



Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm

ECOLOGICAL REPORT

Axis PED

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VERSION 1.1



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1. Introduction

1.1.1 This report has been prepared by Fenland Ecology Ltd on behalf of Axis PED Ltd. The report presents the results of botanical survey and survey for great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) in relation to Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm.

1.1.2 Whilst the condition precedent requiring this report relates solely to the issue of botanical surveys, information regarding GCN has been included to provide a comprehensive understanding of pond habitats in proximity to the wind farm.

1.2 Site & Context

1.2.3 The Site is located at Foel Trawsnant, approximately 2.3km to the northwest of Maesteg, Bridgend in the Neath Valley, West Glamorgan in Wales (in Figure 1, Appendix A). The general topography of the Site is undulating, with small river valleys bisecting several hill-tops and ridges. The habitats consist of upland farmland, with white moorland and enclosed pasture, both of which are used for sheep grazing. An access track to the Site runs north through the southern portion of the Afan Forest Park, which is an area of commercial coniferous woodland. The Site borders enclosed pasture to the north, white moorland to the east and coniferous woodland to the west and south

1.3 Project Background

1.3.4 Planning permission was granted, subject to conditions, by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council on 4 April 2023, under planning reference P2022/0517 for:

“Amendment to the plans referred to in condition 3 of planning permission reference P2014/0825 to allow for approval of revised plans for the development. The revised plans include increases in rotor diameter of five turbines (T5, T6, T9, T10 and T11) up to 133m and *increase* in rotor diameter up to 117m of three turbines (T1, T2 and T8) with no increase in overall turbine height. The number of turbines to be constructed will be reduced from 11 to 8 (turbines T3, T4, and T7 removed)”.

1.3.5 This shall be referred to herein as the ‘approved development’.

1.3.6 Planning Condition 19 states:

‘In the event additional works are required to extend or widen existing forest tracks, such works shall not be undertaken until such time as botanical surveys identifying any priority species and detailing appropriate action taken to maintain such species, have been undertaken and the results submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.’

1.3.7 Priority Species are those listed under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016¹. Section 7 lists the living organisms of principal importance (Priority Species) for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales².

¹ [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#)

² [Priority Species in Wales](#)

- 1.3.8 Consideration is also being given to the reconfiguration of a pond located along the existing forest track (Pond P3). Reconfiguration of the pond may be necessary to facilitate the alignment of the new access track through an area of existing woodland. This pond and other ponds located within 500 m of the approved development have therefore been surveyed to provide an updated ecological baseline of these features and to determine if they represent Priority Habitat³. The ponds were also surveyed for the presence of GCN.

Previous Botanical Survey

- 1.3.9 Previous botanical survey and assessment at the Site have been presented in the following reports:

- Morgan G. 2014. Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm. *NVC Survey Report*. Unpublished report by AMEC Environment & Infrastructure Ltd for Pennant Walters (FoelT) Ltd.
- Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited (2019a) *Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm Amended Scheme – Appendix 9A.3 Vegetation Survey & Assessment*
- WSP Environment & Infrastructure Solution UK Limited (2022) *Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm – Appendix 9A Desk Study, Extended Phase 1 Verification Survey and Baseline review*.

- 1.3.10 In relation to the existing forest track (referred to as the access track) the 2019 report (Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited 2019) stated:

‘Access Travel Inventory Survey: The botanical assessment confirmed that the existing and proposed access track sections leading to the Foel Trawsnant plateau do not support populations of any plant species of either national or regional conservation importance. It noted the presence of Schedule 8 invasive plants namely Montbretia (Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora) Nuttall’s waterweed (Elodea nuttallii) and Japanese knotweed (Fallopia japonica) in trackside habitats’.

- 1.3.11 Referring to all habitats, including those associated with the forest track, the 2022 survey update (WSP Environment & Infrastructure Solution UK Limited 2022) concluded:

‘Habitats within the planning boundary and 50m from the planning boundary remained the same during the Phase 1 verification survey’

Previous GCN Survey

- 1.3.12 The previous survey and assessment of GCN have been provided in the following reports:

- Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited (2019b) *Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm Amended Scheme – Appendix A Baseline Ecological report (Non-Avian Ecology)*

³ [Priority Habitat](#) listed on Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

- WSP Environment & Infrastructure Solution UK Limited (2022) *Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm – Appendix 9A Desk Study, Extended Phase 1 Verification Survey and Baseline review*.

1.3.13 Ponds located within 500 m of the approved development were identified and environmental DNA (eDNA) survey in 2018 confirmed the absence of GCN from these waterbodies. Subsequent Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment⁴ in 2022 confirmed there had been no change in the suitability of ponds for newts.

1.4 Purpose

1.4.14 The purpose of this document is to provide:

- Updated botanical information for the forest tracks to discharge condition 19 of the approved development (Application Ref P2022/0517).
- Updated presence / absence GCN surveys, to assess the presence or likely absence of GCN and, where appropriate, and to provide an outline of any mitigation that may be required.

1.5 Competence

1.5.15 This survey work has been undertaken by an ecologist with over 40 years of experience of botanical field survey and assessment. The ecologist experience and responsibilities include holding project licences for protected plant species, undertaking conservation assessment of Red List plants, contributing to peer-reviewed research of wetland plants, county moss recorder for Gloucestershire and Chair of the IUCN SSC Freshwater Plant Specialist Group.

1.5.16 All GCN surveys were carried out by surveyors who hold a Natural England GCN survey license.

1.5.17 This report has been prepared by an ecologist with over 20 years experience in habitat appraisal, GCN ecology, survey and ecological impact assessment.

⁴ Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). *Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt* (*Triturus cristatus*). *Herpetological Journal* 10 (4), 143-155.

2. Methods

2.1 Botanical Survey

Scope of Survey

2.1.1 The botanical Survey Area comprised the forest track (Forest Track Survey Areas) within the approved development, including the areas that are due to be widened⁵ and also the location of the eight ponds (Ponds 1 to 8).

2.1.2 The forest track Survey Area was broken down into xx separate areas. The location of each area is illustrated in Figure 2 and the location of ponds are illustrated in Figure 3.

Botanical Survey Methodology

2.1.3 On the 21st and 22nd April 2026 an experienced botanist (equivalent of level 5 FISC⁶) completed a detailed walk-over of the Survey Area to record any Priority Species of plants present. Where necessary the Survey Area was extended where doing so facilitated the assessment of plant status; for example, to determine the coverage of a plant.

2.1.4 All vascular plants and bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) seen were noted against generalised locations. Any notable plants encountered would also be noted, such any legally protected or invasive species of plant.

2.1.5 All names of vascular plants were recorded following Stace (2019⁷) and bryophytes following Pilkington and Hodgetts (2023⁸).

2.2 GCN eDNA Survey

Scope of Survey

2.2.6 A review of Ordinance Survey maps, aerial photography and field survey visits was undertaken as part of the PEA, which identified waterbodies within the Site and up to 500 m from the Site boundary that required further assessment (Fenland Ecology Ltd 2025). The location of the ponds P1 to P8 are illustrated in Figure 3.

2.2.7 The pond P6 was confirmed to be dry at the time of field survey and so was not included in the survey as it represented unsuitable breeding habitat for GCN.

eDNA Sampling

2.2.8 The survey work was undertaken with reference to the current best practice guidance for environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling in Biggs *et al* (2014⁹) and instructions provided by the eDNA sampling kit provider.

⁵ Although the precise location and extent of the widening was not known at this stage, this assumes the Survey Area covers a 5 m buffer either side of the proposed access track in the forested areas.

