
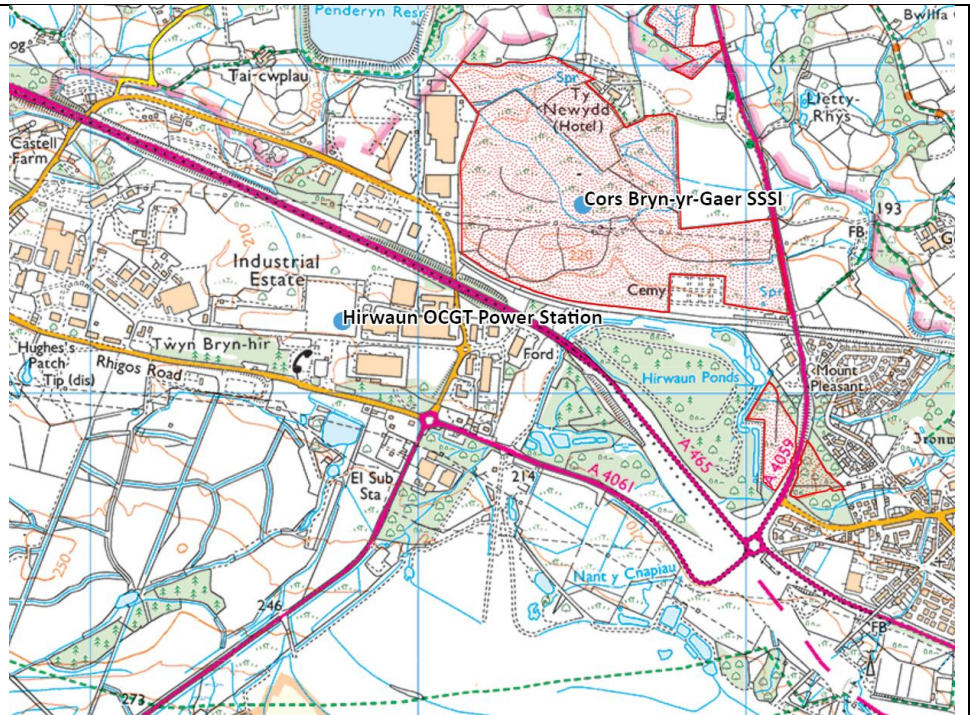


Annex (iv) – SSSI Assessment Form

<p>SSSI Assessment for permit/licence and deployment applications</p>	
<p>To be completed by Permitting Officers for any applications for a permission which Natural Resources Wales has considered under S28I duty to notify SNCB and take their advice into account. This applies to all proposed permissions within a SSSI, and to operations outside the SSSI boundary which are likely to damage its special features.</p> <p>NRW as a Section 28G authority has, when exercising its functions, a general duty to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the flora, fauna or geological or physiological features by reason of which the site is of special interest'</p> <p>Part 1 – SSSI Assessment Part 2 – Formal notification to SNCB (to be completed if part 1 assessment concludes likely damage, not likely to damage because of conditions or you cannot conclude no likely damage) Part 3 – Decision</p>	

Part 1 – SSSI Assessment

1. Permitting officer/team	Victoria Seller, Installations and RSR Permitting Team
2. Permit application reference and site name	PAN-026981 Hirwaun OCGT Power Station
3. a. SSSI name(s) b. location c. NRW Operational Area/Environment Team	a. Cors Bryn-yr-Gaer SSSI (33WBN) b. Hirwaun, Rhondda Cynon Taf



c. South Central, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil Environment Tea

4. Brief description of proposal

Drax Power Limited are applying to vary their permit for Hirwaun OCGT Power Station (ref. [EPR/BB3297CG](#)) to add 2no. 4.144MWth input natural gas-fired water heaters. The heaters will be mutually exclusive and will not operate at the same time.

The rated thermal input of the heaters means that they are classed as Medium Combustion Plant and are therefore subject to the requirements set out in Schedule 25A of EPR 2016.

There is one European site within the relevant screening distance (1km) of the emission points for the heaters. This is the Cors Bryn-yr-Gaer SSSI (3WBN), which is located approximately 400m North East of the installation.

5. What aspects of the proposed permission are likely to damage the SSSI features of special interest?

The following activities are likely to cause damage:

The proposed heaters will burn natural gas and will emit oxides of nitrogen into the atmosphere. The pollutants of concern that may impact this SAC are as follows:

- Airborne NO_x concentration;
- Nutrient nitrogen deposition; and
- Acid deposition.

The following SSSI(s) features and potential impacts have been considered to assess the likelihood of damage:

The Cors Bryn-yr-Gaer SSSI Management Statement (version 1, 13th March 2002) lists the following features of special scientific interest for this site:

- Lowland bog;
- Wet grassland and associated habitats;
- Dry grassland and associated habitats; and
- Marsh fritillary butterfly

The potential impact pathway from the emission points to the features of the SAC is therefore:

- Changes to air quality – Oxides of Nitrogen (NOX) (mixture of NO and NO₂).

The applicant has used the SCAIL screening tool to assess the impact of emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) on this site. The tool calculates process contributions (PC) for:

- NO_x concentration;
- Nutrient nitrogen deposition; and
- Acid deposition

at the point of the site that is geographically closest to the emission points. It compares the generated PCs with the critical level for NO_x and the most conservative (i.e. lowest) relevant critical loads for nutrient nitrogen and acid deposition listed for this site on [APIS](#). The PCs generated by SCAIL are all less than 1% of the lowest environmental assessment levels for these pollutants. The PCs therefore screen out as 'insignificant' and we have therefore concluded that there is no likely significant effect on the Cors Bryn-yr-Gaer SSSI.

We therefore conclude that, in relation to the impact pathway specified above, emissions from the heaters:

- SCREEN OUT - there is no potential impact from the plan or project on the sites features and the proposed changes are not likely to damage the features of the SSSI.

6. Summary of any informal advice received from internal experts (if required and including pre-app advice)	N/A.
7. Recommendation	The proposed permission is not likely to damage any of the flora, fauna or geological or physiological features which are of special interest.
8. Signature and date assessment made	Victoria Seller, 9 th May 2025
9. Officer's name and job title	Victoria Seller, Senior Industry Permitting Officer.

