

Compliance Assessment Report CAR_NRW0043649

Licence being assessed: WA/067/0005/021.
For: Nant Ffridisel, held by North Wales Hydro Power Limited.
At: Nant Ffridisel, Corwen, Denbighshire, LL21 9EL.

Type of assessment: Site Inspection, Reason: Routine.
On 08/02/2024, between 13:00 and 14:00.
Parts of licence assessed: 9 Further Conditions

NRW Lead Officer: Philip Barrett, accompanied by Julian Whitehead.
Report sent to: Richard Rees, Primary contact for licence (North Wales Hydro Power Ltd), on 15/03/2024.

1. Summary of our findings (full details in section 4)

Part of licenced activity assessed (criteria)	Assessment result	Licence condition
WR-E1 - Fish and Eel passage - Infrastructure specified by licence	Assessed (A)	
WR-C1 - Surface/groundwater level and protected flow - Minimum hands-off flow/level requirements	C3 Minor	9.2 (i) The Licence Holder shall construct, operate and maintain the hydropower scheme in accordance with the specifications and drawings

Result types are explained in more detail in the 'Important Information' section below.

2. What action is required?

Criteria	Action needed	Complete by
WR-C1	Clear gravel built up above the structure to ensure the correct flow split. To ensure this is correct, the water level above must not be altered along the impoundment structure so that the weir levels ensure the correct flows through the notches.	26/04/2024

Action criteria codes are listed in the 'Important Information' section below.

3. What will happen next?

Any non-compliance we have identified and recorded on this form is an offence. It can result in criminal prosecution or civil sanctions being imposed depending on the circumstances of the offence.

You are non-compliant with your licence.

At this time, we are issuing you with a warning for the non-compliance recorded above. Warnings may influence future enforcement response for continued or further non-compliance.

This statement does not stop us from taking additional enforcement action if further relevant information comes to light or offences continue.

4. Details of our assessment

A visit was carried out on the 8th February 2024, to the abstraction that takes place on the Nant Ffriddisel for the purpose of power production under licence WA/067/0005/021.

This found that gravel was accumulating behind the impoundment structure. The level of the gravel appeared to be built up higher behind the hands off flow and residual flow notches. Due to the amount of rainfall around the time of the visit, the flow in the watercourse was seen to be going through all slots on the impoundment structure.

Conditions 9.5 of the licence stipulates:

- *(i) No abstraction of water shall take place unless the rate of flow in the Nant Ffriddisel immediately downstream of the authorised point of abstraction, marked as 'Point A' as specified in condition 2.1, is equal to or greater than 10 litres per second and the abstraction shall not cause the flow immediately downstream of the said abstraction point to fall below that rate.*
- *(ii) The quantity of water abstracted shall not exceed 60% of the available flow in the Nant Ffriddisel in excess of 10 litres per second.*

The flows downstream of the structure appeared to be above the required 10 litres per second for an abstraction to take place. Due to the build up of gravel around the residual flow notch, it is not known if the correct 60% flow split above the 10 litres per second is being achieved.

Condition 9.2 of the licence stipulates:

- (i) The Licence Holder shall construct, operate and maintain the hydropower scheme in accordance with the specifications and drawings*

To ensure the correct flow split is achieved by the notches in the impoundment, the structure must be kept clear of obstructions. This is currently non-compliant with the above condition.

The build up of gravel is also a non-compliance of condition 4.3 of the impoundment licence WA/067/0005/022 and is scored in compliance assessment report CAR_NRW0043651.

Condition 9.7 of the licence stipulates:

- No abstraction shall take place unless the Licence Holder has installed a screen with spacing no greater than 6 millimetres to the outfall pipe to prevent the entrapment,*

entrainment or impingement of fish.

An inspection of the outfall found the correctly sized screen to be in place. This was sitting correctly so that there isn't any gaps between the screen and the headwall, as seen during a previous visit.

There was a good flow seen to be coming from the outfall, showing that an abstraction was taking place at the time of the visit.

If you would like to discuss any of the above further, or foresee any reason preventing the required action being carried out, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Phil Barrett
0300 065 3670

If you have any queries about this report, or to discuss completion of any actions, please contact the NRW Officer named above.

Important information

Legal status of this report

Your licence is issued to you under the Water Resources Act 1991 as amended by the Water Act 2003. You have a responsibility to comply with the conditions of your licence and prevent pollution/harm to the environment. You must also ensure that you comply with any other relevant legislation that may apply to your site's operations.

