms an appendix to the chapter.
- 2.1.5 Reference to other chapters in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) should be made including:
 - Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual
 - Chapter 7: Ecology and Biodiversity
 - Chapter 8: Heritage
 - Chapter 9: Transport
 - Chapter 10: Noise; and
 - Chapter 15: Other Matters (including Glint and Glare)

2.1.6 The ARA provides an assessment of the impact to recreational experience only and reference to Chapter 16: Socio-economics and Chapter 17: Health should also be made in relation to how these matters relate to amenity and recreation.

2.2 Study Area

2.2.1 A Study Area of 3km has been advised by the Isle of Anglesey County Council (IoACC) and is used for the purposes of the ARA. This matches the Study Area used for the LVIA and is shown on Figure 1.

2.3 Consultation

- 2.3.1 A scope for the ARA assessment was set out within the scoping submission and comments on this were considered and all incorporated in the ARA by the Applicant.
- 2.3.2 A meeting with IoCC's Public Rights of Way Officer was held on the 27 June 2024 to discuss the scope of the ARA and potential opportunities in relation to amenity and recreation the Project could deliver.

2.4 Site Visits

2.4.1 Site visits to inform the preliminary ARA were undertaken in March 2023 and June 2024.

3 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

3.1 Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (2015) (Ref 6-4-18)

- 3.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.
- 3.1.2 The seven Well-being goals are:
 - A Prosperous Wales
 - A Resilient Wales
 - A More Equal Wales
 - A Healthier Wales
 - A Wales of Cohesive Communities
 - A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
 - A Globally Responsible Wales
- 3.1.3 Amenity and recreation has an important role to play in supporting and contributing positively to these goals.

3.2 National Planning Policy

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Ref. 6-4-15)

- 3.2.1 In relation to amenity and recreation, paragraph 4.7.11 of EN-1 notes that in the Secretary of State decision making the "Secretary of State should be satisfied that the Applicant has considered both functionality (including fitness for purpose and sustainability) and aesthetics (including its contribution to the quality of the area in which it would be located, any potential amenity benefits, and visual impacts on the landscape or seascape) as far as possible."
- 3.2.2 Paragraph 5.7.4 of EN-1 also recognises that "for energy NSIPs of the type covered by this NPS, some impact on amenity for local communities is likely to be unavoidable. The aim should be to keep impacts to a minimum, and at a level that is acceptable".
- 3.2.3 Paragraph 5.10.21 states that assessment of proposals "should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the

presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity. This should include light pollution effects, including on dark skies, local amenity, and nature conservation".

3.2.4 Paragraph 5.8.29 notes that "Applicants should seek opportunities to use open space for multiple purposes such as amenity, wildlife habitat and flood storage uses."

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (Ref. 6-4-16)

- 3.2.5 Paragraph 2.5.2 of EN-3 notes the importance of good design for renewable energy infrastructure, "particularly in respect of landscape and visual amenity, opportunities for co-existence/co-location with other marine and terrestrial uses, and in the design of the project to mitigate impacts such as noise and effects on ecology and heritage."
- 3.2.6 Public Rights of Way in relation to DCO solar proposals are set out in paragraphs 2.10.40 to 2.10.45 which states:
- 3.2.7 "2.10.40 Proposed developments may affect the provision of public rights of way networks.
- 3.2.8 2.10.41 Public rights of way may need to be temporarily closed or diverted to enable construction, however, applicants should keep, as far as is practicable and safe, all public rights of way that cross the proposed development site open during construction and protect users where a public right of way borders or crosses the site.
- 3.2.9 2.10.43 Applicants are encouraged to design the layout and appearance of the site to ensure continued recreational use of public rights of way where possible during construction, and in particular during operation of the site.
- 3.2.10 2.10.44 Applicants are encouraged where possible to minimise the visual impacts of the development for those using existing public rights of way, considering the impacts this may have on any other visual amenities in the surrounding landscape.

3.2.11 2.10.45 Applicants should consider and maximise opportunities to facilitate enhancements to the public rights of way and the inclusion, through site layout and design of access, of new opportunities for the public to access and cross proposed solar development sites (whether via the adoption of new public rights of way or the creation of permissive paths), taking into account, where appropriate, the views of landowners."

Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12 (PPW12) (2024) (Ref. 6-4-17)

3.2.12 PPW12 sets out overarching polices at the national level for Wales. The theme of amenity and recreation permeates the Plan and the importance of recreational and amenity spaces to heath, well-being, movement and connectivity and environmental protection and enhancement.

Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (2017) (Ref. 6-4-11)

- 3.2.13 Policy TRA 4: Managing Transport Impacts relates specifically to PRoW stating:
 "Proposals that would cause unacceptable harm to the safe and efficient operation
 of the highway public transport and other movement networks including
 pedestrian and cycle routes public rights of way and bridle routes will be refused
 he degree of unacceptable harm will be determined by the local authority on a
 case-by-case basis."
- 3.2.14 Stategic Policy PS14 relates to the visitor economy on Anglesey and seeks to protect and encourage a year-round visitor economy. Policy TWR 1: Visitor Attractions and Facilities relates to new and existing facilities stating at subsection "ii) The development is of high quality in terms of design, layout and appearance."

Isle of Anglesey Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2 (2018 – 2028) (Ref. 6-4-8)

3.2.15 IoACC's Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2 (2018 – 2028) sets out and assessment and strategy for PRoW on the island. The Plan notes that "Anglesey is famed for its natural beauty, attractive and diverse landscapes" and attracts 1.63 million visitors each year. The Strategy also notes that 32.7% of Anglesey's PRoW are located within the national landscape, focussed around the coastal areas of the Island. Table 3-1 below is taken from the Plan and provides figures for the PRoW network on Anglesey.

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Table 3-1 Types of PRoW on Anglesey

PRoW Category	Length Total (km)	
Footpath	1,076 (97.2%)	
Bridleway	5.8 (0.5%)	
Cycleway	15.4 (1.4%)	
Restricted Byway	5.2 (0.5%)	
Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT)	4.3 (0.4%)	
TOTAL	1,107	

- 3.2.16 The Plan also sets out identifies main aims and objectives for the plan period, including a statement of action that identify specific aims and priorities for improvements.
- 3.2.17 The Plan has informed the ARA and design and masterplanning of the Project, so that positive outcomes to the PRoW network can be delivered where practicable.