⁶ [FISC levels](#)

⁷ Stace, C E (2019) *New Flora of the British Isles, 4th edition*. Cambridge University Press

⁸ ⁸ Pilkington, S.L. and Hodgetts, N.G. 2023 *Interim Census Catalogue 2023, Including VC records compiled to the end of 2022*. British Bryological Society

⁹ Biggs J, Ewald N, Valentini A, Gaboriaud C, Griffiths RA, Foster J, Wilkinson J, Arnett A, Williams P and Dunn F 2014. *Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt. Appendix 4. Results of a pilot survey to test the use of eDNA outside of the recommended great crested newt survey window. Defra Project WC1067*. Freshwater Habitats Trust: Oxford

- 2.2.9 The waterbodies within the survey scope included ponds and ditches. A single eDNA ‘kit’ was used for each pond as they were all less than 1 hectare in size. There is no standard guidance for surveying length of ditches; however, given the linear and homogenous profile of ditches present it was considered that 1 kit per kilometre of ditch would be sufficient¹⁰.
- 2.2.10 All of the GCN eDNA surveys were completed by appropriately licence surveyors during suitable weather conditions on 21st April 2026. Key stages in the sampling method for each waterbody shall include the following:
- The waterbody was not entered as this can inhibit the results and / or provide false results.
 - Samples were collected from up to 20 evenly spaced locations around the perimeter.
 - Sampling avoided the stirring pond sediment.
 - Surveyors wore sterile gloves, with fresh gloves used for each waterbody and after the initial mixing of collected samples.
- 2.2.11 The samples were analysed in a Natural England approved laboratory in accordance with Biggs *et al* (2014). Further detail of the laboratory method is provided in the reports in Appendix C.
- 2.2.12 During field surveys, any other signs of GCN, such as eggs in folded vegetation, were also recorded. Egg searches were only conducted by a licenced surveyor.

2.3 Limitations

Botanical Survey

- 2.3.13 At any time of year, some species will be better developed and therefore more likely to be recorded than others. The survey was timed to enable thorough representation of bryophytes before development of the vascular flora obscured much of the terrestrial bryophyte flora, together with recording of a representative sample of the vascular vegetation. Recording this early in the season means that some species, such as sedges (*Carex* species), eyebrights (*Euphrasia* species) and some of the grasses would not have developed enough to be visible. However, comparison with previous lists, combined with the range and number of species recorded, suggests that the survey was sufficient to assess the potential for the presence of protected, threatened or notable plant species. There are therefore considered to be no significant constraints to the botanical survey.

¹⁰ This sampling method was also considered to be appropriate by the eDNA kit provider (Surescreen *pers comm*)

GCN eDNA Survey

- 2.3.14 Sections of some waterbodies were covered in dense scrub, which restricted access and prevented the collection of water samples at regular intervals. Where this was the case, the waterbody was sampled at location as close as possible to the sample point. In all cases, the waterbodies had a homogenous habitat structure with very little individual variation in profile or vegetation. Therefore, given that there was limited habitat variability, the restricted access was not considered to represent a constraint to the survey results or assessment.

3. Survey Results

3.1 Botanical Survey

- 3.1.1 In summary, the habitats present were consistent with the previous results from 2018 and 2022 (Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited 2019 and WSP Environment & Infrastructure Solution UK Limited 2022). No Priority Species of plant were recorded within the Survey Area.
- 3.1.2 The following sections provides an overview of the habitats and plant species recorded from the Forest Track Survey Areas and the ponds.
- 3.1.3 The locations of the Forest Track Survey Areas are illustrated in Figure 2 and the pond locations are illustrated in Figure 3. Representative photographs of the habitats recorded are provided in Appendix B. The common and scientific names of all plant species recorded, and the species lists from individual Forest Track Survey Areas and ponds are provided in Appendix C.

Forest Track Survey Areas

Forest Track Survey Area 1

- 3.1.4 Here the roadside has elements of scrub from the adjacent habitat grading into ruderal vegetation. The main habitat consisted of *Betula pendula*, *Betula pubescens*, *Salix cinerea*, *Sorbus aucuparia* and *Ulex europaeus* over heathy vegetation. The plant species recorded from these habitats are listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1 PLANTS RECORDED IN FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 1

Vascular plants		
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	<i>Luzula campestris</i>
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	<i>Dryopteris affinis</i> agg.	<i>Molinea caerulea</i>
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
<i>Betula pendula</i>	<i>Erica cinerea</i>	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	<i>Quercus petraea</i>
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	<i>Galium saxatile</i>	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
<i>Carex flacca</i>	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	<i>Rubus</i> sp.
<i>Chamaerion angustifolium</i>	<i>Hypericum maculatum</i>	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	<i>Taraxacum</i> sp,
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	<i>Juncus effusus</i>	<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	<i>Larix decidua</i>	<i>Viola riviniana</i>
Bryophytes		
<i>Atrichum undulatum</i>	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>
<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	<i>Lophocolea bidentata</i>	<i>Polytrichum juniperinum</i>
<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	<i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i>
<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	<i>Isoetecium myosuroides</i>	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>
<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>		

3.1.5 In addition, the following epiphytes were recorded:

- On dead *Ulex europaeus* comprised: *Frullania dilatata*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *resupinatum*, *Plenogemma phyllantha*.
- On *Quercus petraea* comprised: *Frullania dilatata*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *resupinatum*, *Lewinskya affinis*, *Metzgeria furcata*, *Orthotrichum pulchellum*, *Plenogemma phyllantha*, *Ulotia* sp.

Forest Track Survey Area 2

3.1.6 This area included *Rubus* sp. and *Ulex europaeus* that were mixed with *Pteridium aquilinum* along the track. These areas were separated from semi-natural habitats by a track, behind which the habitat were initially dominated by *Molinea caerulea* with scattered *Rubus* sp. and some trees. The plant species recorded from the habitats are listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2 PLANTS RECORDED IN FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 2

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>
<i>Carex binervis</i>	<i>Juncus articulatus</i>
<i>Hedera helix</i>	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Philonotis fontana</i>	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>
<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>	<i>Sphagnum denticulatum</i>
<i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i>	

3.1.7 Other features and associated species noted within this area included:

- Tussocks of *Molinea caerulea* in this area supported the bryophytes *Calypogeia arguta* and *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*.
- Plants recorded on the track included *Calliergonella cuspidata*, *Calluna vulgaris*, *Carex demissa*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Sphagnum denticulatum*, *Thuidium tamariscinum*.
- Within some drier areas of habitat the plants comprised *Crataegus monogyna*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Impatiens glandulifera*, *Luzula campestris*, *Luzula multiflora*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Vaccinium myrtillus* and *Viola riviniana*.
- Grassy ruderals along road include: *Epilobium hirsutum*, *Heracleum sphondylium*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Senecio jacobaea*, *Taraxacum* sp., *Trifolium repens* and *Urtica dioica*. Large ant-hills present also supported *Atrichum undulatum*, *Dicranella heteromalla*, *Polytrichum juniperinum* and *Veronica montana*.

Forest Track Survey Area 3

3.1.8 There were three broadly distinct areas within Forest Track Survey Area 3, comprising; damp grassland areas, drier heathland habitat and *Pinus sylvestris* plantation.

- 3.1.9 This low-lying grassland areas were located near the roads and included some wet hollows. The following species were dominant across this area: *Juncus effusus*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Pteridium aquilinum* and *Rubus* sp.
- 3.1.10 Away from the road the habitat transitioned from heathland and became increasingly wooded. The wooded area included *Betula pendula*, *Larix decidua*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Salix cinerea* and *Sorbus aucuparia* at the edges, with dense coniferous plantation becoming rapidly dominant.
- 3.1.11 The plant species recorded from each area are summarised in Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5.

TABLE 3 PLANTS RECORDED IN DAMP GRASSLAND OF FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 3

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>
<i>Carex demissa</i>	<i>Juncus acutiflorus</i>
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	<i>Juncus bulbosus</i>
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	<i>Luzula campestris</i>
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
<i>Galium palustre</i>	<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Brachythecium rivulare</i>	<i>Pellia epiphylla</i>
<i>Bryum pseudotriquetrum</i>	<i>Polytrichum commune</i>
<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	<i>Riccardia chamaedryfolia</i>
<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	<i>Sphagnum denticulatum</i>
<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	<i>Tetraphis pellucida</i>
<i>Lophocolea bidentata</i>	

TABLE 4 PLANTS RECORDED IN HEATHLAND OF FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 3

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
<i>Betula pendula</i>	<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	<i>Rubus</i> sp.
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	<i>Salix cinerea</i>
<i>Galium saxatile</i>	<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Atrichum undulatum</i>	<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>
<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	<i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i>
<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	<i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i>
<i>Lophocolea bidentata</i>	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>
<i>Mnium hornum</i>	<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>
Alga	
<i>Vaucheria</i> sp.	

