

Record of a Habitats Regulations Assessment of a project or spatially-specific plan

OGN 200 Form 1A (with free-text boxes for likely significant effect screening and appropriate assessment)

Document owner: Head of Business for Natural Resource Management

Version History:

Document Version	Date Published	Summary of Changes
2.0	21/10/2024	Following 2023/24 review of HRA OGNs

Next review date: October 2025

Record of a Habitats Regulations Assessment.....	3
1. Plan or Project Details	3
2. Determining the need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment.....	5
3. Considering the likelihood of a significant effect (LSE)	5
6. Conclusion.....	9
7. Consultation with the ANCB and how sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this HRA report (as applicable) take into account that advice ...	10

OGN 200 Form 1A

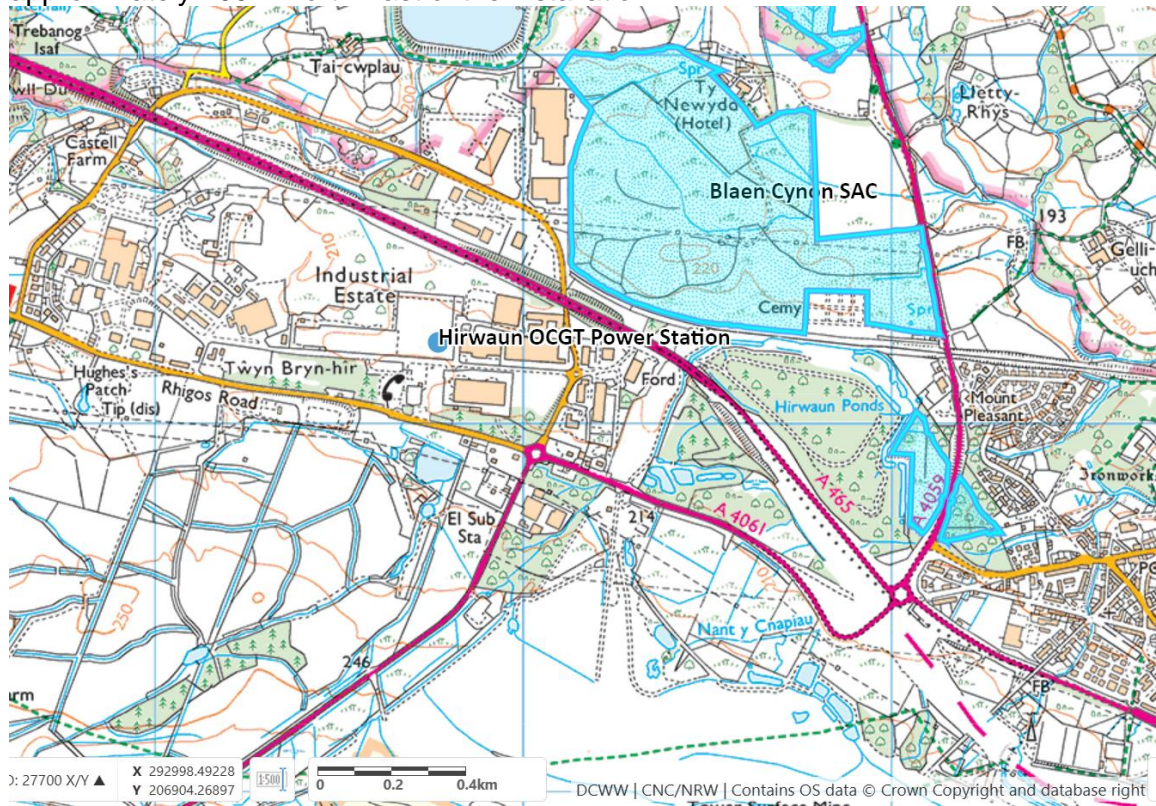
Record of a Habitats Regulations Assessment

Plan or project name, brief description or application reference number	PAN-028941 – Hirwaun OCGT Power Station – variation to add 2no. MCPs.
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HRA iteration/version	1.0
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1. Plan or Project Details

Information about the plan or project		
1	Date application received	Application duly made 17/04/2025
2	Applicant details	Drax Power Limited
3	NRW team responsible for carrying out, or requiring to be carried out, the plan or project, and name of lead officer	N/A
4	Activity/ies proposed	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

		<p>There is one European site within the relevant screening distance (1km) of the emission points for the heaters. This is the Blaen Cynon SAC (UK0030092), which is located approximately 400m North East of the installation.</p> 
5	Relevant legislation or statutory basis	<p>Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 Industrial Emissions Directive 2010 (IED) Medium Combustion Plant Directive (MCP)</p>
6	Location	<p>NRG: 293776, 206217. Site address: Main Avenue, Hirwaun Industrial Estate, Hirwaun, Aberdare, Rhondda Cynon Taf CF44 9UP</p>
7	Plan or project documents, including any application documents	<p>Internal: see DMS folder – PAN-026981, External: see Public Register – PAN-026981.</p>

8	Environmental Statement (ES)	N/A.
9	Pre-application correspondence	N/A.
10	NRW team responsible for preparing this HRA report, and lead officer	Victoria Seller, Senior Permitting Officer Installations and RSR Permitting, Permitting Service.
11	Team or person responsible for approving the plan or project (competent authority role)	As row 10.

