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Appendix 7B Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan

March 2025

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Pennant Walters

FOEL TRAWSNANT

Appendix 7B: Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan

March 2025

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Document revisions

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

1.1.1 This Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan (PRoWMP) has been produced by WSP on behalf of Pennant Walters as part of the Environmental Statement (ES) for the Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm Electricity Network Infrastructure Connection Project (herein after referred to as 'the Project' or 'Site'). The Project will comprise a combination of 66 kilovolt (kV) overhead lines (OHL) and underground cables (UGC) which will provide a connection between the Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm and the wider national grid. The Project is mainly located within Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) but the start and end of the connection fall within the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC).

1.1.2 This Outline PRoWMP is a live document and will be updated as the elements of the Project are finalised. A full version of the PRoWMP (referred to herein as the 'full PRoWMP') will be produced and submitted to the relevant local planning authorities prior to the commencement of the relevant works.

1.1.3 This Outline PRoWMP sets out the locations of all PRoW that could be affected by the Project This report details the likely environmental measures which would be implemented in relation to Public Rights of Way (PRoW), permissive paths, Other Routes with Public Access (ORPA) and Open Access Land (OAL) which are affected by the construction phase of the Project.

1.1.4 An Outline CTMP is provided as Appendix 7AB of the ES which identifies likely mitigation measures to minimise the impact of the construction traffic on the local road network (LRN).

1.2 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

1.2.1 In England and Wales, members of the public have a right to access some land for walking or certain leisure activities. Users can:

- use PRoW, for example, roads (restricted byways), paths or tracks that run through towns, the countryside or private property; and
- use right to roam to access OAL including mountains, moors and common land that is registered.

1.2.2 There are four distinct types of PRoW:

- footpaths – for walking or running;
- bridleways – for walking, running, cycling and horse riding;
- restricted byways – for any transport that does not have a motor; and
- byways open to all traffic (BOAT) – for any kind of transport, including cars (but these are mainly used by walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders).

1.2.3 In the countryside, PRoWs are usually marked with signs or coloured arrows, for example, yellow for footpaths and blue for bridleways. Strategic National Trails are usually marked with route specific signage.

1.2.4 PRoWs are recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement, which are collated by the local Council as surveying authority. Definitive maps and statements are documentary records of public rights of way depending on the category of PRoW. They indicate where the public may lawfully walk, ride or drive. Section 56 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 makes it explicit that the definitive map and statement, taken together, are legally conclusive evidence of the existence of the highways of the description shown and of the rights and limitations existing over those highways at the relevant date, unless there is a subsequently confirmed legal order amending those rights.

1.2.5 All surveying authorities must maintain a Definitive Map and Statement of PRoW within their administrative boundaries, which includes historic routes and any changes to PRoW orders and routes that may have occurred since 1981. Many local authorities also present this information online, but this does not always reflect recent changes.

1.2.6 PRoW are also detailed on Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping, however this mapping may not correspond to information contained within the Definitive Map and Statement. Hence, this should always be referred to confirm whether a PRoW exists and its classification.

1.2.7 A review of the local area has indicated there are 24 PRoWs which are affected by the Project.

1.3 PERMISSIVE PATHS

1.3.1 A permissive path, permitted path, or concessionary path is not a PRoW but a path (which could be for walkers, riders, cyclists, or any combination) whose use is allowed by the landowner, but over which there is no legal right of access.

1.3.2 No permissive paths have been identified as being affected by the Project. If any permissive paths that may interact with the Project are identified through consultation, agreement will be sought with the respective landowners on their management so to accommodate Project activities.

1.4 OTHER ROUTES WITH PUBLIC ACCESS ROUTES

1.4.1 ORPA are included on OS maps and are roads/tracks that carry public rights of some sort, but which are not recorded either as PRoW, nor coloured as most public roads are, in red, brown, orange or yellow on OS mapping. It is not possible to tell if these have rights other than a PRoW on foot.

1.4.2 A review of the local area has indicated there are two ORPAs which are affected by the Project.

1.5 OPEN ACCESS LAND

1.5.1 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act)[1] normally gives a public right of access to land mapped as ‘open country’ (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land. These areas are known as OAL.

1.5.2 OAL may be publicly or privately owned. A review of the local area indicates that there are two areas of OAL that are affected by the Project.