TABLE 5 PLANTS RECORDED IN PLANTATION OF FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 3

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i> <i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i> <i>Athyrium filix-femina</i> <i>Betula pendula</i> <i>Callitriche stagnalis</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i> <i>Dryopteris affinis</i> agg. <i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> <i>Geum urbanum</i> <i>Glyceria fluitans</i> <i>Juncus effusus</i> <i>Oxalis acetosella</i> <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> <i>Rubus</i> sp. <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Atrichum undulatum</i> <i>Campylopus flexuosus</i> <i>Ceratodon purpureus</i> <i>Colura calyptrifolia</i> <i>Dicranum scoparium</i> <i>Fissidens bryoides</i> <i>Hypnum cupressiforme</i> var. <i>cupressiforme</i>	<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i> <i>Isothecium myosuroides</i> <i>Mnium hornum</i> <i>Polytrichum formosum</i> <i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i> <i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i> <i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>
Fungus	
<i>Mitrella paludosa</i>	

3.1.12 Other features associated with this area included:

- Epiphytes noted on *Acer pseudoplatanus*: *Metzgeria consanguinea* and *Microlejeunea ulicina*.
- Garden escapes in association with former building: *Alchemilla mollis*, *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*, *Cotoneaster* sp., *Fragaria vesca*, *Hypericum androsaemum* and *Lonicera nitida*.
- Low-lying damp area near the road supports: *Carex flacca*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Juncus articulatus*, *Juncus inflexus* and *Pulicaria dysenterica*.

Forest Track Survey Area 4

3.1.13 This area consisted of rough grassland and scrub adjacent to the forest track, which graded in some areas into dry grassland habitat. The habitats were over-shaded in some areas by the adjacent conifers. A margin of approximately 5 – 8 m had been mown some time before survey.

TABLE 6 PLANTS RECORDED FROM FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 4

Vascular plants		
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	<i>Quercus petraea</i>
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	<i>Rubus</i> sp.
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	<i>Juncus effusus</i>	<i>Salix cinerea</i>
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	<i>Juncus inflexus</i>	<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>
<i>Betula pendula</i>	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>
<i>Carex flacca</i>	<i>Luzula campestris</i>	<i>Taraxacum</i> sp.
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>
<i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	<i>Veronica chamaedryfolia</i>
<i>Equisetum palustre</i>	<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	<i>Veronica officinalis</i>
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>		
Bryophytes		
<i>Atrichum undulatum</i>	<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>
<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	<i>Philonotis fontana</i>	

- 3.1.14 There were also a series of culvert pools in this area, many of which contain water. These supported some plant species, including *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Angelica sylvestris*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Epilobium hirsutum*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, *Fissidens taxifolius*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Juncus effusus*, *J. inflexus*, *Ranunculus acris*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Ranunculus repens* and *Rumex acetosa*.

Forest Track Survey Area 5

- 3.1.15 This included a heath-scrub area over grassy vegetation, with the following species recorded *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *D. affinis* agg., *Calluna vulgaris*, *Juncus effusus* and *Sorbus aucuparia*. Downhill from a junction in the forest track, the habitats grade from dense *Salix cinerea* (located adjacent the pond 5) to open, scrubby *Rubus*-dominated grassland. The plant species recorded from these habitats are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7 PLANTS RECORDED FROM FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 5

Vascular plants		
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	<i>Corylus avellane</i>	<i>Juncus inflexus</i>
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	<i>Dryopteris affinis</i> agg.	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>
<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>	<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
<i>Carex binervis</i>	<i>Equisetum palustre</i>	<i>Prunus avium</i>
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	<i>Salix cinerea</i>
	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Bryophytes		
<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	<i>Campylopus pyriformis</i>	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>
<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	<i>Cephalozia curvifolia</i>	<i>Pogonatum aloides</i>
	<i>Dicranella heteromalla</i>	<i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i>
	<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>

- 3.1.16 A separate track running down to the forestry track, and which had a stream flowing adjacent to it, supported the following plants; *Carex panicea*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, *Glyceria* sp., *Juncus bulbosus* and *Molinea caerulea*.

Forest Track Survey Area 6

- 3.1.17 This majority of Forest Track Survey Area 6 comprised open heathland habitat, with patches of *Salix cinerea* scrub. The plant species recorded from these habitats are listed in Table 8.

TABLE 8 PLANT SPECIES RECORDED FROM FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 6

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	<i>Galium verum</i>
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	<i>Hypericum pulchrum</i>
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>
<i>Athyrium felix-femina</i>	<i>Juncus articulatus</i>
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	<i>Juncus squarrosus</i>
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
<i>Carex flacca</i>	<i>Luzula campestris</i>
<i>Chamaerion angustifolium</i>	<i>Luzula multiflora</i>
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	<i>Nardus stricta</i>
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	<i>Pilosella</i> sp.
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	<i>Rubus</i> sp.
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	<i>Vicia sepium</i>
<i>Galium saxatile</i>	
Bryophytes	
<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	<i>Pogonatum aloides</i>
<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	<i>Pogonatum urnigerum</i>
<i>Ceratodon purpureus</i>	<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>
<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	<i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i>
<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>
<i>Mnium hornum</i>	<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>

- 3.1.18 Other habitats and features from within Forest Track Survey Area 6 included:
- The margins of the track supported *Bryoerythrophyllum ferruginascens*
 - A potential former quarry (Grid Reference SS 83772 92713). The plant species recorded from this area are listed separately in Table 9.
 - Epiphytes recorded on oak trees included: *Frullania dilatata*, *Hypnum andoi*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *cupressiforme*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *resupinatum*, *Isohetecium myosuroides*, *Metzgeria consanguinea*, *Microlejeunea ulicina*, *Orthotrichum pulchellum*, *Plenogemma phyllantha* and *Ulota* sp.

TABLE 9 PLANT SPECIES RECORDED FROM QUARRY IN FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 6

Vascular plants	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> <i>Carex flacca</i> <i>Corylus avellana</i> <i>Cotoneaster</i> sp. <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> <i>Juncus articulatus</i> <i>Lous corniculatus</i> <i>Luzula campestris</i>	<i>Molinea caerulea</i> <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> <i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i> <i>Ranunculus repens</i> <i>Sagina procumbens</i> <i>Salix aurita</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Archidium alterniflorum</i> <i>Atrichum undulatum</i> <i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i> <i>Calypogeia fissa</i> <i>Ctenidium molluscum</i> <i>Dicranoweissia cirrata</i>	<i>Dicranum scoparium</i> <i>Philonotis fontana</i> <i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i> <i>Scapania irrigua</i> <i>Weissia controversa</i>

Forest Track Surve Area 7

- 3.1.19 This area was dominated by *Salix cinerea* scrub and conifer plantation over grassland and scrub. The plant species recorded from these habitats are listed in Table 10.

TABLE 10 PLANT SPECIES RECORDED FROM FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 7

Vascular plants	
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i> <i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i> <i>Corylus avellana</i> <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> <i>Geranium robertianum</i>	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i> <i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i> <i>Rubus</i> sp. <i>Salix</i> × <i>multinervis</i> <i>Tussilago farfara</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Atrichum undulatum</i> <i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i> <i>Fissidens taxifolius</i>	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i> <i>Lophocolea heterophylla</i> <i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>

- 3.1.20 In addition, the following epiphytes were recorded:

- On *Fraxinus excelsior*: *Brachythecium rutabulum*, *Cryphaea heteromalla*, *Frullania dilatata*, *Hypnum andoi*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *cupressiforme*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *resupinatum*, *Lewinskya affinis*, *Metzgeria consanguinea*, *Plenogemma phyllantha*, *Pulviger a lyellii* and *Ulota* sp.
- On *Salix cinerea*: *Cololejeunea minutissima*, *Colura calyptrifolia*, *Frullania dilatata*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *resupinatum*, *Metzgeria consanguinea*, *Metzgeria furcata*, *Plenogemma phyllantha*, *Radula complanate* and *Ulota* sp.

Forestry Track Survey Area 8

- 3.1.21 This consisted an area of grassland and *Rubus* sp. scrub. The habitat was flanked by a line of *Salix cinerea*, *Salix aurita*, *Quercus petraea*, *Crataegus monogyna* and *Sorbus aucuparia*, which then transitioned into coniferous woodland. The plant species recorded from these habitats are listed in Table 11.

TABLE 11 PLANT SPECIES RECORDED FROM FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 8

Vascular plants	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	<i>Juncus inflexus</i>
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	<i>Linum catharticum</i>
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	<i>Luzula campestris</i>
<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>	<i>Luzula multiflora</i>
<i>Chamaerion angustifolium</i>	<i>Molinea caerulea</i>
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i> agg.	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	<i>Potentilla sterilis</i>
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
<i>Festuca ovina</i>	<i>Rumex crispus</i>
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	<i>Salix aurita</i>
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	<i>Senecio aquaticus</i>
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>
<i>Hedera hibernica</i>	<i>Stellaria alsine</i>
<i>Hypericum maculatum</i>	<i>Taraxacum</i> sp.
<i>Hypericum pulchrum</i>	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>
<i>Juncus articulatus</i>	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	
Bryophytes	
<i>Brachythecium rivulare</i>	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>
<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	<i>Plagiomnium undulatum</i>
<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>
<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	<i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i>
<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>

- 3.1.22 An orchid rosette was recorded in turned soil on the road margin (Grid Reference SS 83784 929937).

