

GWENLAIS FARM

SOLAR PROJECT NEWS

January 2023



This newsletter will tell you about our proposal to build a solar field at Gwenlais Farm, Pontlliw. It contains a copy of our site design and where you can view the plans in more detail. It will also show you how to comment and ask further questions.

We know that the landscape where we propose to build the solar field is important to you and our role is to balance your comments with the Welsh Government's policy and guidelines and the views of your local elected representatives. We must also make sure the technical and environmental requirements are met so that we can generate secure and reliable clean electricity to be used locally.

Energy security is a priority for the UK, not only because gas and coal fired power stations are coming to the end of their lives but to reduce our reliance on electricity from other countries.

The UK needs solar power to meet its 2030 targets, which could see 95% of electricity set to be low carbon. This means cleaner and more affordable power and independence and protection from volatile international energy markets.

Solar photovoltaic (PV) is a technology that has been established for over 60 years and is relatively low cost compared to other forms of power generation. Solar fields are easily reversible and can be returned to arable land after decommissioning and often remain in agricultural use (e.g. grazing sheep) throughout the lifetime of the solar field. This is also the intention for Gwenlais Farm.

Solar fields go through a rigorous planning process before they gain planning consent. This process takes into account the suitability of the specific site, any potential impact on the area and relevant renewable energy targets.



Gwenlais Farm solar project development boundary (in red), including access route

The story so far

Solar Securities Ltd proposes to build a solar field on land at Gwenlais Farm, situated on a plateau above the village of Pontilliw, which lies south of the site.

Our plan is to develop 31 hectares (approx 76.6 acres) of lower quality land, mostly Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) grades 3b and 4, to build a 16.5 megawatt (MW) solar site. This will produce enough clean and renewable electricity to power over 4,900 homes per year (based on an average annual consumption of 2,900 kWh of electricity for an average three bedroom house*)

We have been carrying out technical surveys, which provide us with the information to build the solar field in a way that is not only efficient but

has minimal impact on the landscape and environment. Our intention is to submit a Development of National Significance (DNS) application to the Welsh Government in Spring 2023.

The appointed Inspector will then consider our evidence and that of Swansea Borough Council, other statutory consultees and interested parties. The process is thorough and detailed and we are expecting a decision in autumn 2023. All being well we aim to construct the solar field around Spring 2024.

*Source Ofgem

Listening to you

We will listen carefully to what you have to say as well as taking advice from the Welsh Government, Swansea Borough Council and our technical experts, who are undertaking important environmental, geological and archaeological surveys on our behalf.

A public consultation event has been arranged, as well as other opportunities to discuss and comment on this proposal.

Using the information currently available to us we have designed a solar farm, which we believe will have no unacceptable impact on any neighbouring properties and can easily be screened.



Picture of Solar Securities Site

GWENLAIS FARM

SOLAR PROJECT NEWS



Picture of Solar Securities Site

Agricultural land use

It is our intention to keep the site in agricultural use through grazing sheep on the land.

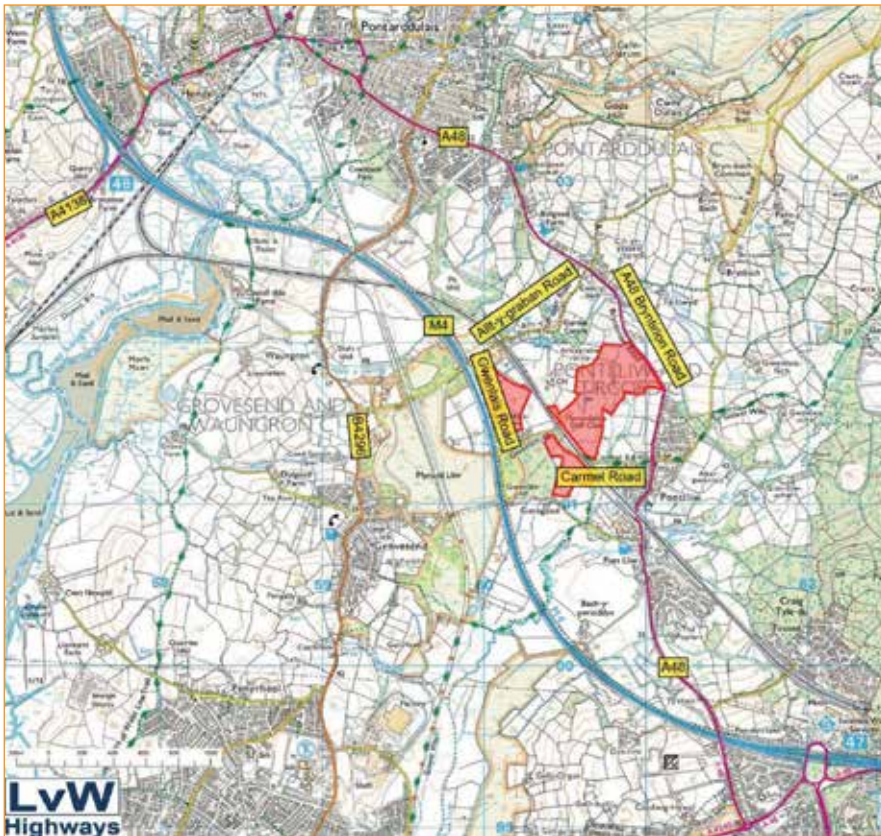
The onsite fencing reduces the risk of stock straying and instances of sheep worrying from dogs, shelter from extreme weather is also provided by the solar panels.