[1] UK Government (2000). The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. (online) Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents (Accessed February 2025)

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1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE PROW MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.6.1 The remainder of this Outline PRoWMP is set out as follows:

- Section 2: Potential effects of the Project – identifies PRoWs, ORPAs and OAL that are affected by the Project and sets out the nature of the interaction;
- Section 3: Environmental measures – details the likely overarching environmental measures and proposals for affected PRoWs; and
- Section 4: Summary and conclusions – summarises the environmental measures and provides a narrative for the next steps.

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2. POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 In order to ascertain the extent of the potential effects of the Project on the PRoW network, OAL and ORPA, several key sources of data have been used to inform the Outline PRoWMP:

- BCBC – online mapping[2];
- NPTCBC – online mapping[3];
- Welsh Government – online mapping[4] and
- OS map information on Bing Maps – online mapping[5].

2.1.2 In terms of potential effects, this Outline PRoWMP presents all effects anticipated as a result of the Project, be that during the construction or operational phase including PRoWs, permissive paths, ORPAs and OAL which are:

- affected by the construction of any permanent elements of the Project;
- affected by any temporary elements of the Project; and
- affected by the routeing of construction traffic on or across a PRoW/ORPA route or within an OAL area and any affected by construction accesses.

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

2.2.1 **Figure 7B.1** provides an overview of the Project's Site boundary. A description of the construction works is provided below. During the construction phase the Project will have a direct effect on the local road and PRoW network due to construction traffic and where the Project crosses roads and PRoW.

Underground Work

Existing track and highways

2.2.2 The highway works will be mainly confined to the highways boundary and adhere to standard practice. The exact nature of underground cabling construction works is to be

[2] Bridgend County Borough Council (2024) Bridgend County Borough Council: Web Mapping https://maps.bridgend.gov.uk/webmap9/Map.aspx?MapName=OSWMTSBasemap (Accessed February 2025)

[3] Neath Port Talbot Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (2016) Online mapping (online) Available at: https://maps.npt.gov.uk/rights_of_way/index.html (Accessed February 2025)

[4] Welsh government, Natural Resources Wales (2016) DataMapWales Open Access – Open Country (online) Available at: https://datamap.gov.wales/layers/inspire-nrw:NRW_OPEN_COUNTRY_2014 (Accessed February 2025)

[5]Bing Maps and Ordnance Survey data (2025) Bing Maps Ordnance Survey Layer (online) Available at: https://www.bing.com/maps/ (Accessed February 2025)

confirmed between the National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) and local highways authority, though an outline is provided below.

2.2.3 Underground cabling work will involve placing cables within ducts; the ducts themselves will be within a trench. An open cut method will be used, where the duct is laid directly into a trench of up to 1.5m depth (see Appendix 4C). The ducts are placed at the bottom of the trench, and the excavation around the cables is then filled with sand before the remaining excavation is backfilled with the excavated material. Cables are jointed at approximately 500m intervals. The joint boxes are generally 1-2m deep and 5m x 3m. Once the cable ducts are laid, the cable will then be pulled through.

2.2.4 The creation of trenches, laying of cable ducts and pulling of cable will be in accordance with NGED (2021) Standard Technique: CA6A/7[6].

Overhead Line Work

2.2.5 The exact nature of OHL construction works is to be confirmed between NGED and the local authorities, though an outline is provided below.

2.2.2 An OHL would be carried on wooden H-poles, consisting of two single wooden poles (most likely Scots Pine) joined by a crossarm with bracing. At the termination points only, two sets of H-poles will be located side-by-side. Terminal ends may be located at the start and end of the underground section of the connection.

2.2.3 Whilst the intention is for the route to be as straight as possible, there will be some deviation to avoid environmental features, such as trees. At points of deviation, angle poles will be used; these are likely to be H-pole structures. In all locations where the line deviates, there will be the requirement to provide cable stays to the poles. The poles are not typically stayed, and do not require concrete foundations. However, pre-cast kicking blocks will be installed below ground, to provide the poles with adequate structural support.

2.2.4 The height of the wooden poles will mostly be 12m above ground level, with a maximum height not exceeding 15m above ground (see Table 4-1). An assumed minimum clearance to trees from the conductors is 4m from the nearest part of the tree.