Forest Track Survey Area 9

- 3.1.23 This section comprised a recently mown grass margin, with areas of *Juncus effusus* and *Rubus* sp. scrub. The plant species recorded from these habitats are listed in Table 12.

TABLE 12 PLANT SPECIES RECORDED FROM FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 9

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i> <i>Angelica sylvestris</i> <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> <i>Bellis perennis</i> <i>Carex binervis</i> <i>Carex pilulifera</i> <i>Chamaerion angustifolium</i> <i>Cirsium palustre</i> <i>Cirsium palustre</i> <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> <i>Epilobium ciliatum</i> <i>Equisetum palustre</i> <i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i> <i>Festuca rubra</i> <i>Fragaria vesca</i> <i>Galium palustre</i>	<i>Juncus articulatus</i> <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> <i>Luzula campestris</i> <i>Molinea caerulea</i> <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> <i>Potentilla erecta</i> <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> <i>Ranunculus repens</i> <i>Salix cinerea</i> <i>Senecio aquaticus</i> <i>Senecio jacobaea</i> <i>Taraxacum</i> sp. <i>Tussilago farfara</i> <i>Urtica dioica</i> <i>Veronica chamaedryfolia</i> <i>Veronica officinalis</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Aneura pinguis</i> <i>Atrichum undulatum</i> <i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i> <i>Ctenidium molluscum</i> <i>Dichodontium pellucidum</i>	<i>Fissidens taxifolius</i> <i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i> <i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i> <i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i> <i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>

Forest Track Survey Area 10

3.1.24 Here the habitats comprised a margin of coniferous plantation, which opened up at the southern extent of the area. The plant species recorded from these habitats are listed in Table 13.

TABLE 13 PLANT SPECIES RECORDED FROM FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREA 9

Vascular plants	
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i> <i>Athyrium felix-femina</i> <i>Bellis perennis</i> <i>Blechnum spicant</i> <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> <i>Cardamine flexuosa</i> <i>Cardamine hirsuta</i> <i>Carex flacca</i> <i>Carex pilulifera</i> <i>Cirsium arvense</i> <i>Cirsium palustre</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Crocasmia crocosmiiflora</i> <i>Dactyls glomerata</i> <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> <i>Dryopteris dilatata</i> <i>Erica cinerea</i>	<i>Juncus effusus</i> <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> <i>Luzula campestris</i> <i>Molinea caerulea</i> <i>Nardus stricta</i> <i>Pilosella</i> sp. <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> <i>Potentilla erecta</i> <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> <i>Ranunculus acris</i> <i>Ranunculus repens</i> <i>Rubus</i> sp. <i>Rumex acetosa</i> <i>Sagina procumbens</i> <i>Senecio aquaticus</i> <i>Senecio jacobaea</i> <i>Taraxacum</i> sp.

<i>Fragaria vesca</i> <i>Galium palustre</i> <i>Hypericum androsaemum</i> <i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> <i>Juncus articulatus</i>	<i>Tussilago farfara</i> <i>Urtica dioica</i> <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i> <i>Veronica montana</i> <i>Veronica officinalis</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i> <i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i> <i>Calypogeia fissa</i> <i>Dichodontium pellucidum</i> <i>Fissidens dubius</i> <i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i> <i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	<i>Pellia epiphylla</i> <i>Philonotis fontana</i> <i>Plagiothecium undulatum</i> <i>Polytrichum formosum</i> <i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i> <i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i> <i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>

Ponds

3.1.25 Table 14 provides a summary description of the ponds P1 to P8. The ponds P3, P4, P7 and P8 were located within the Site, while the ponds P1, P2, P5 and P6 were located outside the Site boundary.

3.1.26 No Priority Species of plant were recorded with any of the ponds.

TABLE 14 DESCRIPTION OF PONDS

Pond	Description	Botanical Results*
P1	Open waterbody c. 10 x 5 m and set within grass-heath habitat	Table 15
P2	Open waterbody c. 8 x 4 m and set within grass-heath habitat	Table 16
P3	Extensive, deep water, partly shaded by fallen conifers. Includes extensive filamentous algae	Table 17
P4	Small area of shallow water, with <i>Salix cinerea</i> growing from bed.	Table 18
P5	Patchy iron-rich water, under fairly closed canopy of <i>Betula pendula</i> and <i>Salix cinerea</i> .	Table 19
P6	Damp but no water, with <i>Cardamine hirsuta</i> and <i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	N/A
P7	A damp hollow, with, on the margin of the conifer plantation shaded by <i>Salix cinerea</i> .	Table 20
P8	Some standing water, beneath shade of <i>Salix cinerea</i> .	Table 21
*N/A indicates no additional botanical information recorded		

TABLE 15 PLANTS RECORDED FROM POND P1

Vascular plants	
<i>Callitriche stagnalis</i> <i>Juncus effusus</i>	<i>Molinea caerulea</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Calypogeia fissa</i> <i>Calypogeia muelleriana</i> <i>Campylopus pyriformis</i> <i>Cephalozia bicuspidata</i> <i>Dicranella heteromalla</i>	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i> <i>Scorpidium revolvens</i> <i>Sphagnum cuspidatum</i> <i>Sphagnum inundatum</i>

TABLE 16 PLANTS RECORDED FROM POND P2

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis canina</i> <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> <i>Callitriche stagnalis</i> <i>Carex nigra</i> <i>Dryopteris dilatata</i> <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i>	<i>Glyceria</i> sp. <i>Juncus acutiflorus</i> <i>Juncus conglomeratus</i> <i>Juncus effusus</i> <i>Molinea caerulea</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Dicranella heteromalla</i> <i>Drepanocladus aduncus</i> <i>Polytrichum commune</i> <i>Sphagnum cuspidatum</i>	<i>Sphagnum denticulatum</i> <i>Sphagnum inundatum</i> <i>Sphagnum palustre</i>

TABLE 17 PLANTS RECORDED FROM POND P3

Vascular plants	
<i>Callitriche</i> sp. <i>Carex flacca</i> <i>Elodea callitrichoides</i> <i>Equisetum fluviatile</i> <i>Juncus effusus</i> <i>Lemna gibba</i>	<i>Myosotis</i> sp. <i>Nymphaea</i> sp. <i>Potamogeton polygonifolius</i> <i>Stellaria alsine</i> <i>Typha latifolia</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	<i>Drepanocladus aduncus</i>
Algae	
<i>Chaetophora pisum</i>	

TABLE 18 PLANTS RECORDED FROM POND P4

Vascular plants	
<i>Galium palustre</i> <i>Juncus effusus</i>	<i>Typha latifolia</i>

TABLE 19 PLANTS RECORDED FROM POND P5

Vascular plants	
<i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i>	
Bryophytes	
<i>Cephalozia curvifolia</i> <i>Lepidozia reptans</i> <i>Polytrichum commune</i> <i>Rhizomnium punctatum</i>	<i>Riccardia chamaedryfolia</i> <i>Sphagnum denticulatum</i> <i>Sphagnum fimbriatum</i>

TABLE 20 PLANTS RECORDED FROM POND P7

Vascular plants	
<i>Juncus effusus</i> <i>Galium palustre</i>	<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Mnium hornum</i> <i>Plagiomnium undulatum</i>	<i>Polytrichum commune</i>

TABLE 21 PLANTS RECORDED FROM POND P8

Vascular plants	
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> <i>Galium palustre</i> <i>Glyceria</i> sp.	<i>Juncus effusus</i> <i>Molinea caerulea</i> <i>Ranunculus flammula</i>
Bryophytes	
<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	<i>Sphagnum denticulatum</i>

3.2 GCN eDNA Survey Results

3.2.27 Descriptions of each pond are provided above in Table 14. Table 22 provides the results of eDNA survey and the detailed eDNA report is provided in Appendix D.