We are able to support a sheep flock at similar stocking densities to land without a solar installation.



Picture of Solar Securities Site

Transport and vehicle access to the site



Solar construction is quick and we would expect the build to be complete within three months but it is important that any disruption to our neighbours is kept to an absolute minimum. Most of the larger deliveries would take place during the first four weeks of construction

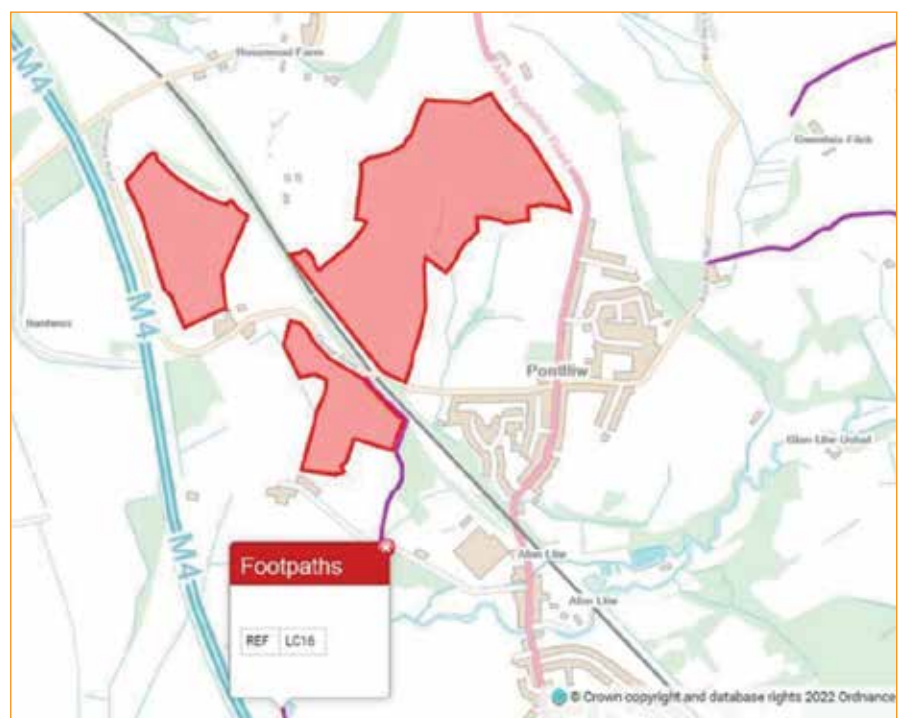
We are proposing that vehicles enter and leave the site using the following routes throughout the construction process.

South route: M4 Junction 47 at Swansea West, then A48/Swansea Road/Bryntirion Road, left onto Allt-y-graban Road, left onto site entrances on Gwylais Road and Carmel Road. **North route:** M4 Junction 48, then A4138 onto A48, right on to Allt-y-graban Road, left onto site entrances on Gwylais Road and Carmel Road.

Deliveries to the site will be restricted to normal working hours (9am – 6pm) and outside of school drop off and pick up times.

Footpaths

No footpaths or public rights of way (PROW) cross the proposed site, although footpath LC16 runs partially along the eastern and northern boundary of the southern site, connecting Grovesend with Carmel Road. There may be a temporary closure of this path while we construct the site.





Picture of Solar Securities Site

Community benefit and ecological enhancement

We will be working with Pontlliw and Tircoed Community Council about how we could support the local community.

We are also looking at options to enhance the site by planting native hedgerows, meadows and grasslands.

Security

We take our onsite security seriously and the site will be fenced with CCTV directed onto the solar panels. As developers we need to balance the visual impact of the proposed site at Gwenlais Farm with the necessary security. We intend to work with South Wales Police, Swansea Council and Pontlliw and Tircoed Community Council to produce an effective security strategy.



Picture of Solar Securities Site



Picture of Solar Securities Site



Feedback

Your feedback will help us to develop the proposal and it is important you let us know what you think about the plans shown in this newsletter.

The plans are available on our project website www.gwenlaisolar.co.uk which can also be accessed via the solar securities website www.solarsecurities.com

Next steps

To start building the solar field we need planning permission from the Welsh Government who will be consulting on our application shortly via the DNS process.

We are hoping for a decision in the autumn and if we are granted planning permission, we aim to complete construction in the Spring 2024.

GWENLAIS FARM

SOLAR PROJECT NEWS



Have your say

This is an important opportunity to tell us what you think about the proposals and you can feedback to us in a number of ways,

1. Through the Gwenlais Solar project website gwenlaissolar.co.uk
2. Email info@solarsecurities.com
3. You can also write to us at,

Solar Securities Ltd
21C Heathmans Road
London SW6 4TJ

Keep in touch with the project

Regular updates on the project's progress will be available on the Gwenlais solar consultation website. You can also follow us on Instagram [gwenlais_solar](https://www.instagram.com/gwenlais_solar)