

Determination report

Licence number: WA-065-0016-017 & WA-065-0016-018

Application reference number: PAN-031400 & PAN-031401

Site name: Afon Goch HEP, Llanberis, Gwynedd

Report of an application for technical variations to full abstraction licence number WA-065-0016-017 and impoundment licence number WA-065-0016-018

Purpose of this document

This determination report:

- explains how the application has been determined
- provides a record of the decision-making process
- shows how all relevant factors have been taken into account
- justifies any further conditions in the licence other than those applied as standard.

Unless the determination report specifies otherwise we have accepted the applicant's proposals.

NRW has decided to grant the variations to the licences.

We consider that in reaching this decision, we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements and that the licence will ensure that the appropriate level of environmental protection is provided.

A glossary of acronyms used can be found at the end of this document in [Annex 2](#).

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1. Summary of the proposal

Applications to vary existing abstraction licence and impoundment licences which authorise abstraction for a hydropower scheme on the Afon Goch, Llanberis, Gwynedd at SH 56795 59401. The construction of the hydropower scheme differs to the drawings included in the existing licences, which were originally issued in 2015. The applications are necessary to update the licence drawings so that the scheme is compliant. There are no proposed changes to the licensed abstraction percentage take of 70%, the protective HoF measure of 7 l/s or the licensed abstraction quantities. The structure has been built in a mirror image to that licensed, the proposed new drawings reflect this design alteration. Additionally, the as-built weir dimensions are being altered so that they reflect the licensed dimensions to ensure the correct percentage take and residual flow/HoF notch are secured.

2. Application details

Administrative details	
Applicant name and address	Ynni Padarn Peris Cyf. 8 Ty Du Road, Llanberis, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 4HD
Existing licence number	WA-065-0016-017 abstraction WA-065-0016-018 impoundment
New licence number	WA-065-0016-017/V001 abstraction WA-065-0016-018/V001 impoundment
Hydrometric sub-catchment	006: Gwyrfai/Seiont

Any differences between what was applied for within the initial application and what was subsequently agreed as the application details have been communicated to the applicant.

3. Validation of the application and further information received during determination

The application was validated on 02/02/2026. This means we considered it was submitted on the correct form; the correct application fee has been received and that the application contained sufficient information for us to begin our determination, but not that it necessarily contained all the information we would need to complete that determination; see below.

Further information was required to enable final determination of the application. Copies of these requests and the responses when received were placed on our public register. The

applicant confirmed in an email received on 03/06/2026 that although the drawings indicate that proposed changes had been carried out, the changes are yet to be made and are subject to NRW decision of the applications.

The applicant demonstrated that they are entitled to apply for the abstraction licence, as they have, or will have when the licence takes effect, a right of access to the abstraction point(s).

4. Advertising

In exercise of its discretion under the Water Resources (Abstraction and Impounding) Regulations 2006 (Regulation 7(4)), Natural Resources Wales dispensed with the advertising requirements in relation to this proposal. This decision is documented on a dispensation notice, which can be found on the public register.

Notice of this proposal has not been published; consequently no external representations from the general public can be made or considered. No statutory bodies have been notified because the proposal is not subject to advertising.

5. Justification of requirements and water efficiency

The applicant does not propose to alter the licensed abstraction regime which authorises up to 5,496 cubic metres per day, and 2,005,689.6 cubic metres per year water to be abstracted, at an instantaneous rate not exceeding 63.6 litres per second. These quantities were justified when the scheme was original license on 25/09/2015. The scheme abstraction licence was renewed on 1 April 2025 where justification of need and water efficiency were reviewed and accepted.

Water efficiency

Natural Resources Wales have reviewed the measures provided by the applicant and consider that they are satisfactory to ensure that water is used efficiently.

6. Consultation

Natural Resources Wales carried out consultation on the application in accordance with its legal obligations, our statutory Public Participation Statement (PPS) and Principles of Working Together agreements.

Consultation with other bodies	
National Park Authority	02/04/2026 – no response received

A summary of consultation comments and our response can be found in 7.11.

7. Technical assessment of the proposal

This proposal has been screened for potential impacts to the water environment, which includes designated sites, protected species, protected rights and lawful users.

7.1 Resource assessment and Abstraction Licensing Strategy (ALS)

The abstraction / impoundment is within NRW's Llyn and Eryri Abstraction Licensing Strategy (ALS) area. It should be noted that the abstraction is a non-consumptive and the strategy notes that we can consider licensing new non-consumptive abstractions where we would not license other water uses. However, the application is for a variation which is not affecting licence quantities and therefore the ALS is not considered integral to determination of the applications.