TABLE 22 EDNA SURVEY RESULTS

Waterbody	eDNA Results	GCN Eggs
P1	Negative	-
P2	Negative	-
P3	Negative	-
P4	Negative	-
P5	Negative	-
P6	Dry	-
P7	Negative	-
P8	Negative	-

3.3 Summary of Survey Results

3.3.28 All ponds were confirmed to be negative for GCN eDNA.

4. Discussion

4.1 Botanical Survey

Priority Species of Plant

- 4.1.1 No Priority Species of plant listed under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. In addition, no plants on the Welsh Red Lists of bryophytes or vascular plants (Dines 2008¹¹, Bosanquet and Dines 2011¹²) or the UK Red List of bryophytes (Callaghan 2022¹³) were recorded.
- 4.1.2 One species classed as Near Threatened in the Red List of vascular plants of Great Britain (Stroh *et al* 2025¹⁴); bell heather *Erica cinerea* was found to be common along the eastern margin of the track. Bell heather is considered to be “very common or widespread” in Great Britain “but with some clear decline, most especially in the lowlands of England” (Stroh *et al* 2025). It remains widespread and abundant in Wales, where it is classed as of Least Concern (Dines 2008).
- 4.1.3 Most of the species recorded are common and fairly widespread both at local and national levels. Most species recorded were also typical of the habitats represented on the site and would be expected to occur in such habitats throughout the country. The only exceptions were:
- Garden plant species, such as tutsan *Hypericum androsaemum* and Wilson’s honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida*, which were associated with a ruined building along the entrance route.
 - The water-lily *Nymphaea* sp. and South American waterweed *Elodea callitrichoides* which have clearly been introduced to pond P3.
 - Small patches of horticultural daffodil cultivars *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* which have been planted around the picnic area.
 - Strips of calcium-loving plant species along the margins of the forestry track associated with the gravel brought in to form the forestry track.
- 4.1.4 Therefore, Priority Species of plant (or any other notable plant species) are absent and do not represent a constraint to the approved development and no further action is required to maintain such species.

Ponds

- 4.1.5 The field survey confirmed that each of the ponds present are typical of the nutrient poor habitats present and of limited botanical and structural diversity.

¹¹ Dines, T. 2008 *A vascular plant Red List for Wales*. Plantlife, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

¹² Bosanquet, S. and Dines, T. 2011 *A Bryophyte Red Data List for Wales*. Plantlife, Salisbury

¹³ Callaghan, D.A. 2022. *A new IUCN Red List of the bryophytes of Britain, 2023*. Journal of Bryology 44(4): 271-389.

¹⁴ Stroh, P.A., Pescott, O.L., Bateman, R.M., Cooke, E.L., Cousins, M., Fay, M.F., Finger, A., Harrower, C.A., Jones, A., Lansdown, R.V., Leach, S.J., Macdonald, I., Mills, A., Pearman, D.A., Prendergast, A., Rich, T.C.G., Rumsey, F.J., Woodman, J. and Walker, K.J. 2025. *A new vascular plant Red List for Great Britain*. British & Irish Botany 7(3): 148-216

- Ponds P1 and P2 supported standing water and were associated with the open heath habitat
- Pond P3 had some open water that was over-shaded by adjacent woodland and fallen trees. The pond supported two non-native; water-lily *Nymphaea* sp. and South American waterweed *Elodea callitrichoides* and extensive filamentous algae.
- The pond P6 was dry and the ponds P4, P5, P7 & P8 had only very limited standing water and / or were heavily over-shaded by adjacent woodland.

4.1.6 Each of the ponds are considered to be unexceptional and of low ecological quality, with limited structural diversity, a lack of notable plant species and supporting some non-native plant species (pond P3). On this basis the ponds are considered unlikely to represent Priority Habitat¹⁵. The ponds are therefore to be of low ecological importance (local importance or below).

4.2 GCN

4.2.7 GCN UK are protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation protects the places GCN use for breeding, resting, shelter or protection against damage, destruction or obstruction and GCN are protected from killing, injury or disturbance. Further detail on the legislation relevant to GCN is provided in Appendix E.

4.2.8 GCN are recognised as a Priority Species under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Assessment & Recommendations

4.2.9 Consistent with previous survey from 2018 and 2022, the eDNA survey confirmed the absence of GCN from ponds P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7 & P8. Pond P6 was dry at the time of survey and therefore represents unsuitable breeding habitat for GCN.

4.2.10 Therefore, GCN have confirmed to be absent from the ponds P1 to P8. GCN do not represent a constraint to the approved development, and no specific mitigation is or compensation is required for this species.

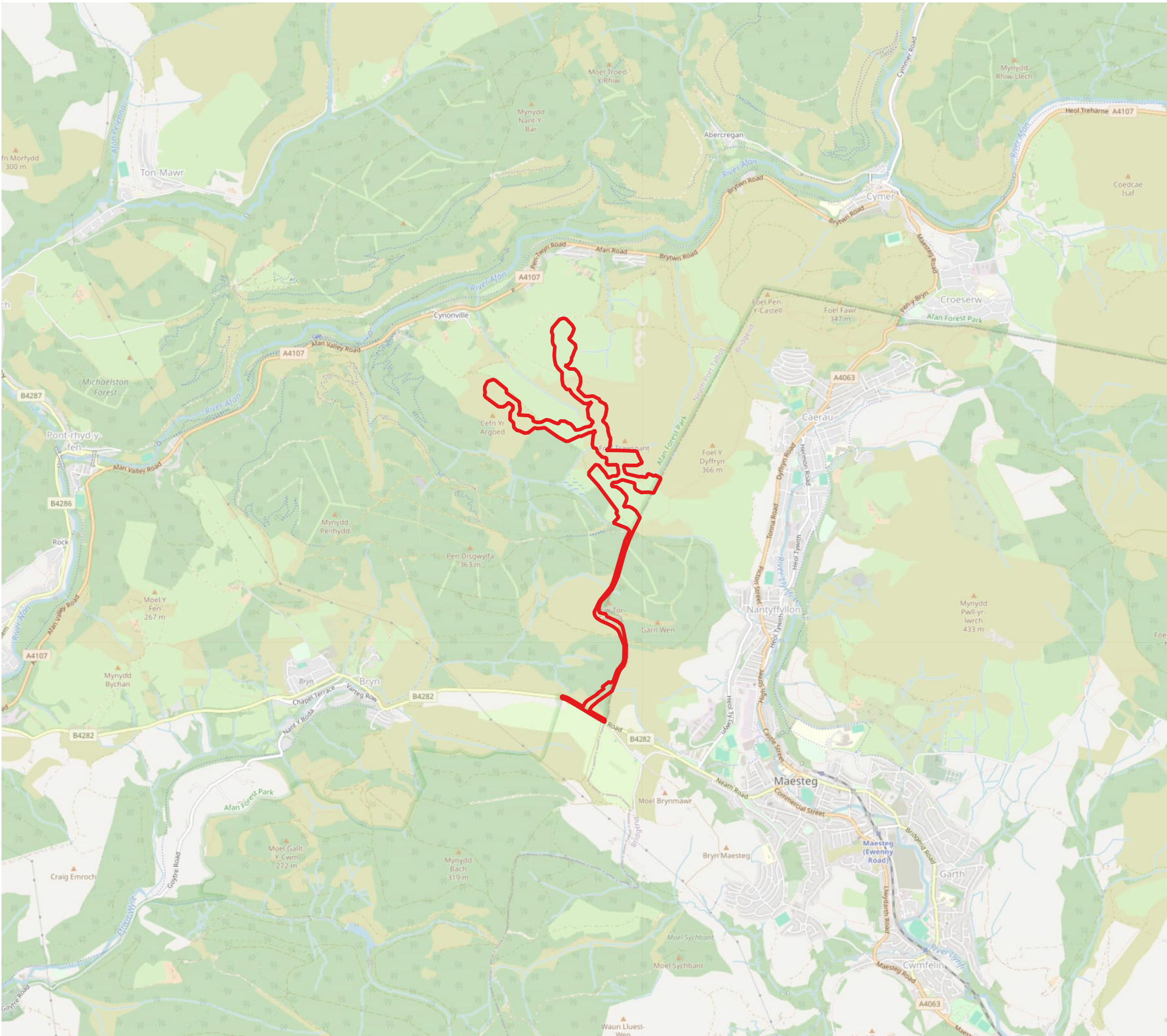
4.3 Report Lifespan

4.3.11 The recommendations in this report are valid for up to 24 months from the completion of surveys (CIEEM 2019¹⁶) and it is recommended that a review of the need for update surveys would be required after this period.