This report explains the findings of our assessment and any action you are required to take. We categorise non-compliance using our guidance for assessing non-compliance at regulated sites.

When we find potential non-compliance/s we will normally give you advice on how to maintain compliance.

To correct non-compliance, we may:

- require you to take specific actions
- issue a notice.

Any advice and guidance we give will be without prejudice to any other enforcement response that we consider may be required.

Assessment results and non-compliance categories (used in section 1):

Assessment result	Description
Assessed (A)	Assessed or assessed in part, no evidence of non-compliance found
Action only (X)	Action only relating to the activity assessment
Ongoing (O)	Ongoing non-compliance, not scored

Non-compliance category	Description
C1 Major	Potential to have a major, serious, persistent and/or extensive impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property
C2 Significant	Potential to have a significant impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property
C3 Minor	Potential to have a minor or minimal impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property
C4 No environmental impact	Non-compliance at a regulated site that cannot foreseeably have any impact on the environment, people and/or property

If your assessment result in Section 1 is suspended, what does this mean?

In line with our guidance, we may suspend non-compliance for up to six months to allow time for remedial action to be taken. These will be re-instated if the action is not completed.

Full list of Water resource action criteria (used in section 1 and 2):**WR A: Abstraction specified by Licence**

- WR-A1 Source of supply
- WR-A2 Points of abstraction
- WR-A3 Means of abstraction
- WR-A4 Purposes of abstraction
- WR-A5 Period of abstraction
- WR-A6 Quantities
- WR-A7 Land
- WR-A8 Other specified on licence

WR B: Abstraction measurement and records

- WR-B1 Means of measurement
- WR-B2 Recording
- WR-B3 Reporting

WR C: Surface / Groundwater level and protected flow

- WR-C1 Minimum hands-off flow/level requirements
- WR-C2 Flow/level measurement devices
- WR-C3 Recording
- WR-C4 Reporting

WR D: Environmental monitoring and information

- WR-D1 Recording
- WR-D2 Reporting
- WR-D3 Notifications

WR E: Fish and eel passage

- WR-E1 Infrastructure specified by licence
- WR-E2 Maintenance and records

WR F: Discharge

- WR-F1 Point of discharge
- WR-F2 Infrastructure
- WR-F3 Measurement
- WR-F4 Recording
- WR-F5 Reporting

WR G: Impoundment specified by licence

- WR-G1 Inland water to be impounded
- WR-G2 Manner and extent of impoundment
- WR-G3 Point(s) of impoundment
- WR-G4 Construction and removal requirements
- WR-G5 Other specified on licence

WR H: Borehole infrastructure

- WR-H1 Infrastructure and accessibility
- WR-H2 Maintenance and calibration

Enforcement response

Any licence condition non-compliance is an offence and we may take legal action against you. Action we take can include prosecution or civil sanctions. See our Enforcement and Sanctions Guidance for further information.

Data protection notice

You should make sure that anyone named in this report knows that the information it contains will be processed by Natural Resources Wales to fulfil its regulatory and monitoring functions and to maintain the relevant public register(s).

We may also use and/or disclose the report in connection with:

- offering or providing you with our literature or services relating to environmental matters
- consulting with the public, public bodies and other organisations (e.g. Health and Safety Executive, local authorities) on environmental issues
- carrying out statistical analysis, research and development on environmental issues
- providing public register information to enquirers
- investigating possible breaches of environmental law
- assessing customer service satisfaction and improving our service
- Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations requests.

We may also pass it on to our agents or representatives to do these things on our behalf.

Disclosure of information – this report will be available to view on-line

If you think this report contains commercially confidential information that should not be placed on our public register, you must contact your local Natural Resources Wales office within **fifteen working days** of receiving this report, using the contact details in the accompanying email or letter. You must give a full explanation of why it should not be added to our public register, including specifying which information is commercially confidential. We will assess your request and respond to you within 20 working days to let you know if we agree to your request.

What do I do if I disagree with the report or have a complaint?

If you disagree with this compliance assessment report, you should contact the lead officer without delay to discuss your concerns.

If you are unable to resolve the issue with the lead officer or their line manager you should contact our Customer Contact team on 0300 065 3000 (Mon to Fri 08:00 – 18:00), or email enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk for details of how to raise your dispute further through our Complaints and Commendations procedure.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales by phone on 0300 7900203 or by email at ask@ombudsman.wales

Welsh Language Standards

We are committed to establishing Natural Resources Wales as a naturally bilingual organisation. We will provide compliance reports in your preferred language.