

Determination report

Licence number: WA/065/0001/0027

Application reference number: PAN-031614

Site name: Trawsfynydd Power Station

Report of an application for a new full abstraction licence.

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 issue the licence.

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

The proposal is for a new full transfer abstraction licence for dewatering purposes at Trawsfynydd Power Station, Gwynedd. Groundwater ingress is currently occurring to the south of the Safe Store building, causing operational issues at the site. This ingress was not anticipated as part of the original design and the applicant has advised that the groundwater ingress is associated with the external French drain not functioning as originally intended.

It is therefore proposed to abstract groundwater from five boreholes located to the south of the building in order to control groundwater levels and manage the ingress. The five boreholes will be fitted with priming pumps that have a maximum abstraction rate of 2.14 litres per second. The pumps will abstract to a holding tank then transferred via the site's surface water drainage system for treatment before being discharged to Trawsfynydd Lake under environmental permit CG0087701.

It is proposed to abstract the following quantities: 9 cubic metres per hour, 200 cubic metres per day, 70,000 cubic metres per year.

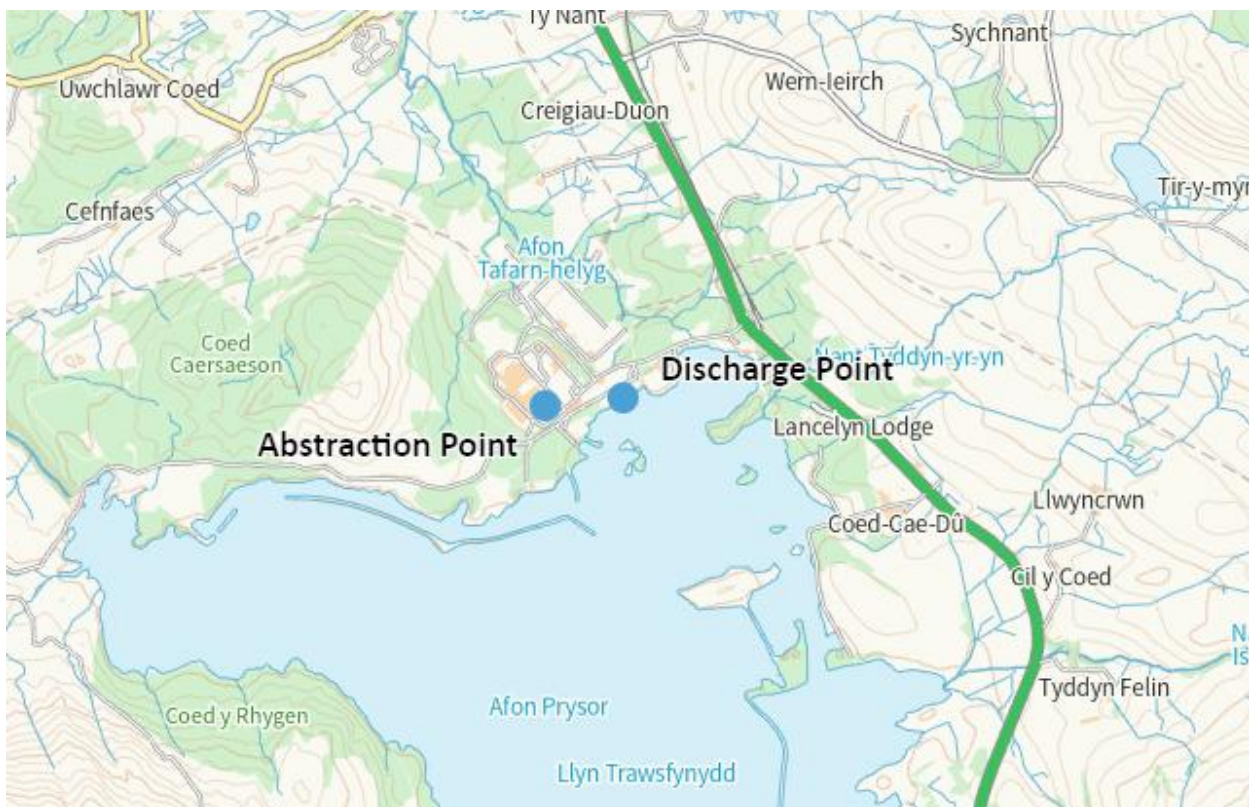


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2. Application details

Administrative details	
Applicant name and address	Nuclear Restoration Services Limited