4 Baseline

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The 'Visit Anglesey' website (Ref. 6-4-10) is the principal promotional tool for tourism and leisure activities for Anglesey. The Island markets itself around its rich heritage and natural environment (including geology and its designation as 'GeoMôn', a UNESCO Global Geopark (Ref. 6-4-3)) and promotes a variety of outdoor activities and destinations.
- 4.1.2 The majority of tourism sites and destinations are around the coastline which is designated as a National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)) (Ref. 6-4-7) and also includes the route of the Coastal Path National Trail (Ref. 6-4-12). Relatively few key recreational assets are located in the central area of the Island. There are a number of identified heritage and Geotrails (Ref 6-4-2) and Circular walks (Ref. 6-4-5) for walkers but these again tend to be located at the coast (Figure 1).
- 4.1.3 A network of National Cycle Routes (Ref. 6-4-14) extends across the heart of the island, crossing over at the small market town of Llannerch-y-medd (Figure 1). These include National Cycle Networks NCN5: The North Wales Coast Cycle Route; NCN 566 link and the locally identified route the 'Copper Trail' which follows sections of NCN 5 and NCN566 forming a 55km (34 mile) circular route in the north of the Island using existing lanes and roads.
- 4.1.4 A number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) provide access to the countryside in the north of the Study Area with a more limited network evident in the central and southern parts (Figure 1). No PRoW are within Maen Hir South B and many of the routes in Maen Hir North, notably around the Former Oil Depot and Bodewryd are not passable, either as a result of overgrown vegetation or no legible route on the ground. Table 4-1 below identifies PRoW within the parcels that form the Project within the PEIR Boundary, including those within areas proposed for Mitigation and enhancement land.

Table 4-1 PRoW Within the Project parcels

Parcel	Number of PRoW within the parcel	References (with total length in brackets)
Maen Hir North	8	11/075/1 (364m)
		44/028/1 (437m)
		44/028/2 (1189m*)
		38/06/1 (245m)
		38/065/4 (520m)
		38/065/3 (132m)
		38/069/2 (160m)
		38/072/1 (1815m*)
Maen Hir Central	1	44/027/1 (678m*)
Maen Hir South A	4	25/002/1 (1188m*)
		25/002/2 (640m*)
		25/005/1, (384m)
		44/059/1 (1621m*)
Maen Hir South B	0	_
TOTAL	13	

^{*} not all length of PRoW within parcels.

- 4.1.5 The amenity of the PRoW network is reflective of the often complex drumlin landscape topography and land cover of the area, with a diverse amenity experience ranging from expansive, elevated views from rocky outcrops to more intimate and enclosed views within woodland and the folds of the undulating topography.
- 4.1.6 In addition to the PRoW network, Parys Mountain with its rich mining history, the rocky outcrop of Mynydd Bodafon and the open, watery expanse of Llyn Alaw reservoir, represent key recreational features beyond the PEIR Boundary. Greater levels of public access, including access land and PRoWs are present within designated landscapes such as the National Landscape to the north and east of the PEIR Boundary; at the coast; and Special Landscape Areas at Myndd Mechell and Myndd Parys beyond Maen Hir Central and Maen Hir South.

- 4.1.7 The Former Oil Depot at Rhosgoch is not formally publicly accessible apart from a PRoW (11/075/1) that enters a short distance in the east before skirting around the southern edge (44/02/2). Footpath 44/028/3 that also ran across this area was extinguished as part of the development of the oil deport in the 1970s.
- 4.1.8 However, parts of the Former Oil Depot do appear to be used informally by dog walkers and motorcross bikes, and IoACC's PROW officer highlighted that trespass and use of motorcross bikes is an issue (pers comm during meeting).
- 4.1.9 Whilst settlement is relative sparse in the Study Area, renewable energy and energy infrastructure are a common feature of the recreational amenity experience on Anglesey in the form of existing solar and windfarms, Wylfa Nuclear Power Station and overhead power lines.

4.2 Cultural Heritage

4.2.1 Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage, of the PEIR, considers cultural heritage in detail but the cultural heritage of the Island also provides an important contribution to the recreational amenity experience. Heritage assets from prehistoric through to industrial heritage from the 19th century add richness to the recreational experience, with many designated and undesignated features such as archaeological earthworks, standing stones, listed buildings (notably small chapels), enclosures and trackways.

4.3 Tranquillity and Dark Skies

- 4.3.1 Figure 6-17 of the LVIA illustrates the relative tranquillity of the area based on Natural Resource Wales (NRW) mapping and indicate the areas of relatively more tranquillity closely correlate to more rural areas further from settlement, roads and energy infrastructure. The parcels that form Northern and Central Maen Hir occupy areas of largely Zone B and Zone C representing relatively less tranquillity. Maen Hir South A and B largely lie within 'undisturbed' areas reflective of the rural character of these areas.
- 4.3.2 The Isle of Anglesey is not designated as an 'International Dark Skies Place' but darker skies are a characteristic feature in more rural areas on the Island. Figure 6-18 of the LVIA illustrates NRW Dark Skies mapping in relation to the PEIR Boundary and indicates that the Project lies within areas that are relatively dark.

4.3.3 The relative dark skies of the area and sense of rurality is an important perceptual component of the recreational amenity.

4.4 GeoMôn UNESCO Global Geopark

- 4.4.1 The entire Island of Anglesey is designated by UNESCO as a global geopark, a non-statutory designation, on account of its internationally important rocks and geomorphology, with a geological record spanning 4 Eras, 12 Geological periods, 1,800 million years and more than 100 rock types and many types of surface sediments. There are currently 195 Global Geoparks in 48 countries around the world, 8 of which are in the UK and 2 in Wales (the other being Fforest Fawr in the Breacon Beacons).
- 4.4.2 The Isle of Anglesey Geopark is administered by GeoMôn, an independent charity whose mission "is to develop Anglesey's spectacular geoheritage as a resource for education and recreation for both visitors and residents of the Island and thereby to improve the local economy and employment prospects on the island". (Ref. 6-4-3)
- 4.4.3 The richness and diversity of Anglesey's geology is a unique and highly valued component of the recreational resource, and GeoMôn has identified a number of Geotrails (Ref. 6-4-1) that allow an appreciation of the Island's rich geological history which are considered further in Section 4.6.

4.5 Wales / Anglesey Coastal Path

- 4.5.1 The Isle of Anglesey Coastal Path circumnavigates a distance of circa 200km (130 miles) around the entire perimeter of Anglesey and falls almost entirely within the National Landscape designation (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which covers 95% of Anglesey's coast (Ref. 6-4-7). The route passes through varying landscapes that include a mixture of farmland, coastal heath, sand dunes, sandy beaches, salt-marshes, foreshores, cliffs, woodland, and Nature Reserves. The Anglesey Coastal Path forms part of the Wales Coastal Path, officially launched in 2012.
- 4.5.2 The terrain of the Coastal Path generally comprises of low-lying coastal land, often with precipitous cliffs with limitless coastal horizons, although the route does rise to elevated rocky outcrops on occasion (around 60 to 90m AOD), where more

wide and expansive views are possible in land as well, but more so out to sea which is the primary focus of the route. In these views, views outward to the sea are the dominant feature, with only limited views back inland. It is of note that the exact path itself often contours around the summits on the coastal side, such as at Graig Wen (91m AOD) to the east of Bull Bay. In these views settlement at Amlwch and Cemaes is visible along with the windfarm to the south of the alignment of the A5025.