¹⁵ [Pond Priority Habitat Definition](#)

¹⁶ CIEEM (2019) *Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports & Surveys*. Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>

Appendix A Figures



 Site Boundary

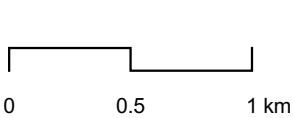


FIGURE 1
SITE LOCATION PLAN

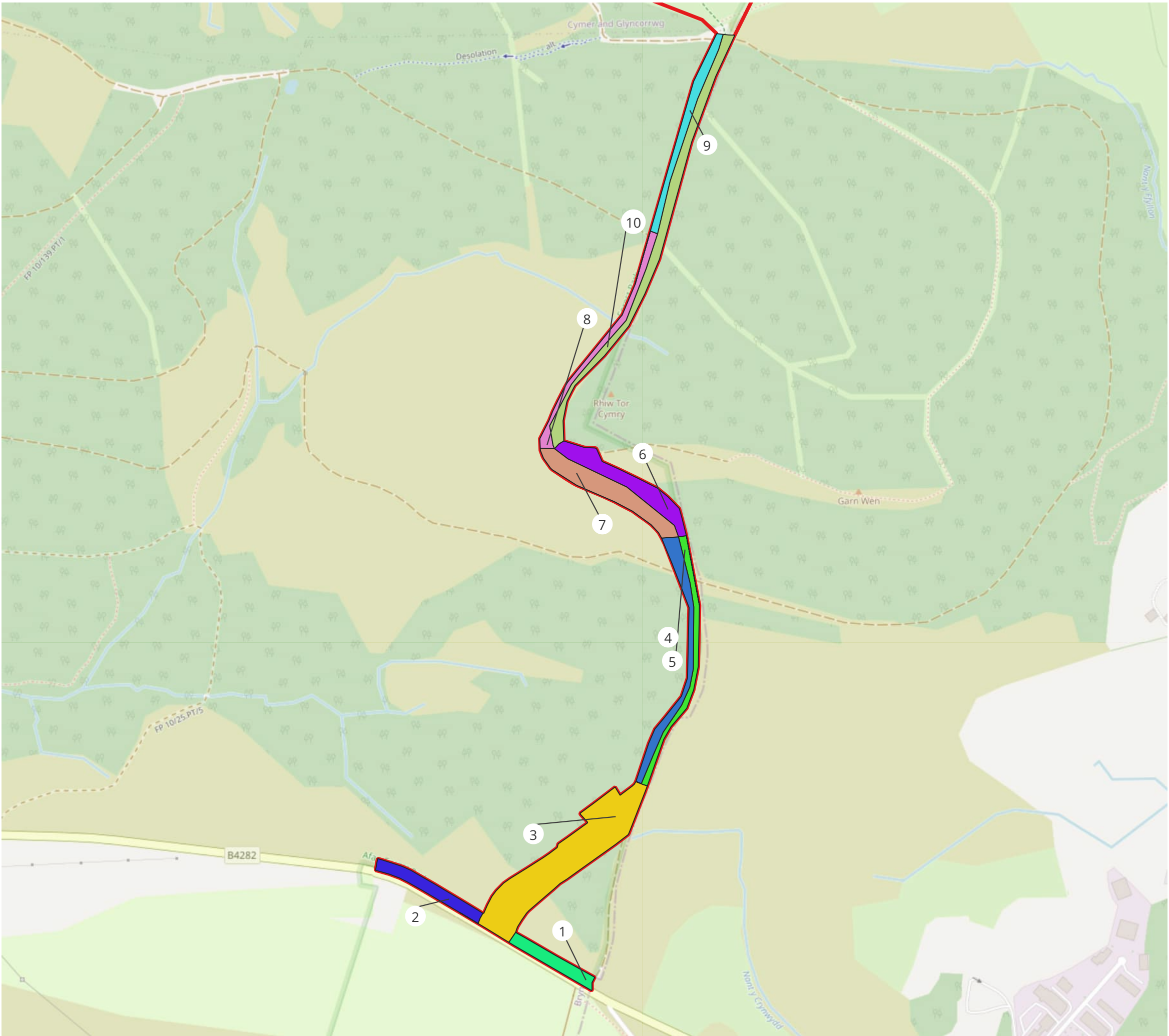
CLIENT
Alerion UK Limited
PROJECT
Foel Trawsant Wind Turbines

REVISION
SCALE
1:50,000 @ A3

DATE
15/05/26

DRAWN
MWH

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- Site Boundary
- Forest Track Survey Areas
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

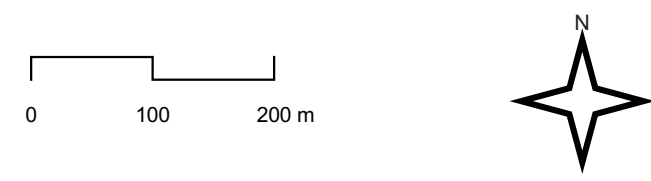
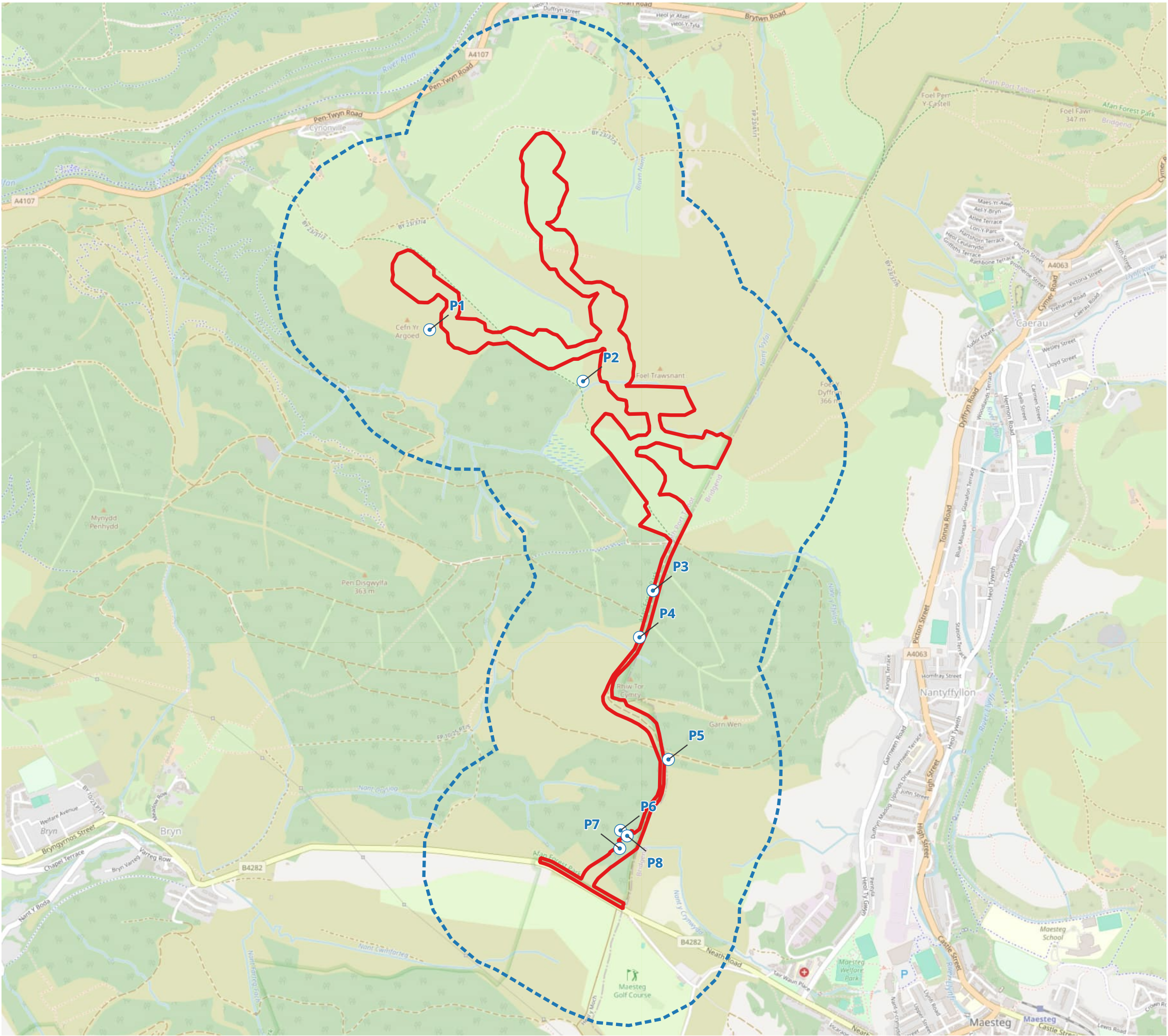