New licence number	WA/065/0001/0027
Hydrometric sub-catchment	065/0001: Dwyrdd

Departures from application forms	
Aspect of application	New value applied for
Abstraction point National Grid Reference	SH 69095 38079, SH 69101 38085, SH 69107 38090, SH 69112 38096, and SH 69118 38100.
Volumes	9 cubic metres per hour, 200 cubic metres per day, 70,000 cubic metres per year 2.14 litres per second instantaneous
Requested licence end date	31 March 2037
Maximum pump capacity	2.14 litres per second

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

The application was validated on 11/03/2026. 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.

Entitlement to apply

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 points.

4. Advertising

A copy of the application is available on the public register. In accordance with our legal obligations we also advertised the application in a local newspaper and served notice to relevant bodies.

Advertisement details	
Date of advertisement	17/06/2026
Name of local newspaper	Cambrian News
Notice served to	The Statutory Water Undertaker

This notice was also placed on our website directing people to the public register, advising them of how they could view or request copies of the application documents if required and how they can provide comments.

A summary of representations and our response to the representations we received can be found in Section 7.11. We have taken all relevant representations into consideration in reaching our decision.

5. Justification of requirements and water efficiency

The Hydrological Impact Assessment (HIA) provided by the applicant states that groundwater is entering the basement of Reactor Building 1. The applicant has provided information demonstrating the need to manage groundwater ingress to ensure that the building remains free from water accumulation. This is necessary to maintain appropriate safety conditions for workers on site and to reduce the risk of groundwater becoming contaminated through contact with areas within the building.

The applicant proposes to abstract groundwater outside Reactor Building 1 before it enters the building. This approach reduces the potential for groundwater contamination and the associated risks to workers that could arise from managing water after it has entered the building. The groundwater was originally intended to be managed through a French drain, which directed water into the existing drainage system and prevented ingress into the building. However, the applicant has stated that this drainage system is no longer operating as intended.

The proposed maximum abstraction quantities are 9 cubic metres per hour, 200 cubic metres per day and 70,000 cubic metres per year. These volumes are not included on the transfer licence as the abstraction will be limited by the pump capacity of 2.14 litres per second. The results of the test pumping indicate that abstraction is effective in reducing groundwater ingress into Reactor Building 1. The proposed abstraction quantities are based on the assessed groundwater inflow rates and are therefore considered to reflect the quantities required to manage groundwater ingress.

NRW have assessed the applicant's justification of requirements and have deemed them reasonable.

Water efficiency

The proposal includes measures to return all abstracted water to Llyn Trawsfynydd to the east of the abstraction points. The water will be treated before being returned to the lake.

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	
Eryri National Park Authority	17/06/2026
Heneb (the Trust for Welsh Archaeology)	01/05/2026

A summary of consultation comments and our response can be found in 7.11. We have taken all relevant representations into consideration in reaching our decision.

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 is within NRW's Llyn and Eryri Abstraction Licensing Strategy (ALS) area. According to the ALS, there is no surface water available for licensing at this location; the abstraction is from groundwater. The ALS states that for non-consumptive abstraction where *'all the water is returned, the environmental impact is localised and there is no overall change in water availability. Consequently, we may be able to consider licensing new non-consumptive abstractions where we would not license other water uses'*. As this proposal includes the return of all water abstracted to the nearby watercourse, it is considered acceptable to NRW as it aligns with ALS.

7.2 Hydrology and/or hydrogeology

The abstraction is from made ground south of the Safestore building. The proposed boreholes are shallow being less than 7.5 meters deep. There is a chance that there is connectivity with surface waters. The proposal includes the mitigation measure of returning all water abstracted to the nearby waterbody which is immediately south of the site. A condition is added to the licence (6.1) requiring the return of all water abstracted to NGR SH 69383 38127.