- 4.5.3 The path, at its closest to the PEIR Boundary lies approximately 1.1km to the north of Maen Hir North, around the settlements of Amlwch and Bull Bay. This section is a low-lying relatively flat area and views of the Project would not be possible (Figure 2).
- 4.5.4 Located on the Coastal Path to the east of Hell's Mouth, the potential effect to the view from the King Edward VII Coronation Tower was specifically referenced in the Scoping Response (Ref 2-2) however field survey has confirmed that no views of the Project would be possible from this location given the intervening topography, and the recreational amenity would remain unchanged. No effects are therefore concluded.

4.6 Geotrails

- 4.6.1 There are 14 Geotrails identified as part of the GeoMôn on the Isle of Anglesey (Ref 6-4-2). These are half day walks, usually circular, that showcase and allow an appreciation of Islands geological richness and diversity. Each route has an accompanying downloadable leaflet that points out features of interest along the route.
- 4.6.2 The following Geotrails are within the Study Area or are beyond it and have been identified specifically within the Scoping Response (Figure 1):
 - Wylfa Visitor Centre to Cemaes Bay: Located 3.8km to the northwest of the PEIR Boundary, this is an approximately 4.8km linear route starting at Wylfa Nuclear Power Station Visitor Centre and ending at Cemaes Bay. It is a low-lying coastal route and views to the Project are not possible given intervening topography. Given the distance and lack of visibility there would be no effect to this route as a result of the Project.

- Parys Mountain: A c. 3.2km circular route around the spectacular mining landscape of Parys Mountain. The route itself centres around the old mine workings with occasion wider views out, culminating at the high point of a derelict windmill tower. The effect to users of the open access land at Parys Mountain is assessed in Section 6.
- Bodafon to Moelfre: This is an c. 12.9km circular route that takes in the landscape and coast between Brynrefail and Traeth Lligwy approximately 3.8km to the northeast of Maen Hir South B. A short extension to the route also includes the elevated, rocky outcrop of Mynydd Bodafon approximately 1.8km to the northeast of Maen Hir South B. Although elevated, this extension section of the route is within the eastern undulation of Mynydd Bodafon and views westward toward the Project are not possible (effects to Mynydd Bodfan Open Access Land are considered in Section 4.11. Given distance and lack of visibility, no effects would occur to the amenity of this route.
- Porth Amlwch: Located to approximately 2.9km north of the Maen Hir North, this is a short circa1.6km walk around the Porth Amlwch. The route is centred around the heritage of harbour infrastructure as well as the geological strata visible. Give the absence of intervisibility to the PEIR Boundary and distance, it is concluded there would be no effect to the recreational amenity of this route.
- 4.6.3 The Edward Greenley (within the churchyard of St Cristiolus to the south of the A5) and Gallows Point (near to Beaumaris Pier) are shorter (less than 1km) walks that are also themed around geology. Given the distance of these from the PEIR boundary, neither of these routes would be affected by the Project.

4.7 Circular Walks

- 4.7.1 A total of 10 local circular walks have been designated across Anglesey by IoACC (Ref. 6-4-5). These are local, signposted routes between approximately 1 6hrs duration that take in a variety of the Island's landscapes. Circular Walks illustrated on Figure 1 with two of the routes within the ARA Study Area.
- 4.7.2 Circular walks specifically identified within the Scoping Response are:

- Llaneilian Located outside of the Study Area to the south of the village of Llaneilian. This a circular walk of approximately 3km starting/finishing at the village and taking in the coast path, including views of Goleudy Lighthouse, before tuning inland and climbing to the Old Telegraph Station before descending back to the Llaneilian. Given the intervening topography and distance there would be no effects to the recreational amenity of this route as result of the Project.
- Bull Bay Located to the west of Amlwch, this is a 5km predominantly
 coastal route that runs between Bull Bay in the east and Porth Wen in the
 west although the route does traverse inland on slightly higher ground via
 Pan-y-Gaseg. The Overall ZTV (Figure 6-12) and site visits have confirmed
 there is very limited to no visibility to the Project from this route and no
 effects would result.
- Cemaes Bay This is a 7km circular walk to the east of Cemaes Bay. It is predominantly a coastal route with expansive sea views and also takes in the relicts of mining at Porth Llanlleiana and Edward VII Coronation Tower. The route does however head inland via Llanbadrig following a local lane enclosed by vegetation. Views to the PIER Boundary from the route are not possible, however from the area of high land at Graig Wen (91m AOD) expansive views inland are possible (The actual route itself contours around the northern side of Graig Wen). Views of Maen Hir North may be possible seen in the context of a sweeping panoramic view southward that includes windfarm (Fferm Wynt Rhyd-y-groes) and the Porth Wen solar development in the middle-ground between this location and the PEIR Boundary. Given the approximate distance to the PEIR Boundary of 2.7km and intervening context of windfarm development the scale of change from this specific location is considered small resulting in a minimal effect at most to the recreational amenity.

4.8 Llyn Alaw

4.8.1 Llyn Alaw is a man-made reservoir, owned and managed by Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW). Officially opened in 1966, the lake covers some 3.5sq km and is owned and managed by DCWW as the main source of potable water on Anglesey.

It is identified as a Drinking Water Protected Area under the Water Framework Directive and non-statutory designated as a water safeguarded zone. The reservoir is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on account of its variety and numbers of wild fowl, notably overwintering birds (Ref 6-4-1).

- 4.8.2 It is located adjacent to the south of the Maen Hir Central and is a rural feature with relatively little infrastructure development surrounding it. Llyn Alaw was a multi-use recreational location in the past with a visitor centre, toilets and picnic area located at the far western edge, but these have been demolished and fish stocking of the reservoir has also ceased, decreasing its appeal for anglers.
- 4.8.3 Nonetheless, the reservoir provides recreational amenity in the form of PRoW in the area and permissive paths on the northern and southern banks, albeit these do not create a full continuous loop around the shoreline. A small, informal nature area is also present at Penwerthyr on the southern bank. Impacts on the recreational amenity of Llyn Alaw and Penwerthyr nature area are considered in Section 6.0.