2.2.5 The poles are designed to carry the conductor wires. It is currently proposed to install a single circuit made up of one conductor per phase. Telemetry and monitoring capabilities, such as fault detection, will be provided by a microwave link. The poles will carry the cross arms onto which the insulators are attached. Poplar conductor wire will be used for all the OHL sections. Span length between poles will be between 90m to 130m. The actual span between poles will be influenced by topography and the surrounding environment.

2.2.6 The construction and maintenance of OHL will be in accordance with NGED (2024) Policy Document: OH6/4[7].

Project Programme

2.2.20 It is currently anticipated that construction will commence in January 2028 and is expected to be nine months in duration. The works have been assumed to take place between

[6] NGED (2021) Standard Technique: CA6A/7, Relating to the Installation of Underground Cables. Available at: https://www.nationalgrid.co.uk/documents/tech-info/underground-cable-construction/66000-volt

[7] NGED (2024) Policy Document: OH6/4, Construction, Maintenance and Replacement of Low Voltage Overhead Services. Available at: https://www.nationalgrid.co.uk/documents/tech-info/overhead-construction

07:00 to 19:00 hours on weekdays and 07:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays. In exceptions, there may be a requirement for a 7-day work week. This would be agreed with the local council as appropriate.

2.3 PROJECT TRAFFIC

Construction Phase

2.3.1 **Chapter 7** of the EIA Report sets out the proposed LRN construction traffic routes and construction traffic volumes on the LRN. It is currently unknown the access tracks to be used to access the Project excluding a forestry track which will be used to access the construction compound. The forestry track is an existing track accessed from the B4282.

2.3.2 This Outline PRoWMP therefore only sets out impact on PRoWs (and ORPAs and OAL) from the Project OHL and UGC route and the known forestry track (accessed from the B4282 routing to the Project construction compound. The full PRoWMP will be updated, as needed, once details of any additional access tracks to be used by construction traffic are known.

Operational Phase

2.3.3 During the operational phase, traffic movements associated with the Project will be minimal, compromising trips for inspection, repair and maintenance purposes. Vehicles used for repair work are likely to be similar to those used during construction, however, these would be infrequent. Therefore, the operational effects of construction traffic have been scoped out of the PRoWMP.

Decommissioning Phase

2.3.4 The operation life of the Project is anticipated to be up to 30 years. Post operation the above and below ground infrastructure is assumed to remain in situ. Therefore, the development traffic movements associated with the Project decommissioning phase will be lower than those associated with the construction phase and traffic and transport decommissioning phase effects were scoped out of the ES and thus scoped out of the construction phase PRoWMP. At the appropriate time impacts of decommissioning on the PRoW network should be assessed and appropriate mitigation implemented in consultation with the local planning authority.

2.4 ROUTES AFFECTED BY THE PROJECT

2.4.1 This sections sets out the PRoW, ORPA and OAL affected by the Project. The impact on these routes in terms of access/transport will be during construction and therefore temporary in duration and not permanent.

Public Rights of Way

2.4.2 As previously outlined, the PRoW network can be impacted by various elements of the Project: affected by the construction of any permanent elements of the Project; affected by any temporary elements of the Project; and affected by the routeing of construction traffic on or crossing PRoW routes and affected by construction accesses.

2.4.3 **Table 2-1** summarises the interactions between the Project and the PRoW network. The locations of PRoWs affected by the constructed elements of the Project are shown in

Figure 7B.1, the PRoWs affected by the forestry track (that is part of the route to the construction compound) are shown in **Figure 7B.2.** All impacts are anticipated to be temporary in nature.

Table 2-1 PRoW Interactions with the Project Summary

PRoW Reference/ID	Local Authority Area	Interaction between the Project and the PRoW
9/73.PT/1	NPTCBC	Footway crossed by Project OHL.
MAE/13/3	BCBC	Footway crossed by Project OHL and with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/15/1	BCBC	Footway crossed by Project OHL and with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.
MAE/50/1	BCBC	Footway crossed by Project OHL.
MAE/50/2	BCBC	Footway crossed by Project OHL.
MAE/20A/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/75/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/52/2	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/52/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/49/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/55/2	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/48/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/2A/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at the Project UGC.
MAE/51/1	BCBC	Bridleway with a terminus at the Project UGC
MAE/1/1	BCBC	Bridleway crossed by Project OHL and with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.
10/26.PT3	NPTCBC	Footpath follows construction access route along forestry track.
10/26.PT3	NPTCBC	Footpath follows construction access route along forestry track.
MAE/1/5	BCBC	Bridleway follows construction access route along forestry track.
MAE/14/2	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.
MAE/17/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.
MAE/20/1	BCBC	Footway with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.
10/140.PT/3	NPTCBC	Footway with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.
10/139.PT/1	NPTCBC	Footway with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.
23/39/1	NPTCBC	Bridleway with a terminus at construction access route along forestry track.

