



Parc Ynni Calon y Gwynt

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Appendix 5B: Access Road Preliminary Ecological Appraisal





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Appendix 5B: Access Road Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

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PARC YNNI CALON Y GWYNT ACCESS ROAD PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL
APPRAISAL 2024

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UPDATED DESK STUDY RESULTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1. WSP UK Limited (hereafter referred to as WSP) was commissioned by Wind2 (the Client) to undertake an updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the Parc Ynni Calon y Gwynt access road, in Powys, mid-Wales (approximate central British National Grid (BNG) reference: SO001983). This is hereafter referred to as the 'Access Road'.
- 1.1.2. Data lifespan advice provided by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management¹ states that field data over 18 months old should be subject to renewed survey by a professional ecologist.
- 1.1.3. This PEA update is annexed by the original PEA carried out in April 2024 (**Annex 5B.1**), and forms part of the supporting documentation for an application to acquire consent to install 11 wind turbines and associated infrastructure, hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'. The site, hereafter referred to as the Combined Site, comprises two areas, referred to as the 'Main Site' and the 'Access Road'.
- 1.1.4. This PEA update supersedes the original PEA carried out in April 2024. It should be noted that, since the original PEA, the following ecological assessments and surveys have been carried out within the Access Road, and the associated reports should be read in conjunction with this PEA update:
- A badger *Meles meles* survey²;
 - Ground level tree assessment surveys, to assess the suitability of trees to support roosting bats³;
 - Riparian mammal presence/likely absence surveys⁴;
 - Dormouse surveys⁵;
 - A report to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment⁶;
 - A Net Benefit for Biodiversity (NBB) report⁷; and
 - An outline Habitat Management Plan (oHMP)⁸.
- 1.1.5. This document provides details of the PEA update for the Access Road only; the Main Site PEA is considered in **Appendix 5A** of the Environmental Statement (ES).

¹ CIEEM (2019) Advice Note. Available at: <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf> (Accessed: 23/05/2026).

² **Appendix 5E: Access Road Badger Survey Report**

³ **Appendix 5H: Access Road Ground Level Tree Assessment Survey Report**

⁴ **Appendix 5L: Access Road Riparian Mammal Survey Report**

⁵ **Appendix 5K: Access Road Dormouse Survey Report**

⁶ **Appendix 5N: Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report**

⁷ **Appendix 5O: Net Benefit for Biodiversity Report**

⁸ **Appendix 5P: Outline Habitat Management Plan**

1.2 SCOPE OF REPORT

- 1.2.1. Wind2 commissioned WSP in 2026 to complete a PEA update of the Access Road. The brief was:
- In line with CIEEM's advice on data lifespan; to update field survey data to determine if any changes had occurred to the Access Road baseline ecology since 2023;
 - To provide appropriate updates to recommendations to enable compliance with relevant nature conservation legislation and planning policy; and
 - If necessary, to identify further need for avoidance, mitigation, compensation or enhancement measures and/or further ecological surveys.

1.3 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- 1.3.1. The appraisal has been prepared in the context of the current national policy and legislative framework for nature conservation as summarised in **Annex 5B.1**. The report discusses the implications of the legislation and policy relevant to the Proposed Development. This does not constitute legal advice, and the original legislation should be consulted for details.
- 1.3.2. In January 2026 the Welsh Government published a revised list of Habitats and Species of Principle Importance to Conservation (traditionally referred to as Priority Habitats and Priority Species) under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Habitats and Species listed under Section 7 should be '*maintained and enhanced*' under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. A review of Section 7 Habitats and Species has been included within this PEA update⁹. Hereafter, these features will be referred to as S.7 Priority Habitats/Species.

⁹ In the absence of definitions of S.7 Priority Habitats, professional judgement and reference to UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat definitions (as published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee) has been used to assess whether habitats identified qualify as S.7 Priority Habitats. Where it is not possible to confidently assess a habitat as not qualifying as a S.7 Priority Habitats, a precautionary approach has been assumed.