4.9 Cors Erddreiniog

- 4.9.1 Cors Eriddreiniog is designated as a National Nature Reserve and lies approximately 600m to the east of Maen Hir South B at its closest point. The area is a vegetated, low-lying wetland and does not have formally designated PRoW within it although there are boardwalks to access hides.
- 4.9.2 The ZVI at Figure 2, and verified by site visits, has confirmed there is a lack of intervisibility between Cors Erddrieniog and the Project and, coupled with the presence of vegetation and distance, it is concluded that there would be no effects to users recreational amenity at Cors Erddieniog as a result of the Project.
- 4.9.3 A technical assessment of the potential impacts to ecological receptors is made within Chapter 7: Ecology, of the PEIR.

4.10 Myndd Eilan

4.10.1 Mynydd Eilan is an area of high ground to the southeast of Pengorffwysfa beyond the 3km Study Area. The land rises to approximately 177m, and although not open

- access land, an ascending footpath (24/024A/1) leads to a trig point where 360-degree panoramic views over the sea to the north and inland are possible.
- 4.10.2 Whilst views of the Solar PV Site looking westward from Myndd Eilan would be possible given the distance and wide panoramic views available, punctuated with energy infrastructure including wind farms and individual turbines, overhead power lines and Porth Wen solar farm, the scale of change would be negligible resulting in minimal effects at most to the recreational amenity at this location.

4.11 Open Access Land

- 4.11.1 Open Access Land is illustrated on Figure 1 and comprises Countryside Rights of Way (CRoW) including common land and open country where the 'right to roam' permits public access (Ref. 6-4-12).
- 4.11.2 There are no areas of open access land within the PEIR Boundary. However, views would be possible from the elevated outcrops of Parys Mountain and Myndd Bodafon Open Access Land to the east and these are taken forward for further assessment.
- 4.11.3 A small area of common land is also present approximately 2.6km to the east of Maen Hir Central at Penygraigwen, which was identified in the Scoping Response. The land comprises a small area of woodland, with thick understorey and no formal footpaths within it. Consequently, no views are possible from within the woodland and given its distance from the PEIR Boundary there would be no effects to the recreational amenity of this land as a result of the Project.

4.12 National Cycle Network and Cycle Routes

- 4.12.1 The National Cycle Network is a network of cycle routes across the UK identified by Sustrans to promote cycling (Ref. 6-4-14). They include routes on and off road and often utilise local lanes and routes with less vehicular traffic.
 - The following cycle routes are within the Study Area and are shown on Figure 1:The Copper Trail – a locally identified, circa 54km circular route that utilises part of National Cycle Route 500 between Llannerch-y-medd, Capel Parc, Penysarn, Llaneilian, Amlwch, Burwen, Hafoldllin, Rhosbeiro

- and Llanfechell directly north of Maen Hir North and directly west of Maen Hir South A. This route is considered in Section 6.0.
- North Wales Coastal Route (National Cycle Route 5) between Llannerch-y-medd, Maenaddwyn and Capel Coch directly north and east of Maen Hir South B. Although this route runs adjacent to Maen Hir South B the actual adjoining length is four fields, those in the north of Maen Hir South B benefit from mature hedgerows and with fleeting or limited visibility. Minimal effects at most are therefore concluded.
- National Cycle Route 566 between Llannerch-y-medd and Llangefni –
 1.1km west of Maen Hir South B. Given the distance and lack of intervisibility with the PEIR Boundary it is concluded there would be no effects to the amenity of this route as a result of Project.

4.13 Local Open Spaces

- 4.13.1 Local Open spaces comprise outdoor recreation resources such as recreation and playing fields, golf courses, allotments and cemeteries. Figure 1 illustrates local open spaces within the Study Area. These are predominantly located within or near to settlements, principally at the southern edge of Amlwch to the north and northwestern edge of Llannerch-y-medd approximately 300m to the south of Maen Hir South A. Whilst the focus of users' purpose and attention may be the relevant activity, their wider amenity also contributes to their recreational experience.
- 4.13.2 Figure 2 illustrates the ZTV and ZVI in relation to local open spaces and indicates that intervisibility between these resources and the Solar PV Site would be limited, which has also been verified on the ground during site visits. Whilst there may be isolated glimpsed views from the undulating course at Almwch Golf Club these would be limited and the overall amenity would remain unchanged.
- 4.13.3 Given the lack of intervisibility and distance between the Solar PV Site and local open spaces no effects to their recreation amenity are anticipated and they are not considered further as part this ARA.

5 Embedded Mitigation and Enhancement

5.1 Embedded Mitigation

- 5.1.1 Appendix 5-1 of the PEIR sets out the embedded Mitigation as part of the masterplanning principles that have underpinned the Project across the Site. In relation to recreation and amenity, these include:
 - Offset of 10m from hedgerows, dry stone walls and Cloddiau.
 - Offset of 50m + Bespoke design response to Llyn Alaw Reservoir Edge.
 - Offset of 15m from PRoW (including Bridleways).
 - Offset of 6m from roads.
- 5.1.2 In addition to these offsets new planting is proposed to further reduce potential effects.

5.2 Additional Mitigation

5.2.1 Further Mitigation and enhancement measures will be considered as the design develops for the DCO Application and through consultation and engagement with local communities and stakeholders. The additional Mitigation measures would be embedded into the design

6 Potential Likely Significant Effects

6.1 Landscape and Visual

- 6.1.1 Chapter 6 provides an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of the Project. Given the strong influence of landscape and visual aspects in recreational amenity, the ARA relies heavily from the findings of the LVIA in its assessment, augmented by other technical assessments and its own site visits and assessment.
- The LVIA identifies both a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and more refined Zone of Visual Influence shown on Figure 2. Beyond areas of the ZVI there would be no visual or landscape effects to the recreational amenity and in many instances where visibility is indicated views are restricted by vegetation and are often glimpsed views between gaps in the vegetation coverage.

6.2 Glint and Glare

6.2.1 Chapter 15: Other Matters considers potential effects in relation to glint and glare. The assessment concludes that generally glint and glare effects would only potentially occur within 1km of the Solar PV Site and at distances beyond this any potential effects would be no greater than direct sunlight. The effects of glint and glare are also dependent on astrological and meteorological conditions that only occur at certain times of the year. In light of this, the potential for glint and glare to affect the recreational resource is considered to be limited.

6.3 Noise, Vibration and Air Quality

- 6.3.1 Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR, considers potential noise impacts.

 The technical assessment uses a 500m Study Area and 10m Study Area from proposed transport roads indicating the limited spatial extents of potential noise effects the Project is likely to generate both during construction and operation.
- 6.3.2 During construction, effects to PRoW would potentially occur where there is overlap with construction routes or on a phased basis as the Project is built out. This the same potential effects may also occur in relation to vibration and air which would principally arise during the piling of the mounting framework and / or as a result of construction of larger components and would be on a phased field by field basis.