Note this Outline PRoWMP does not include any PRoW terminating at LRN roads as impacted by the Project.

2.4.4 It should also be noted that the Project interacts with a permissive PRoW that is to be installed for the lifetime of the Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm, approximately 200m north of the intersection of 23/39/1 and 10/26.PT/1.

2.4.5 As previously stated, the Outline PRoWMP only sets out the impact on PRoWs from the Project OHL and UGC route and the known forestry track to be utilised by construction traffic. The full PRoWMP will be updated, as appropriate, once the detail of the construction and access is known.

Other Routes with Public Access Affected by the Project

2.4.6 Two ORPAs have been identified as being impacted by the Project (shown on **Figure 7B.3**):

- ORPA 1 – South of Neath Road (B4282) – follows UGC route; and
- ORPA 2 – Northeast of Cae Emi Farm – follows UGC route and construction access route.

Open Access Land Affected by the Project

2.4.7 Two OAL areas have been identified as being impacted by the Project (**Figure 7B.3**):

- OAL 1 – an area south of Neath Road (B4282); and
- OAL 2 – an area west of Maesteg.

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3. ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 Having identified the PRoWs, ORPAs and OAL areas that may be affected by the Project (see **Table 2-1** summarises the interactions between the Project and the PRoW network. The locations of PRoWs affected by the constructed elements of the Project are shown in **Figure 7B.1**, the PRoWs affected by the forestry track (that is part of the route to the construction compound) are shown in **Figure 7B.2.** All impacts are anticipated to be temporary in nature.

3.1.2 **Table *2-1***), it is necessary to consider how those impacts can be managed and mitigated, where possible and appropriate.

3.1.3 Based on the information presented **Table 2-1** summarises the interactions between the Project and the PRoW network. The locations of PRoWs affected by the constructed elements of the Project are shown in **Figure 7B.1**, the PRoWs affected by the forestry track (that is part of the route to the construction compound) are shown in **Figure 7B.2.** All impacts are anticipated to be temporary in nature.

3.1.4 **Table *2-1***, the likely management and mitigation measures that would be required for the temporary period of impact during the Project construction:

- PRoWs/ORPAs/OALs that route along the route of the OHL or UGC or construction traffic access tracks; and
- PRoWs/ORPAs/OALs that are crossed by or themselves cross the OHL or UGC route or construction traffic access tracks.

3.1.5 The following section sets out those management and mitigation measures. The full PRoWMP will be developed in consultation and agreement with the relevant local authority PRoW officers and highways teams.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES PROPOSALS

3.2.1 Overarching mitigation measures will be implemented for all PRoWs affected by the Project construction phase (and where relevant for ORPAs and areas of OAL). Additionally, PRoW specific mitigation measures can be implemented. All PRoW mitigation measures will be detailed within the full PRoWMP and will be subject to agreement with the local planning authority.

Overarching mitigation

3.2.2 Three main overarching elements will form the PRoW mitigation measures as follows:

- Inspection and maintenance;
- Communication on Project works – commencement and programme; and
- Signage – warning signage will be situated at appropriate PRoW junctions to warn users of construction works and unexpected vehicle movements.

Inspection and Maintenance

3.2.3 Regular inspection of the physical infrastructure will be vital if paths and other infrastructure are to be maintained in a safe and usable condition. Failure to deal with problems quickly can also result in more widespread problems and require more costly repairs.

3.2.4 An Inspection and Maintenance Plan for all areas which fall within the scope of the PRoWMP will be defined. Maintenance will only be focused on damage to existing PRoWs caused by the ongoing works associated with the construction phase of the Project. Maintenance operations will include:

- Inspection, repair/re-surfacing of PRoW;
- Inspection and repair of drains associated with temporary construction access routes;
- Maintenance of temporary construction access infrastructure including signage, waymarkers, interpretation boards and bridges; and
- Cclearance of any litter associated with temporary construction works that may blight PRoW.