FIGURE 2 FOREST TRACK SURVEY AREAS	REVISION
	-
	SCALE 1:10,000 @ A3
	DATE 15/05/26
CLIENT Alerion UK Limited	DRAWN MWH
PROJECT Foel Trawsnant Wind Turbines	

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- Site Boundary
- 500 m Buffer
- Ponds



FIGURE 1

POND LOCATION PLAN

CLIENT
Alerion UK Limited

PROJECT
Foel Trawsnant Wind Turbines

REVISION

SCALE
1:26,000 @ A3

DATE
15/05/26

DRAWN
MWH

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Appendix B Photographs



Forest Track Survey Area 1



Forest Track Survey Area 1



Forest Track Survey Area 2



Forest Track Survey Area 2



Forest Track Survey Area 3



Forest Track Survey Area 3



Forest Track Survey Area 4



Forest Track Survey Area 5



Forest Track Survey Area 6



Quarry in Forest Track Survey Area 6



Forest Track Survey Area 7



Forest Track Survey Area 8



Forest Track Survey Area 9



Forest Track Survey Area 10



Pond P1



Pond P2



Pond P3



Pond P4



Pond P5



Pond P6



Pond P7



Pond P8

Appendix C Botanical Species Lists

TABLE 23 LIST OF VASCULAR PLANTS RECORDED

Scientific name	Common name
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Agrostis canina</i>	Velvet bent
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Brown bent
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping bent
<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	Garden lady's-mantle
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	Wild angelica
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet vernal-grass
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False oat-grass
<i>Asplenium adiantum-nigrum</i>	Maidenhair spleenwort
<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>	Hart's-tongue fern
<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Lady fern
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver birch
<i>Betula pubescens</i>	Downy birch
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard fern
<i>Callitriche</i> sp.	Water-starwort sp.
<i>Callitriche stagnalis</i>	Common water-starwort
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather
<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	Wavy bittercress
<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>	Hairy bittercress
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	Cuckooflower
<i>Carex binervis</i>	Green-ribbed sedge
<i>Carex flacca</i>	Glaucous sedge
<i>Carex nigra</i>	Common sedge
<i>Carex demissa</i>	Common yellow-sedge
<i>Carex panicea</i>	Carnation sedge
<i>Carex pilulifera</i>	Pill sedge
<i>Chamaerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay willowherb
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping thistle
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	Marsh thistle
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel
<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp.	Cotoneaster species
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Crocsmia crocosmiiflora</i>	Montbretia
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted hair-grass
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i> agg.	Scaly male-fern
<i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i>	Narrow buckler-fern
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Brad buckler-fern
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male fern
<i>Elodea callitrichoides</i>	South American waterweed
<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>	American willowherb
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Great willowherb
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	Broad-leaved willowherb
<i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>	Hoary willowherb
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Field horsetail
<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>	Water horsetail

<i>Equisetum palustre</i>	Marsh horsetail
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	Bell heather
<i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i>	Hare's-tail cottongrass
<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>	Hemp agrimony
<i>Festuca ovina</i>	Sheep's-fescue
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red fescue
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wild strawberry
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	Hedge bedstraw
<i>Galium palustre</i>	Marsh bedstraw
<i>Galium saxatile</i>	Heath bedstraw
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's bedstraw
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb Robert
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood avens
<i>Glyceria fluitans</i>	Floating sweet-grass
<i>Glyceria</i> sp.	Sweet-grass
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Common ivy
<i>Hedera hibernica</i>	Atlantic ivy
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire fog
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	Bluebell
<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Tutsan
<i>Hypericum maculatum</i>	Imperforate St. John's-wort
<i>Hypericum pulchrum</i>	Slender St. John's-wort
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Cat's-ear
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly
<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	Himalayan balsam
<i>Juncus acutiflorus</i>	Sharp-flowered rush
<i>Juncus articulatus</i>	Jointed rush
<i>Juncus bulbosus</i>	Bulbous rush
<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>	Compact rush
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft rush
<i>Juncus inflexus</i>	Hard rush
<i>Juncus squarrosus</i>	Heath rush
<i>Larix decidua</i>	European larch
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow vetchling
<i>Lemna gibba</i>	Fat duckweed
<i>Linum catharticum</i>	Fairy flax
<i>Lonicera nitida</i>	Wilson's honeysuckle
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common bird's-foot trefoil
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	Field wood-rush
<i>Luzula multiflora</i>	Heath wood-rush
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	Purple moor-grass
<i>Myosotis</i> sp.	Forget-me-not
<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>	Daffodil
<i>Nardus stricta</i>	Mat-grass
<i>Nymphaea</i> sp.	Water-lily (horticultural cultivar)
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Wild marjoram
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	Wood-sorrel
<i>Pilosella</i> sp.	Mouse-ear hawkweed
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scot's pine
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort plantain

<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>	Common milkwort
<i>Potamogeton polygonifolius</i>	Bog pondweed
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Silverweed
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	Tormentil
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping cinquefoil
<i>Potentilla sterilis</i>	Barren strawberry
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Self-heal
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild cherry
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken
<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	Common fleabane
<i>Quercus petraea</i>	Pedunculate oak
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow buttercup
<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	Bulbous buttercup
<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>	Lesser Spearwort
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup
<i>Rubus sp.</i>	Bramble
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common sorrel
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curled dock
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved dock
<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	Procumbent pearlwort
<i>Salix aurita</i>	Eared osier
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	Grey willow
<i>Salix × multinervis</i>	a hybrid willow
<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>	Common figwort
<i>Senecio aquaticus</i>	Marsh ragwort
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Ragwort
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge woundwort
<i>Stellaria alsine</i>	Bog stitchwort
<i>Taraxacum sp.</i>	Dandelion
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White clover
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Colt's-foot
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Bulrush
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common nettle
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Bilberry
<i>Veronica chamaedryfolia</i>	Germander speedwell
<i>Veronica montana</i>	Wood speedwell
<i>Veronica officinalis</i>	Heath speedwell
<i>Vicia sepium</i>	Bitter vetch
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common dog-violet

TABLE 24 LIST OF BRYOPHYTES, FUNGI AND ALGAE RECORDED

Bryophytes	
Mosses	Liverworts
<i>Archidium alterniflorum</i>	<i>Aneura pinguis</i>
<i>Atrichum undulatum</i>	<i>Calypogeia arguta</i>
<i>Brachythecium rivulare</i>	<i>Calypogeia fissa</i>
<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	<i>Calypogeia muelleriana</i>
<i>Bryoerythrophyllum ferruginascens</i>	<i>Cephalozia bicuspidate</i>
<i>Bryum pseudotriquetrum</i>	<i>Cephalozia curvifolia</i>

<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	<i>Cololejeunea minutissima</i>
<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	<i>Colura calyptrifolia</i>
<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	<i>Lepidozia reptans</i>
<i>Campylopus pyriformis</i>	<i>Lophocolea bidentata</i>
<i>Ceratodon purpureus</i>	<i>Lophocolea heterophylla</i>
<i>Cryphaea heteromalla</i>	<i>Metzgeria consanguinea</i>
<i>Ctenidium molluscum</i>	<i>Metzgeria furcata</i>
<i>Dichodontium pellucidum</i>	<i>Microlejeunea ulicina</i>
<i>Dicranella heteromalla</i>	<i>Pellia epiphylla</i>
<i>Dicranoweissia cirrata</i>	<i>Radula complanata</i>
<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	<i>Riccardia chamaedryfolia</i>
<i>Drepanocladus aduncus</i>	
<i>Fissidens bryoides</i>	
<i>Fissidens dubius</i>	
<i>Fissidens taxifolius</i>	
<i>Frullania dilatata</i>	
<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	
<i>Hypnum andoi</i>	
<i>Hypnum cupressiforme</i> var. <i>cupressiforme</i>	
<i>Hypnum cupressiforme</i> var. <i>resupinatum</i>	
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	
<i>Isoetecium myosuroides</i>	
<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	
<i>Lewinskya affinis</i>	
<i>Mnium hornum</i>	
<i>Orthotrichum pulchellum</i>	
<i>Philonotis fontana</i>	
<i>Plagiomnium undulatum</i>	
<i>Plagiothecium undulatum</i>	
<i>Plenogemma phyllantha</i>	
<i>Pogonatum aloides</i>	
<i>Pogonatum urnigerum</i>	
<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	
<i>Polytrichum commune</i>	
<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>	
<i>Polytrichum juniperinum</i>	
<i>Pseudoscleropodium purum</i>	
<i>Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans</i>	
<i>Pulvigerella lyellii</i>	
<i>Rhizomnium punctatum</i>	
<i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i>	
<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>	
<i>Scorpidium revolvens</i>	
<i>Sphagnum cuspidatum</i>	
<i>Sphagnum denticulatum</i>	
<i>Sphagnum fimbriatum</i>	
<i>Sphagnum inundatum</i>	
<i>Sphagnum palustre</i>	
<i>Sphagnum squarrosum</i>	
<i>Tetraphis pellucida</i>	
<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>	
<i>Ulota</i> sp.	