- 6.3.3 In terms of operation, noise effects would potentially arise from the Project Substation/BESS/Inverters, principally in relation to the cooling systems required. These components are all point sources of noise and whilst there would be an effect to the amenity of these routes where they are in close proximity to these elements, they are unlikely to affect routes in their entirety and the effects would be temporary on users given their transient use. Nonetheless for routes within the Project potential noise effects could have a substantial impact on users.
- 6.3.4 Given the low maintenance activity needed for solar development the impacts to amenity are anticipated to be nominal and as replacement of components would be managed on a phased basis would not affect large areas across the recreational resource.

6.4 Transport

- 6.4.1 Chapter 9: Transport, of the PEIR, considers potential transport effects. In relation to ARA the movement of construction and delivery of materials to the Project has the potential to disrupt amenity. However, these potential effects would be limited to where construction routes overlap with amenity resources and would be temporary in nature. It is likely that routes in close proximity to the Solar PV Site would be most affected as deliveries converge on the Solar PV Site and this is considered in the ARA.
- Again the low maintenance requirements during operation are not anticipated to result in significant effects to the amenity and recreational resource and although there may be some increased intrusion during replacement activities as a result of increased traffic, these would be on a phased basis across the Solar PV Site and would be no greater than those for construction.

6.5 Heritage

6.5.1 Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage, of the PEIR, considers heritage. In terms of amenity and recreation, those routes of greater heritage interest are often designated as part of circular walks or Geotrails. Nonetheless, the presence of heritage assets, both designated and undesignated, and historic landscape contributes to the recreational amenity. The Chapter concludes that whilst there would be changes to the setting of a number of historic assets in the locality, significant effects are

unlikely considering the embedded Mitigation, as the key contributors to the assets' importance would be unlikely to be affected.

6.6 Public Rights of Way within the PIER Boundary

- 6.6.1 Figure 3 illustrates the predicted geographical spread of the significance of effects on the PRoW network, recognising that the nature of effect can vary greatly even within an individual route dependent on specific circumstances.
- Whilst the nature of impact would potentially vary considerably for each PRoW within the PEIR Boundary dependent on specific circumstance, for the 13 identified PROW within the PEIR Boundary there would be a Large scale of change to the amenity of these routes given the proximity to the Solar PV Site. Although the Mitigation measures summarised in Section 5.0 would assist in tempering potential impacts, the significance of effect is likely to remain as major or major/moderate.
- 6.6.3 It is of note that there are no PRoW present within Maen Hir South B. Furthermore, many of the PRoW routes in Maen Hir North do not appear to be well used and are not passable, either due to overgrown vegetation or lack of legibility when walking on the ground.

6.7 Public Rights of Way Beyond the PEIR Boundary

- 6.7.1 Figure 3 illustrates the predicted geographical spread of the significance of effects on the PRoW network, recognising that the nature of effect can vary greatly even from an individual route dependent on specific circumstances.
- 6.7.2 Generally, given the low lying nature of the Project and the undulating drumlin landscape of the area, potential impacts of the Solar PV Site to the wider recreational resource are relatively limited, albeit the precise nature of impact is heavily dependent on specific circumstances.
- 6.7.3 In general, effects to recreational and amenity assets, namely PRoW, would be largely within 1km of the PEIR Boundary with effects arising principally through visibility and reducing with distance beyond this. The more substantial effects are anticipated to be within approximately 500m where Major / Moderate effects are concluded and where noise and vibration effects are likely to be at their greatest.

- Beyond this, between 500m and 1km, effects would generally reduce to Moderate significance and beyond this reduce further to Slight or no effect.
- 6.7.4 As noted previously, the undulating drumlin landscape screens many views beyond 1km however, where PRoWs rise up to more elevated land, namely the rocky outcrops of Parys Mountain and Mynydd Bodafon to the east, views of the Project would be possible and seen in the context of the wider panoramic views possible. A small to medium scale of change anticipated resulting in a low magnitude of change and Moderate significance and Adverse effect to the amenity of these users.

6.8 Llyn Alaw

- 6.8.1 The introduction of the Solar PV Site on the northern flanks of the reservoir is likely to result in a Large scale of change to the recreational amenity of Llyn Alaw. Although there is a good coverage of vegetation in this area in the form of hedgerows and scrubby vegetation around the foreshore, and the influence of Llyn Alaw windfarm, views of construction and operation of the Solar PV Site would be prominent in the locality, particularly from the southern foreshore where open views across the reservoir are possible. Views from PRoW on rising land further south of the reservoir are also likely to be possible although the vegetative network of field hedgerows in this area would filter and screen many potential views.
- 6.8.2 The likely change is anticipated to result in major / major moderate effects that are Adverse to users of the recreational resource in this area, including Penwerthyr Nature Area and PRoW along the foreshore that would have open views of the Solar PV Site to the north.

6.9 Open Access Land

6.9.1 Parts of Parys Mountain are designated as CRoW Open Access Land (Figure 1). However, it is important to note this designation does not cover the whole of the mountain and the majority of this land is located on the mountain's eastern flanks, facing away from the PEIR Boundary, with just a small area on the western flank toward the PEIR Boundary. It is also of note that given the historic mining activity of Parys Mountain the inclination to stray too far from the safety of recognised

- paths is not compelling as it might otherwise be, and it is apparent anecdotally that most visitors to Parys Mountain keep to the clearly waymarked Geotrail.
- 6.9.2 Nonetheless views of the Project from a relatively small area of CRoW land would be possible where it would be seen as part of the wide, sweeping, panoramic views possible that take in the undulating countryside and coast, renewable energy developments and settlements that form the composition of views. The scale of change is likely to be small, resulting in low magnitudes of effect and Moderate and Adverse effects.
- 6.9.3 Unlike Parys Mountain, the large majority of Myndd Bodafon is designated as CRoW Open Access Land (Figure 1) however, as with Parys Mountain the ability and consequently the desire to roam openly across it is limited by overgrown vegetation, particularly in the Spring and Summer. It is likely therefore that most visitors keep to the recognised Bodafon Circular Walk where views are largely not possible as confirmed by the ZTV (Figure 2) and site analysis.
- 6.9.4 From the western outcrops of Myndd Bodafon Open Access Land views of the Solar PV Site would be possible, particularly those to Maen Hir South B to the south and also Maen Hir South A at greater distance to the north. These would be seen in the context of the wide panoramic views possible that include settlement and energy infrastructure characteristic of the Island. The scale of change is likely to be small to medium resulting in a medium magnitude of effect and Moderate and Adverse effects.