3.2.5 The Principal Contractor will inspect the affected PRoW routes at the following times:

- prior to commencement of the construction phase (likely undertaken in the week before works commence that will affect any specific PRoW);
- once during the construction phase; and
- following completion of the construction phase.

3.2.6 The survey carried out prior to commencement of the construction phase will also include written descriptions and location maps noting where any existing issues with PRoWs are noted, resulting in a baseline of the condition of the PRoWs. This will enable the reinstatement of PRoWs to their previous condition, once the construction phase has been completed. Where appropriate, this survey will be utilised to note opportunities for enhancement of PRoWs, following the completion of the construction phase. For example, there may be improvements that are required to some access tracks as part of the temporary construction access works, to get vehicles to construction areas associated with the Project. Discussions with landowners will be undertaken regarding the retention of any enhancement works. It is acknowledged however, that the Principal Contractor remit is only to return PRoWs back to the original standard they were in before commencement of the construction phase.

3.2.7 The survey will be provided to the PRoW officer at each relevant local planning authority as a record of conditions prior to commencement of work in the area in question, (the pre-commencement may be phased in line with the order of construction).

Communication

3.2.8 As part of the overall Project, there will be liaison and consultation with third parties and stakeholders and communications regarding the works to residents, businesses and third parties within close proximity to the affected PRoW.

Signage

3.2.9 Appropriate signage will be required for all of the PRoWs (and where relevant ORPAs and OAL areas) affected by the Project. The nearest access points of any affected PRoW will also have signs in order to keep people informed. These will be prominently displayed and

clearly indicate the relevant information. Signage will be designed to be accessible to all potential users. Signs will be regularly inspected to ensure that they remain in place, are readable and have not been tampered with or altered.

3.2.10 If relevant, diversion routes waymarked in advance of construction. Signage will also emphasise that the right to wander from any PRoW within the construction area is not permitted. At any point where a PRoW is blocked off temporarily for the works, there will be clear 'No Entry' signs.

3.2.11 All signage will contain contact details for the Applicant and the Principal Contractor. Contact numbers will be provided to enable visitors to report any problems encountered when accessing the site, particularly with regard to the condition of PRoWs.

3.2.12 All signage will be removed once construction is complete and all PRoWs with temporary effects returned to their former use where agreed.

3.2.13 All signage relating to PRoW management would be agreed with the relevant local authority for PRoW as appropriate.

3.2.14 The Applicant is committed to enabling access to the PRoW network during the construction phase, where this does not compromise the safety of the general public and construction staff. Where temporary restrictions to widen access rights are required, the Applicant will provide accurate and up-to-date information relating to the construction phase activity being carried out and identifying PRoW routes which remain open or those which are currently diverted or scheduled for future diversion.

3.2.15 Suitable location(s) at towns/settlements or local groups can be provided with information in advance of works which would affect the PRoW network. This would include timings and maps detailing temporary construction activities affecting relevant PRoWs.

3.3 ADDITIONAL MANAGEMENT MEASURES

3.3.1 Additional management measures that may be required for an affected include:

- The use of qualified personnel (banksperson) at key locations such as in the vicinity of Project access points, where construction traffic or PRoW users cross each other (with appropriate street works licences in place);
- Information provision and training to drivers regarding the content of the PRoWMP including construction routes, protocols and Code of Good Practice; and
- Timing of works to minimise impacts on the PRoW network sections interacting with the Project and as a whole.

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4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 This Outline PRoWMP has been prepared to support the assessment of transport effects provided in **Chapter 7: Traffic and Transport** of the EIA Report.

4.1.2 The Outline PRoWMP has set out in an overview of the PRoWs that are currently anticipated to be impacted by the Project. All traffic and transport effects on the PRoW network are anticipated to be temporary.

4.1.3 It is proposed to manage and provide environmental measures for each PRoW that is affected by the Project and a series of likely environmental measures have been set out which can be applied to different types of interaction between the Project and the PRoW network during the construction phase of the Project.

4.1.4 A full version of the PRoWMP will be produced and submitted to the relevant local planning authorities prior to the commencement of the relevant works setting out agreed mitigation measures. The PRoWMP is a live document that will require updating should changes to the Project be made that impact on PRoWs affected or nature of effect on a PRoW for example.

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