7.2 Hydrology and/or hydrogeology

The abstraction and impoundment are located on the Afon Goch watercourse/waterbody, located in the Gwyrfai/Seiont catchment. The Afon Goch is a small watercourse draining into Llyn Padarn, approximately 3 km downstream.

7.3 Impact on groundwater

Not applicable as this application is for a surface water abstraction and impoundment with no identified impacts to groundwater.

7.4 Impact on surface water flows

The proposal is a variation to switch the intake and residual weirs around, effectively a mirror image of the currently licensed drawings, and to approve design alterations to ensure the as-built weir reflects the originally licensed weir dimensions. There will be no changes to flows or hands off flow to that already licensed and previously assessed. The changes will ensure that the abstraction percentage and residual flow/HoF are secured.

7.5 Impact on ecology

Note that impacts to ecological features within designated sites can be found in section 7.8. The changes proposed will ensure that the protective residual flow/HoF are secured, therefore ensuring flow variation and low flow protection in the watercourse. No negative impacts from the proposal are anticipated.

7.5.1 Impacts on fisheries

By securing the correct percentage abstraction and residual flow/HoF there are no anticipated impacts to fisheries as a result of this proposal. Downstream fish passage has already been incorporated with the inclusion of a plunge pool.

7.5.2 Impacts on other water dependent species and habitats

There are no anticipated impacts to water dependent species or habitats as a result of this proposal.

7.6 Impact on water quality

There are no anticipated impacts to water quality as a result of this proposal.

7.7. Protected rights and lawful users

Lawful uses of water have been considered and appropriate measures to safeguard them have been taken. No protected rights have been identified as being at risk of derogation as a result of this proposal.

7.8 Conservation impacts – Designated sites

7.8.1 The National Site Network and Ramsars:

The following National Site Network sites and Ramsars have been identified as at risk as a result of this proposal:

- Menai Strait and Conwy Bay SAC

A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) was completed to assess the potential to affect any of the sites identified. The project was screened for likelihood of significant effects and, is considered not likely to have a significant effect on any National Site Network site (as documented in section 3.2 of OGN 200 Form 1, or section 5 if applicable). The Habitats Regulations Assessment is available to view on the public register.

7.8.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The following sites were identified within the potential impact pathway of the proposal:

- Llyn Padarn SSSI
- Afon Seiont SSSI

Natural Resources Wales is of the opinion that the proposal is not likely to have any impact on these sites for the following reasons: the scheme is entirely non-consumptive, returning 100% of abstracted quantities to the Afon Goch, which is approximately 763 metres upstream from the Llyn Padarn SSSI, and over 5km upstream of the Afon Seiont SSSI. The Afon Goch has a natural barrier below the discharge point preventing the upstream migration of migratory salmonids; whilst the Afon Seiont is designated for its geological features. As such there is no mechanism of impact upon the designated features of these sites.

7.8.3 Other Designations

No designations have been identified within the depleted reach. Natural Resources Wales is of the opinion that the proposal is not likely to have any impact on other designations.

7.9 Water Framework Directive Regulations 2017

A Water Framework Directive Regulations Compliance Assessment has been completed and NRW consider that the proposal has no or low risk of causing deterioration in overall waterbody status or quality elements. NRW consider that the proposal will not prevent any water body or WFD Protected Area from reaching its objectives. The assessment is available on the public register to view.

7.10. Other considerations

Consideration	
Flooding	No concerns have been raised regarding flood risk as a result of this proposal.
Archaeology	No concerns have been raised regarding impacts to the historic environment and archaeology as a result of this proposal.
Recreation and amenity	NRW consider that this proposal will have minimal impact to recreation and amenity.
Subsidence and desiccation	NRW do not have concerns regarding the risk of subsidence and desiccation as a result of this proposal.

7.11 Representations and external consultation/notification responses

The applications were not advertised, however external consultation was made to the National Park. No comments were received from Eryri National Park.

7.12 Other consents

The applicant may be required to apply for other consents in addition to this application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary consents are obtained before commencing this proposal.

8. Cost benefits and environmental mitigation or gain

In accordance with the Environment Act 1995, Section 39, NRW have had regard to costs and benefits in exercising its powers in the assessment below.