6.10 National Cycle Network and Cycle Routes

- Users of cycle routes are assumed to be travelling at faster speeds than users of PRoW and also, when on roads, to have regard to the traffic conditions that will require their attention.
- 6.10.2 The Copper trail utilises part of The National Cycle Network 500 and passes adjacent to Maen Hir South A for a short distance along the B5111 and also to Maen Hir North around Hafodllin. Views of the Solar PV Site would be possible from these two stretches of the route between and above hedgerows that line these roads. Whilst views would be possible they would be glimpsed views whist travelling at speed. They would also be to one side of the route and would not

result in extensive sections of the route appearing to be surrounded by solar development. The Copper Trail route however, does follow in part the proposed construction access and the increase in construction traffic is likely to be perceptible to users during part of the Construction Phase.

- 6.10.3 Longer distance, glimpsed views may also be possible from the Copper Trail to the south of Llwn Alaw although these would be at distance and filtered by intervening vegetation.
- 6.10.4 In light of the above is concluded that a medium scale of change would occur resulting in a low magnitude of change and Moderate and Adverse effects to some sections of the route although its majority would remain unaffected.

6.11 Impacts to Local Open Spaces

6.11.1 The analysis undertaken as part of the baseline assessment of this ARA has concluded that there would be no significant effects to local open spaces such as recreation fields, gold courses or cemeteries.

6.12 Sequential Views

- 6.12.1 The ARA has shown the Project would not affect a recognised route in its entirety and so any sequential views would be from the result of walking/cycling successive individual routes.
- In this network the geographical spread of the PEIR Boundary would mean there would always be a 'break' of at least approximately 1km between areas when traveling on PRoW or cycling trails. There is a shorter physical gap between Maen Hir South A and Maen Hir South B but given there are no PRoW within Maen Hir South B the ability for sequential effects to arise to PRoW between them is limited and there is sufficient distance if travelling on the Copper Trail and Cycle Route NCN500 to provide a sufficient perceptual break. Consequently, it is considered that where sequential views from PRoW do exist, they are not as frequent so as to result in perception of an unbroken solar farm along the recreational experience.

6.13 Displacement

6.13.1 Given the appeared limited existing use of potentially affected routes, it is considered unlikely that the Project would displace a substantial amount of users so as to affect the recreational amenity of other existing routes such as the Coastal Path or identified local routes. No significant displacement effects as a result of the Project are therefore anticipated.

7 Cumulative Effects

- 7.1.1 Cumulative effects to the recreation and amenity resource will be assessed in further detail within the ARA as part of the Environmental Statement at the submission stage once the design of the Solar PV Site has further evolved.
- 7.1.2 In terms of PEIR assessment, Figure 18-1 illustrates cumulative schemes in the Study Area.
- 7.1.3 In relation to cumulative schemes identified as part of the PEIR, the Carrog Cemaes (pre-application consultation ongoing) application is for a BESS which is relatively small in scale to the Project and sufficiently distant from it at approximately 1.4km to the northeast beyond the village of Llanfechell to render cumulative amenity and recreation effects unlikely. It is concluded this would not result in Cumulative effects to the amenity and recreation resource in combination with the Project.
- 7.1.4 The potential new nuclear plant at Wyfla is also sufficiently distant from the PEIR Boundary so as not to result in Cumulative effects to the recreational resource. There is potential for indirect effects as a result of construction traffic should this project come forward but it is likely that these would be at a later time than those of the Project.
- 7.1.5 The Alaw Môn Solar Farm (PEDW application reference: DNS/3274702) is a Development of National Significance (DNS) solar application of 160MWp located at its closest point approximately 1.8km to the south of Maen Hir Central.
- 7.1.6 Although the landscape is gently undulating in this area, it is likely that there would be Cumulative effects to the amenity of PRoWs to the southwest of Llyn Alaw, and Llyn Alaw itself, where both developments would potentially be seen from this area. These effects are likely to be significant for recreational users in this area. Additional Mitigation and design evolution will be explored as a result of this ARA PEIR conclusion.