2. Determining the need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.1 Is there any possibility that the plan or project could negatively affect any European sites?	Yes.
2.2 Is the whole of the plan or project directly and only connected with or necessary to the management of one or more European sites, for the purposes of conserving the habitats or species for which the European site(s) is/are designated?	No.
2.3 Is there a possibility that the plan or project could affect any other feature of the European site(s) concerned, or of another European site, in a way that would undermine that feature's conservation objectives?	N/A.

3. Considering the likelihood of a significant effect (LSE)

3.1 Renewal of a project authorisation on the same or more restrictive terms as an extant authorisation

Is this a renewal of an extant authorisation which complies with NRW approved criteria for ruling out significant effects of renewals (see Part 2 of	No.
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OGN200) without conducting a project-specific LSE test?	
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3.2 Likelihood of significant effects (LSE) test

3.2.1 Which European sites might be affected by the plan or project?

(a)	Based on the plan or project specification, or information provided in the application, it is considered that these European sites have features which could be negatively affected by the plan or project	Blaen Cynon SAC (UK0030092).
(b)	The potential for the plan or project to negatively affect these European sites was also initially considered, but can be ruled out without further consideration	N/A.

3.2.2 Screening for likelihood of significant effect

TABLE 3.2.2 Screening assessment
European site name: Blaen Cynon SAC (UK0030092)
<p>The Core Management Plan (version 1, 28th February 2008) lists the following key species and habitats for this site:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marsh fritillary butterfly (key species) 2. Marshy grassland (key habitat) 3. Flush and spring (key habitat) <p>Conservation Objectives for the site are listed in the Core Management Plan linked above.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airborne NO_x concentration; • Nutrient nitrogen deposition; and • Acid deposition. <p>The potential impact pathway from the emission points to the features of the SAC is therefore:</p>

- 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 Blaen Cynon SAC.

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 a significant effect can be ruled out without further assessment.

TABLE 3.2.3 Screening decision of the plan or project 'alone'

(a) If the screening conclusion for <u>all</u> features for all sites in Table 3.2.2 is 'SCREEN OUT'	The plan or project is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site, and no further consideration under the Habitats Regulations is required in order to determine the approval/application.
(b) If the conclusion for <u>any</u> features in Table 3.2.2 is 'SCREEN IN'	The plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on one or more European sites and therefore an appropriate assessment is required.
(c) If there are <u>no</u> features in Table 3.2.2 that are 'SCREEN IN' and <u>any</u> features that are 'IN COMB'	The plan or project is not likely to have a significant effect on any European sites when considered alone, but the possibility of significant effects in combination with other plans and projects needs to be considered.

6. Conclusion

HRA is not required because there is no conceivable impact on any European sites. (As documented in section 2.1)	
HRA is not required because the whole of the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of one or more European sites, for the purposes of conserving the habitats or species for which the site(s) is/are designated, <u>and</u> the plan or project is not likely to have a significant effect on any other European sites. (As documented in section 2.2 and 2.3)	
This project is a renewal of a current permission which complies with NRW agreed criteria for ruling out likely significant effects of a renewal without conducting a project-specific LSE test. Therefore, it is considered not likely to have a significant effect on any European sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. (As documented in section 3.1 of this form)	
The plan or project has been screened for likelihood of significant effects and is considered not likely to have a significant effect on any European sites. (As documented in section 3.2 of this form, and section 5 if applicable)	X
In light of the conclusions of an appropriate assessment it has been established that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of any European sites, taking into account any conditions or restrictions as applicable, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. (As documented in section 4 of this form, and section 5 if applicable)	
In light of the conclusions of the appropriate assessment, it has <u>not</u> been ascertained that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of any European sites, as documented in section 4 of this form, and section 5 if applicable. Approval for the plan or project <u>cannot</u> be given unless either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the plan or project specification, and/or the terms under which it might be approved, are modified so as to remove the risk of adverse effects, and a revised HRA is prepared, or the plan or project (not being an SSSI consent*) satisfies the requirements for a derogation and a Derogation Notice is prepared and submitted for consideration by the appropriate authority, normally Welsh Ministers (*SSSI consents cannot be given as derogations)	
Signed: Victoria Seller Name: Victoria Seller Position: Senior Industry Permitting Officer Date: 09/05/2025	
Was this HRA conclusion an escalated decision? YES or NO	No

7. Consultation with the ANCB and how sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this HRA report (as applicable) take into account that advice

Relevant section of the HRA report	Correspondence and/or meetings with the ANCB	Description of how the comments from the ANCB have been taken into account
2	N/A	
3	N/A	