Assessment of probable benefits and costs of proposed option to the :	
Water Resources/ The Environment	There is low risk of environmental damage occurring as a result of this proposal. The inclusion of flow conditions will ensure there is enough water for the environment. The proposal accords with local water resources policy and is sustainable.
The applicant	The applicant will benefit from the availability of water for their operation. There will be a cost saving from not having to use mains water for this purpose. The applicant will incur the costs of installing and maintaining the method of abstraction and of measuring the volumes of water they abstract. The applicant will have to pay the application fee.
Natural Resources Wales	Natural Resources Wales will incur the cost of determining the application and enforcing the licence. These costs will be partly recovered through the application charge and annual charges, where applicable. In determining the licence in accordance with local and national policy, Natural Resources Wales is fulfilling its duties as a regulator.

The economic and social well being of the rural community.	No adverse effects upon the social and economic well being of local communities in the rural area are perceived as a result of this proposal.
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9. Biodiversity and Sustainable development

The principles of sustainable development and biodiversity are embodied in the conditions attached to the licence.

10. Time limit

A time limit has been included for the abstraction licence in accordance with the CAMS common end date for the catchment and Natural Resources Wales' approved policy. A time limit has not been included in the impoundment licence because the licence applied for is to impound water.

11. Special agreements

There are no special agreements relevant to this proposal.

12. Measurement of water abstracted

The applicant has been advised of the measuring requirements which will comply with the Abstraction Metering Good Practice Manual (R & D Technical Report W84). Flow Measurement Analysis (FMA) will be applied to the abstraction licence in accordance with the Hydropower Guidance. The Licence Holder will be required to determine the quantities of water abstracted by reference to the kilowatt-hours generated, as measured by a kilowatt-hours meter multiplied by a site specific conversion factor determined using the calculation checklist attached to the abstraction licence.

In accordance with current guidance, records of daily electrical output and the corresponding quantity of water abstracted will need to be submitted to the NRW on an annual basis (within 28 days of 31 March in each year) or within 28 days of the NRW requesting the records in

writing. The Licence Holder will also be required to keep all records for at least 6 years and to make them available for inspection during all reasonable hours.

13. Considerations of SMNR – compliance with our General Purpose

We are satisfied that this decision is compatible with our general purpose of pursuing the sustainable management of natural resources in relation to Wales and applying the principles of sustainable management of natural resources.

14. Conclusion and decision

Full and due consideration has been given to any representations made, and due regard has been taken of protected rights and other lawful interests.

The principles of sustainable development are embodied in the conditions attached to the licence.

The conditions incorporated on the licence are considered to be necessary and reasonable in light of the available and presented evidence. The conditions are also considered to be consistent with appropriate standards for enforcement by Natural Resources Wales.

NRW has therefore approved the applications (as modified) and issue of Licence numbers WA/065/0016/017/V001 and WA/065/0016/018/V001 with the conditions applied.

Annex 1 – Administration

Purpose code and loss factor

Licence	Primary Code	Secondary Code	Use	Loss factor
WA/065/0016/017/V001	P	ELC	240	Very Low
WA/065/0016/018/V001	X	ELC	240	Very Low

Finance

The licence is exempt from the payment of annual charges being one of the categories under Paragraph 6.2 of [Natural Resources Wales's water abstraction charges scheme](#).

Annex 2 - Glossary of acronyms used in this document

ALS	Abstraction Licensing Strategy
CAMS	Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
CRoW	Countryside Rights of Way
EFI	Environmental Flow Indicator
FRAP	Flood Risk Activity Permit
GES	Good Ecological Status
GW	Groundwater
HAF	Hydro abstraction factor
HEP	Hydro-electric power
HES	High Ecological Status
HIA	Hydrological Impact Assessment
HoF	Hands-off flow
HoL	Hands-off level
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NRW	Natural Resources Wales
PALS	Permitting and Licensing System
PPS	Public Participation Statement
PWS	Public Water Supply
Q ₃₀	Flow exceeded 50% of the time period considered
Q ₅₀	Flow exceeded 50% of the time period considered
Q ₇₀	Flow exceeded 70% of the time period considered
Q ₉₅	Flow exceeded 95% of the time period considered
RBMP	River Basin Management Plans
ROA	Rights of Access (e
RSA	Restoring Sustainable Abstraction
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SINCs	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Local Wildlife Sites)
SMNR	Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

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Licence number: WA/065/0016/017/V001 & WA/065/0016/018/V001

SPA	Special Protection Area
SPZ	Source Protection Zone
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WAT	Welsh Archaeological Trust
WFD	Water Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)
WFS	Water Feature Survey
WIA	Water Industry Act
WR	Water Resources