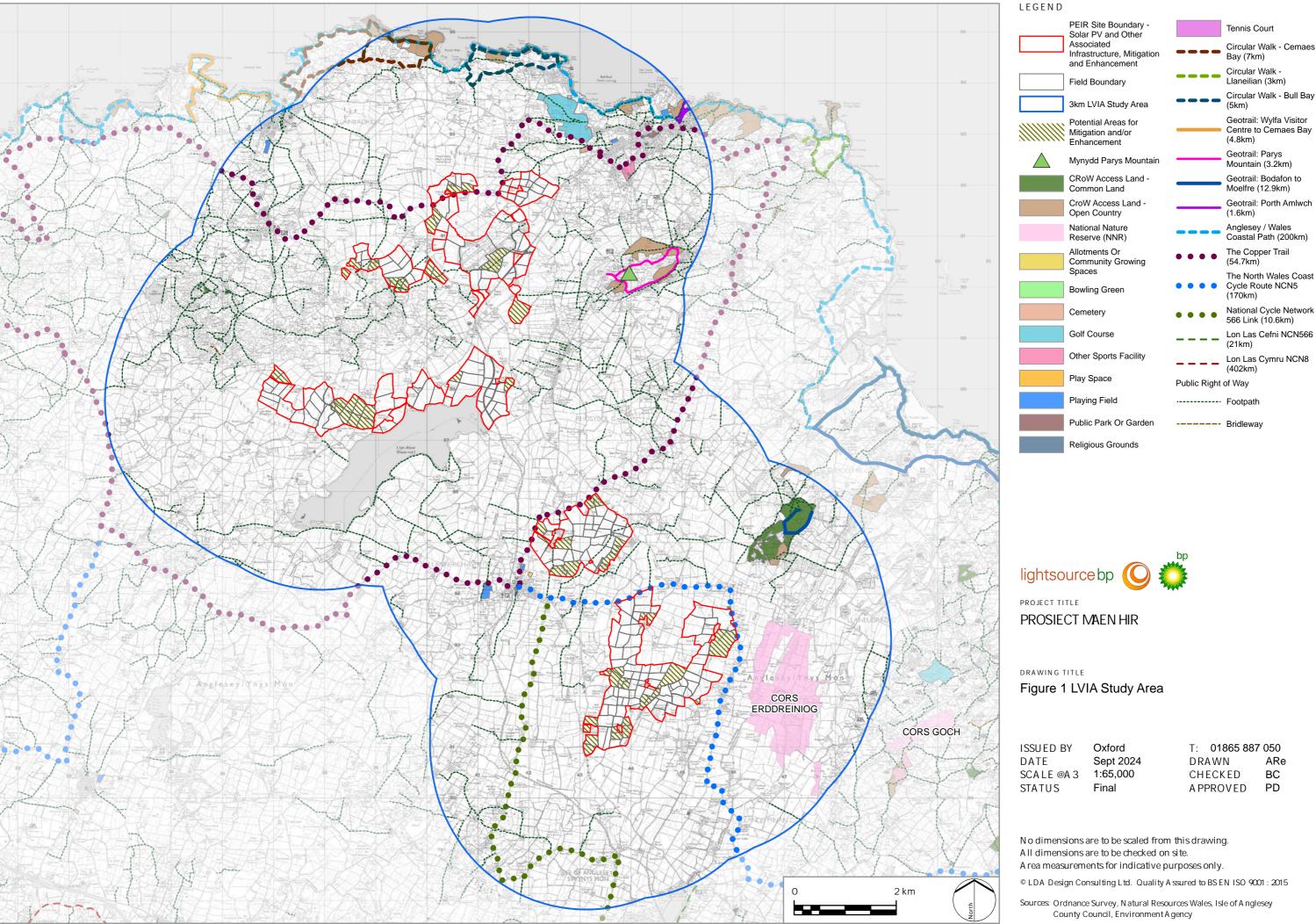
8 Summary

- 8.1.1 This preliminary ARA considers the potential effects to the recreational amenity of outdoor recreational resources that may be affected by the Project. The ARA has also sought to identify and unlock potential opportunities in relation to amenity and recreation as part of the design and masterplanning process, both within the site and Study Area beyond.
- 8.1.2 Impacts to the amenity and recreational resource may arise from direct physical changes to the receptor, such as visual impact or noise; or through indirect effects such as displacement of users.
- 8.1.3 There is no established methodological guidance for ARA, therefore the methodology deployed is informed by relevant legislation and policy and is informed by the technical assessments undertaken by other disciplines contained with the PEIR.
- 8.1.4 The scope of the ARA assessment was included within the Scoping Submission and the ARA has responded positively to the Scoping Opinion received in response, including all additional receptors identified. A meeting with IoCC's PRoW officer was also held to discuss the scope of the ARA and potential opportunities.
- 8.1.5 The ARA has identified a number of amenity and recreational resources within the Study Area, these include PRoW, Open Access Land, recognised walking routes such as the Coastal Path, Geo trails and Circular Walks, National Cycle Network routes and Golf Courses and playing areas. The ARA has identified a total of 13 PRoW within the PEIR boundary (Table 4-1).
- 8.1.6 The preliminary findings of the ARA in relation to the potential effects to the amenity and recreational resource is illustrated on Figure 3. In terms of effects, significant effects (Major/Moderate) are concluded for PRoW that traverse through the PEIR Site Boundary given the proximity of the Project. Effects would reduce with distance from the PEIR Site Boundary, reducing to Moderate between 500m to 1km and Slight to No Effect beyond this.

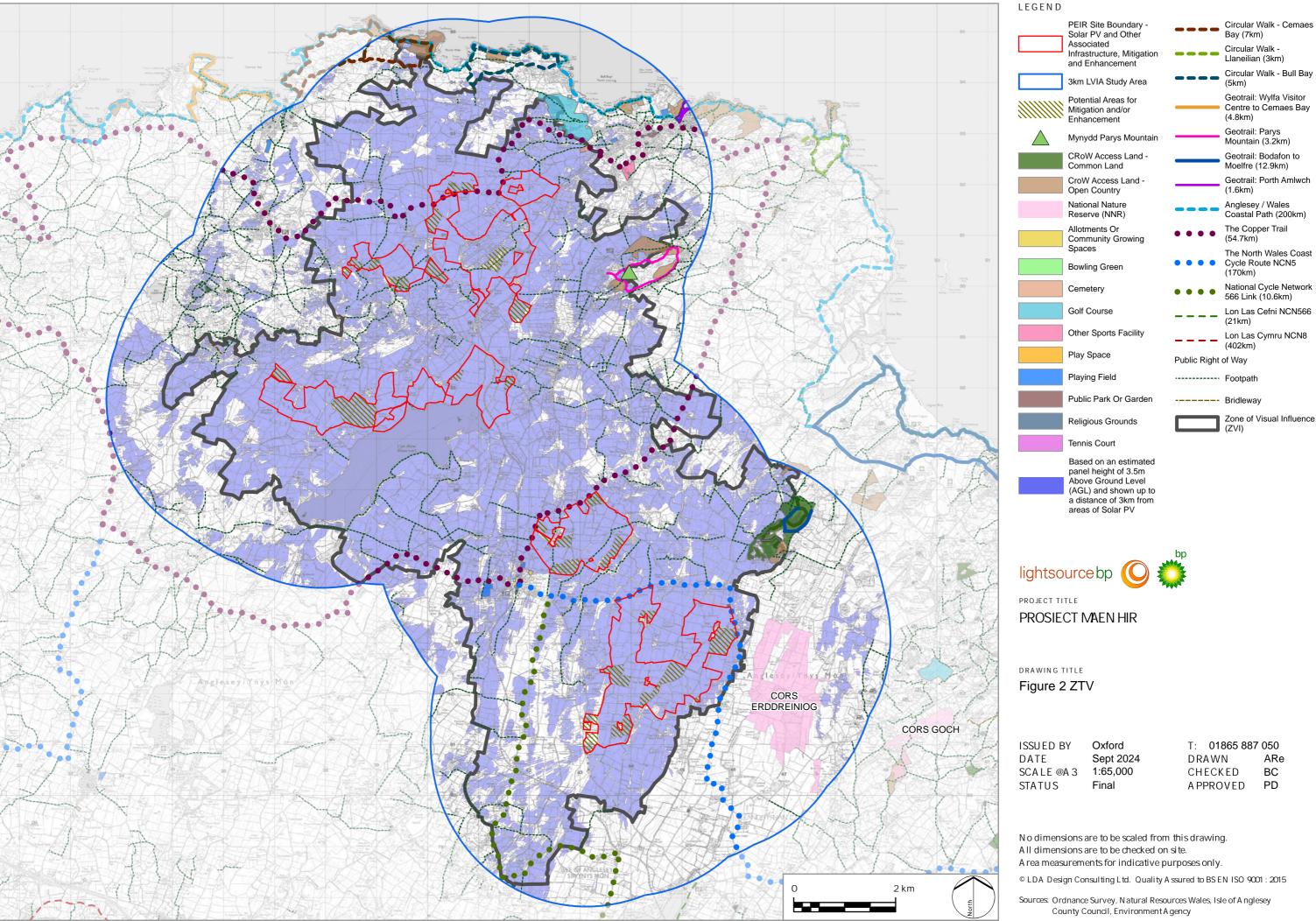
- 8.1.7 Major/Moderate and Adverse effects are also anticipated to the amenity of Llyn Alaw and Moderate and Adverse effects to Open Access Land and Pary's Mountain and Myndd Bodafon and to short sections of the National Cycle Network where they run adjacent to the Solar PV Site. Changes to the amenity of local greenspaces would be Minimal at most.
- 8.1.8 The ARA has found that there is sufficient separation between parcels to avoid sequential view impacts and there is unlikely to be any effects as a result of displacement of users arising from the Project.
- 8.1.9 The ARA has found there are likely to be Cumulative effects with the Llyn Alaw DNS solar development in the Llyn Alaw locality. Additional Mitigation and design evolution will be explored as a result of this preliminary conclusion.
- 8.1.10 The Applicant will explore further opportunities as part of the Statutory Consultation exercise in terms of benefits and enhancements to the amenity and recreational resource the Project may be able to deliver or contribute to.