<i>Weissia controversa</i>	
Fungi	Algae
<i>Mitula paludosa</i> (Bog beacon)	<i>Chaetophora pisum</i>
	<i>Vaucheria</i> sp.

Appendix D eDNA Lab Reports

Folio No: 826-2026
Purchase Order: PON FEN240426
Contact: Fenland Ecology
Issue Date: 27.04.2026
Received Date: 24.04.2026

GCN Report

Technical Report



SureScreen Scientifics

Folio No: 826-2026
Purchase Order: PON FEN240426
Contact: Fenland Ecology
Issue Date: 27.04.2026
Received Date: 24.04.2026

GCN eDNA Analysis

Summary

When great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus*, inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analyzing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN26 03957	FOEL TAWSAN - P7		Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN26 03958	FOEL TAWSAN - P5		Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN26 03959	FOEL TAWSAN - P1		Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN26 03960	FOEL TAWSAN - P8	SS 83750 92171	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN26 03962	FOEL TAWSAN - P4		Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN26 03963	FOEL TAWSAN - P3		Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN26 03964	FOEL TAWSAN - P2		Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

Matters affecting result: none

Reported by: Ruby Fielding

Approved by: Vanessa Hind

Methodology

The samples detailed above have been analyzed for the presence of GCN eDNA following the protocol stated in DEFRA WC1067 'Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt, Appendix 5.' (Biggs et al. 2014). Each of the 6 sub-sample tubes are first centrifuged and pooled together into a single sample tube which then undergoes DNA extraction. The extracted sample is then analyzed using real-time PCR (qPCR), which uses species-specific molecular markers to amplify GCN DNA within a sample. These markers are unique to GCN DNA, meaning that there should be no detection of closely related species.

If GCN DNA is present, the DNA is amplified up to a detectable level, resulting in positive species detection. If GCN DNA is not present then amplification does not occur, and a negative result is recorded. Analysis of eDNA requires attention to detail to prevent the risk of contamination. True positive controls, negative controls, and spiked synthetic DNA are included in every analysis and these have to be correct before any result is declared and reported. Stages of the DNA analysis are also conducted in different buildings at our premises for added analytical security.

SureScreen Scientifics Ltd is ISO9001 accredited and participates in Natural England's proficiency testing scheme for GCN eDNA testing.

Interpretation of Results

Sample Integrity Check:

When samples are received in the laboratory, they are inspected for any tube leakage, suitability of sample (not too much mud or weed etc.) and absence of any factors that could potentially lead to inconclusive results. Any samples which fail this test are rejected and eliminated before analysis.

Degradation Check:

Pass/Fail. Analysis of the spiked DNA marker to see if there has been degradation of the kit or sample between the date it was made to the date of analysis. Degradation of the spiked DNA marker may lead indicate a risk of false negative results.

Inhibition Check:

Pass/Fail. The presence of inhibitors within a sample is assessed using a DNA marker. If inhibition is detected, samples are purified and re-analyzed. Inhibitors cannot always be removed, if the inhibition check fails, the sample should be re-collected.

Result:

Presence of GCN eDNA (Positive/Negative/Inconclusive)

Positive: GCN DNA was identified within the sample, indicative of GCN presence within the sampling location at the time the sample was taken or within the recent past at the sampling location.

Positive Replicates: Number of positive qPCR replicates out of a series of 12. If one or more of these are found to be positive the pond is declared positive for GCN presence. It may be assumed that small fractions of positive analyses suggest low level presence, but this cannot currently be used for population studies. In accordance with the WC1067 Natural England protocol, even a score of 1/12 is declared positive. 0/12 indicates negative GCN presence.

Negative: GCN eDNA was not detected or is below the threshold detection level and the test result should be considered as evidence of GCN absence, however, does not exclude the potential for GCN presence below the limit of detection.

Inconclusive: Controls indicate inhibition or degradation of the sample, resulting in the inability to provide conclusive evidence for GCN presence or absence.



Appendix E Legislation

The following provides a summary of the legislation and policy relevant to the protection and conservation of habitats, flora and fauna. This section does not constitute legal advice.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

Although the UK is no longer bound by EU law, the legal protections established under the Habitats and Birds Directives continue to be enforced in the UK under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. In addition to strengthened powers of enforcement, the important parts of the legislation are:

Designation of Habitat Sites & Appropriate Assessment: The legislation ensures the preservation of important habitats and species through the designation of Habitat Sites (SPA or SAC¹⁷) as part of the National Site Network. Where any plan or project is likely to impact the features for which a Habitat Site is designated, then the competent authority must undertake an Appropriate Assessment to ensure that the integrity of the Habitat Site is not affected.

Species Protection: European Protected Species (EPS) are those listed on Schedule 2 of the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Regulation 43 of those Regulations makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill an EPS;
- Deliberately disturb an EPS
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an EPS; or
- Possess, control or transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale, any live or dead EPS or part of an EPS or anything derived from an EPS or any part of an EPS.

Under the Regulations, disturbance may be taken to include any activity that is likely to:

- Impair their ability:
 - i. To survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
 - ii. In the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 consolidates and strengthens earlier laws related to wildlife conservation, the protection of specific species, and the management of designated areas.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest: The Act allows for the designation and protection of SSSIs, which are areas of land recognized for their ecological or geological importance. Landowners must follow certain regulations to avoid damaging these sites.

¹⁷ Ramsar sites that are designated under the *Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat 1971* (the Ramsar Convention), in the UK, are treated by legislation and policy as having the same level of protection as Habitat Sites, particularly in terms of appropriate assessment.

Protection of Species. Under Section 9 of the Act (section 9(4)(b), 9(4)(c) and 9(5) only), it is an offence (in relation to EPS) to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place of shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used by a bat for shelter or protection;
- Sell, offer or expose for sale, or have in their possession or transports for the purpose of sale, any live or dead bat or any part of, or anything derived from a bat (or be responsible for adverts suggesting the intention to do this).

There is a defence under section 10(3)(c) of the Act, which may apply in some limited circumstances. This defence states that any act made unlawful by section 9 is not an offence if it can be shown that *‘the act was the incidental result of a lawful operation and could not reasonably have been avoided’*.

Breeding Sites and Resting Places

Currently guidance on the interpretation of the Habitat Regulations continues to be provided by the European Commission’s (2021) *Guidance on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive* (the ‘2021 Guidance’¹⁸).

In relation to the legal protection of breeding site or resting place the 2021 Guidance states:

‘The protection applies all year round if these sites are used on a regular basis ... [thus] it follows from Article 12(1)(d) that such breeding sites and resting places also need to be protected when they are used only occasionally or are even abandoned but where there is a reasonably high probability that the species concerned will return to these sites and places. If, for example, a certain cave is used every year by a number of bats for hibernation (because the species has the habit of returning to the same winter roost every year), the functionality of this cave as a hibernating site should be protected in summer as well so that the bats can reuse it in winter.’

Species Protection & Licensing

The Habitat & Species Regulations introduces also a system for obtaining licenses to carry out certain activities that could potentially harm protected species or habitats. Licences may be granted by the appropriate Statutory Nature Conservation Body, i.e. Natural Resources Wales in Wales. Licences may only be granted only after the Statutory Nature Conservation Body is satisfied that

- The proposal are necessary ‘to preserve public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment’
- There are no satisfactory alternatives

¹⁸ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/bbc7ace0-27e2-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

- The proposals will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the Favourable Conservation Status the species concerned.

