

Specialist Estates Services Notification 22/07

03 May 2022

For action by:

Estates/Facilities Directors and Managers
Directors of Planning and Strategy

For information only:

Chief Executives
Copy to: Department of Health and Social Care, Welsh Government

Attached documents:

Letter from Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change dated 1st March 2022.

Dear Colleague

SAFEGUARDING WALES' BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND

Please find attached a letter regarding development, particularly solar PV array development, on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land in Wales.

Planning Policy Wales already provides protection for BMV agricultural land (which is defined as being agricultural land of grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification system) and states that BMV land should only be developed if there is an overriding need for the development and either previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades is unavailable.

The attached letter reinforces this protection but goes on to state that where BMV land is identified within a proposed solar PV array development, considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development because of its special importance, and unless other significant material considerations indicate otherwise it will be necessary to refuse permission.

The letter also requires Local Planning Authorities to consult with Welsh Government before granting planning permission for any proposals which do not accord with the Development Plan and which would involve the loss (both permanent and temporary) of 20 hectares or more of BMV land.

The letter includes a link to a Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map, published by Welsh Government, which identifies BMV land locations in Wales.

Should you require further information or have any queries, please contact Clive Ball, Head of Property, on 029 2090 4106 or e-mail clive.ball@wales.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "NH Davies". The letters are cursive and fluid.

NH Davies BSc (Hons), Dip Proj Man (RICS), MBA, MCIQB, FIHEEM

Director Specialist Estates Services

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