

Compliance Assessment Report CAR_NRW0048445

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 19/05/2025, between 12:30 and 13:00.
Parts of licence assessed: 9 Further Conditions

NRW Lead Officer: Rebecca Redmond, accompanied by Philip Barrett.
Report sent to: Licence Holder, Licence Holder, on 23/06/2025.

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

Part of licenced activity assessed (criteria)	Assessment result	Licence condition
WR-C1 - Water Abstraction - 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 the gravel that has 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 and weir levels must achieve the correct flows through the notches.	31/07/2025

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 site visit was carried out on the 19th May 2025, to the abstraction that takes place on the Nant Ffriddisel under licence WA/067/0005/021. There was no abstraction taking place at the time of visit due to the prolonged dry weather and low flows. The flow appeared to be below the level of Q95 as seen on the photo below.



It was noted that a large amount of gravel was building up behind the structure which may alter the flows if the river was to have a substantial flow in it. A phone call was made following this inspection to make the licence holder aware of the issues. The issue with gravel accumulation has also been highlighted previously in a compliance assessment report dated February 2024 - [Compliance Assessment Report CAR_NRW0043649](#).

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. If the river was flowing as normal and not affected by dry weather, it would score as a category 3 due to the position of the gravel prioritising the hands of flow and fish pass. Please be aware if this alters the hands of flow being met, it has potential to deplete the stretch below the structure which is non-compliant with the above condition and would therefore score higher.

Emails were exchanged between my colleague and the licence holder to explain the gravel build up and the actions needed to rectify it. Please see below:

Here's the picture of the gravel build up from the visit that took place last week. The main flow is prioritising the Hands-off flow notch, but there is a low flow going towards the abstraction screen. The system wasn't abstracting at the time as the low flow was seen to continue below the screen. The picture below is the only 1 from last week, all other pictures are from previous visits and are used for referencing the area of gravel removal and placement.



The agreed works is essentially split into 2 separate times of the year. The first of these

being during the closed season for in river works (17th October – 15th May). At this time of year, it is agreed that a small section of gravel can be cleared above the structure to a width of 0.5m and depth of 0.3m (rough area shown below). This clearance would preferably take place by hand to reduce the risk of harm being caused to the environment.



For work outside of the closed season (16th May – 16th October), it was agreed that a larger removal of gravel could take place (area shown below). The gravel behind the structure could be removed to a depth of 0.5m up to the boulders that are in place. From here, the gravel removal would need to be tapered from the boulders up to the top of the red boxed area.



The gravel should be placed immediately downstream, along the bank and up to the point where gravel was placed in the gap in the bank last year.



The general principles for carrying out gravel movement works are:

- *Sediment should not be removed nor reintroduced to the river during periods of high flow*
- *Should the water become significantly discoloured at any time the operation should stop and only recommence once the discolouration has cleared*
- *Machinery should operate from the bank where possible but may enter the watercourse in the area above the impounding structure.*
- *Excessive tracking in the watercourse should be avoided at all time*
- *Machinery should be fitted with suitable hydraulic oils in the event of a spill*
- *Machinery should be refuelled at least 10m from the watercourse*
- *Machinery should be washed down before and after entering the watercourse*
- *A sediment and oil spill kit should be on hand during the operation*

*Should any oils or excessive sediment pollution occur during the operation, NRW should be notified immediately on **03000 65 3000**.*

The guidance for pollution prevention 5: Works and maintenance in or near water is a useful document that can be used to decide on a method for carrying out the works while protecting the environment.

[GPP 5: Works and maintenance in or near water | NetRegs | Environmental guidance for your business in Northern Ireland & Scotland](#)

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.

Rebecca Redmond
03000 653249

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.