9 References

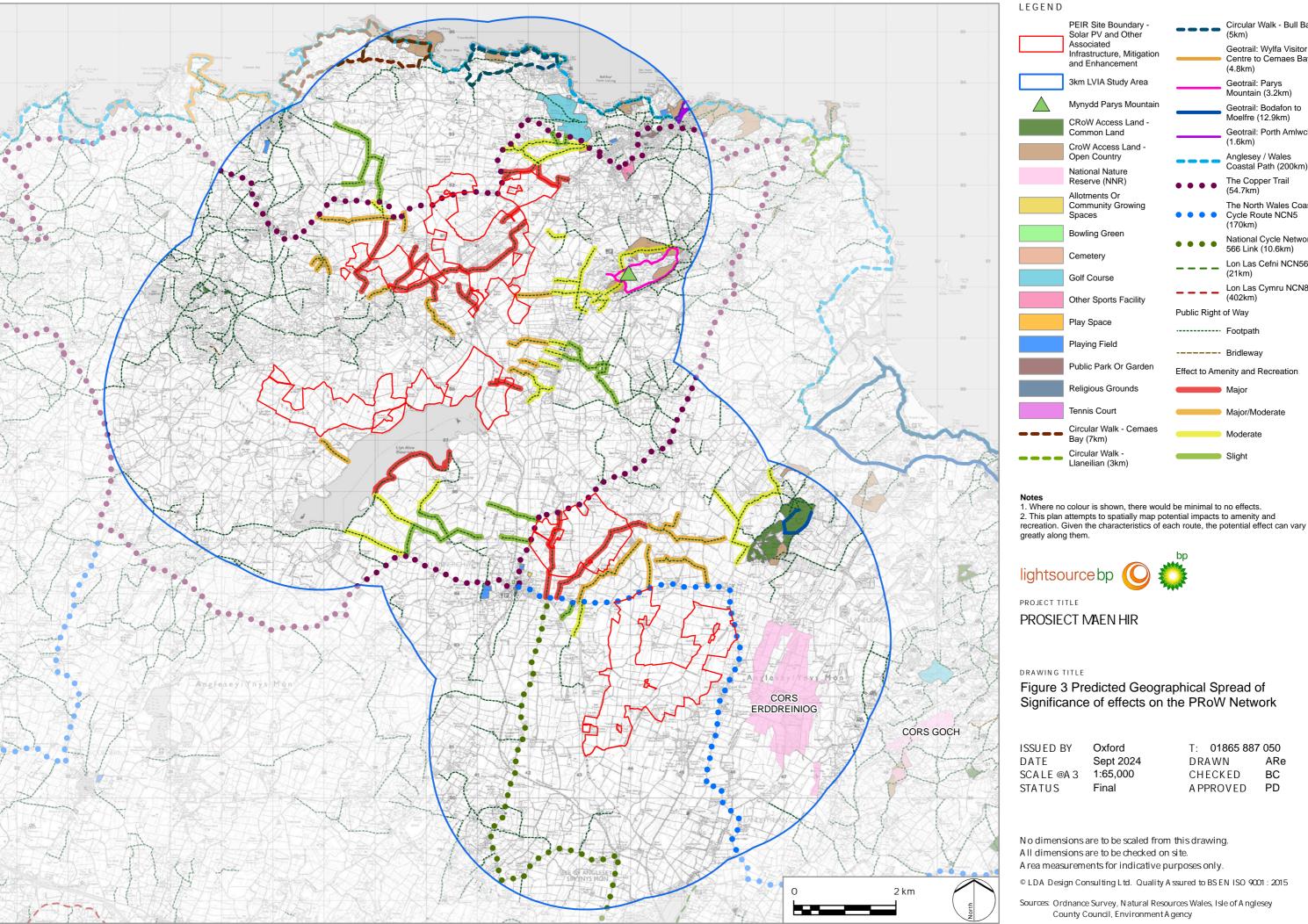
- Ref 6-4-1 ATOM on behalf of Isle of Anglesey County Council (2022) Llyn Alaw Oppurtunites Workshop: Summary of Outputs and Recommendations.
- Ref 6-4-2 Cambell S., Wood M., Windley B. (2017) Footsteps Through Time: The Rocks and Landscape of Angelsey Explained (2nd ed.) Isle of Anglesey Council and GeoMôn,
- Ref 6-4-3 GeoMôn UNESCO Global Geopark (2024)
- Ref 6-4-5 Isle of Anglesey County Council (2024) Circular Walks [https://www.visitanglesey.co.uk/en-gb/category/circular-walks]
- Ref 6-4-6 Isle of Anglesey County Council (2016) Destination Anglesey Management Plan 2016 2020.
- Ref 6-4-7 Isle of Anglesey County Council (2024) Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Ref 6-4-8 Isle of Anglesey County Council (2018) Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- Ref 6-4-9 Isle of Anglesey County Council (2018) Public Rights of Way Management Policies.
- Ref 6-4-10 Isle of Anglesey County Council (2024) Visit Anglesey Website.
- Ref 6-4-11 Isle of Anglesey County Council and Gwynedd (2017) Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011 2026.
- Ref 6-4-12 Natural Resource Wales (2024) Interactive Map Viewer.
- Ref 6-4-13 Oxfordshire County Council (2022) General Response for Preapplication Comment on Solar Farm Planning Applications.
- Ref 6-4-14 Sustrans (2024) National Cycle Network.
- Ref 6-4-15 Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2024) Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1).
- Ref 6-4-16 Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2024) National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)
- Ref 6-4-17 Welsh Government (2024) Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition).
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Circular Walk - Bull Bay

Geotrail: Wylfa Visitor

Geotrail: Bodafon to Moelfre (12.9km)

Geotrail: Porth Amlwch

Coastal Path (200km)

The North Wales Coast

National Cycle Network 566 Link (10.6km)

Lon Las Cefni NCN566

Lon Las Cymru NCN8

Cycle Route NCN5

(170km)

(402km)

Major

Slight

Major/Moderate

ARe

ВС

PD

Moderate

Anglesey / Wales

The Copper Trail

Centre to Cemaes Bay

(5km)

(4.8km)

Geotrail: Parys Mountain (3.2km)

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Prosiect Maen Hir