7.3 Impact on groundwater

Conclusions from the Hydrogeological Impact Assessment suggest there to be no impact on groundwater, the abstraction dewater a 'pond' of groundwater in made ground immediately adjacent to the south wall of reactor building. The extend of the drawdown of groundwater levels is limited to within the 'pond' and well constrained. There are no sensitive water features at risk and in effect the abstractions intercept the natural flow of the groundwater to site drainage and transfers the intercepted water to a downgradient point in the site drainage to which it would have otherwise flowed. NRW agree with the conclusions of the HIA.

7.4 Impact on surface water flows

There is potential for surface water connectivity with the groundwater. As mitigation the applicant will discharge all abstracted water to the nearby watercourse which runs along the northern boundary of the site. This is considered sufficient to mitigate any potential localised drawdown. A condition is included within the licence to ensure that all water is returned to discharge point the unnamed tributary of the River Alyn at National Grid Reference SH 69383 38127.

7.5 Impact on ecology

There are no anticipated impacts to ecology as a result of this proposal. By returning all abstracted water to the nearby watercourse any drawdown impacts will be mitigated.

Note that impacts to ecological features within designated sites can be found in section 7.8.

7.5.1 Impacts on fisheries

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

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.

Water quality monitoring and subsequent data found within the HIA suggest a consistent 'benign' composition. All water abstracted is transferred to storage tanks, then through

surface drain and treated before discharging to Trawsfynydd Lake. Water quality will be addressed through the licence holder's existing discharge permit.

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:

No National Site Network Sites or Ramsars have been identified as at risk as a result of this proposal. Therefore, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is not required because there is no conceivable impact pathway by virtue of location of the project.

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

Natural Resources Wales is of the opinion that the proposal is not likely to have an impact on any SSSIs, NNRs nor any AONBs as none of these sites was identified in NRW's risk screening exercise.

7.8.3 Other Designations

Eryri National Park

The drawdown impacts of the abstraction are limited to the made ground and as all water is returned at the discharge point no impact is expected to this designated site.

7.9 Water Framework Directive Regulations 2017

The abstraction is within the made ground above the Rhinog Formation GB41002G204600 groundwater body which is hydrologically linked with GB110065053600 Dwyrdd - lower.

According to NRW policy, the proposal has screened out of requiring any further assessment under the WFD Regulations 2017 because the activity is considered low risk with no WFD concerns raised. The proposal includes best practice measures of returning all water abstracted to the local watercourse which runs along the north boundary of the site.

7.10. Other considerations

Consideration	
Flooding	No concerns have been raised regarding flood risk as a result of this proposal.
Archaeology	NRW sent a screening request to Heneb the Trust for Welsh Archaeology to seek advice on potential impacts to the historic environment. 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

Below is a table which summarises responses received together with how they have been addressed in the determination process. For specific statutory bodies and voluntary organisations, we have summarised their specific responses. Where responses were received from individuals we have not included their personal details and have grouped responses into categories. Where we received similar responses from individuals we have grouped those together and shown how the issue raised was addressed.

Representations from statutory & non-statutory bodies	
Name of organisation and summary of representation	NRW response
Heneb: The Trust for Welsh Archaeology – “no archaeological concerns in this case”	None required.

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 proposal accords with local water resources policy and is sustainable.
The applicant	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, and any advertising costs that apply.
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.

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 in accordance with the CAMS common end date for the catchment and Natural Resources Wales' approved policy.

11. Special agreements

There are no special agreements relevant to this proposal.

12. Measurement of water abstracted

As the licence is for a transfer abstraction no means of measurement has been included within the licence which is in accordance with NRW policy

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 application (as modified) and issue of Licence number Licence_Number WA/065/0001/0027 with the conditions applied.

Annex 1 – Administration

Purpose code and loss factor

Primary Code	Secondary Code	Use	Loss factor
I: Loss factor Industrial, Commercial and Public Services	DRG: Drainage operations	660: Dewatering	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](#).

A scale of 1:1,654 has been used for the licence map to allow for clarity of licensed dewatering area and discharge point.

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
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