2 METHODS

OVERVIEW

- 2.1.1. This appraisal has been prepared with reference to current good practice guidance published by the CIEEM^{10,11, 12} and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)¹³; and guidance contained in the British Standard – Code of Practice for Biodiversity and Development BS42020:2013¹⁴.
- 2.1.2. This PEA update is based on the following data sources:
- A review of the ecological desk study data; and,
 - An updated extended Phase 1 habitat survey.

DESK STUDY

- 2.1.3. The PEA published in May 2024 included a desk study that was completed in February 2024 for the Combined Site.
- 2.1.4. It was not considered necessary acquire a new data set for this PEA update as desk study data is not necessarily subject to the same lifespan constraints outlined by the CIEEM advice on data lifespan. Further, there have been minimal changes in land-use and habitat type at the Combined Site since the previous PEA. However, all S.7 Priority Habitats/Species statuses have been reviewed within both field and desk study data sets, in light of the recent publication of a revised list of S.7 Priority Habitats/Species.
- 2.1.5. The following data originally obtained to carry out the 2024 desk study of the Study Areas given below has been reviewed considering the revised S.7 lists:
- Data sourced from Biodiversity Information Service for Powys & Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS).
 - Records of legally protected and/or notable species within 1 km of the Combined Site and woodland parcels listed on the Ancient Woodland Itinerary (AWI) within the Combined Site.

SITE WALKOVER – HABITATS SURVEY UPDATE

- 2.1.6. A site walkover of the Access Road and an additional 30m around the Access Road, hereafter referred to as the 'Survey Area', was undertaken between 24 and 26 of February 2026 to record any changes to habitats that may have occurred since the 2024 PEA. The following changes were
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¹⁰ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (2017a). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. CIEEM, Winchester.

¹¹ CIEEM (2017b). Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing. CIEEM, Winchester.

¹² CIEEM (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland, Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal. CIEEM, Winchester.

¹³ JNCC (2016). Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Peterborough.

¹⁴ British Standards Institute (2013) Biodiversity code of practice for planning and development: BS42020. BSI. London.

recorded: changes in characterisation that may warrant a change of Phase 1 habitat classification; changes in habitat extent; and finally any changes to the habitat suitability for supporting protected and/or notable species.

- 2.1.7. Where changes to habitats were identified, habitats were described and mapped following the standard Phase 1 habitat survey methodology¹⁵. Where appropriate, consideration was given to whether habitats qualify, or could qualify, as S.7 Priority Habitats⁹.
- 2.1.8. Target notes (TNs) were made to provide information on specific features of ecological interest or habitat features too small to be mapped. Any invasive non-native plant species (INNS) listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which were evident during the site walkover were also target noted.

NOTES AND LIMITATIONS

- 2.1.9. Every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive PEA update; however, the following specific limitations apply to this document:
 - Ecological survey data is typically valid for two years unless otherwise specified¹¹; for example, if conditions are likely to change more quickly due to ecological processes or anticipated changes in management.
 - Records held by local biological record centres and local recording groups are generally collected on a voluntary basis; therefore, the absence of records does not demonstrate the absence of species, it may simply indicate a gap in recording coverage.
 - The ecological desk study was carried out from a central grid reference from the Combined Site. This was done because these were connected sites and desk study records within the search area are relevant to the Combined Site.
 - Botanical surveys are seasonally limited, and throughout the early spring and summer period certain species will be more or less evident at different times (i.e. depending on the flowering season). The update extended Phase 1 habitat survey was not conducted within the optimal timeframe for habitat surveys. However, plant identification methods using vegetative features in place of blooms and developed foliage was used. It is therefore considered that sufficient information was gathered to enable an assessment of the habitat types present, in line with standard Phase 1 habitat categories and the potential for these to support protected or notable species.
 - The update extended Phase 1 habitat survey was carried out over the period of only three days, over a large area; as such only a selection of all species that occur within the Survey Area will have been recorded. surveys. It is considered that sufficient information was gathered to enable an assessment of the habitat types present, in line with standard Phase 1 habitat categories and the potential for these to support protected or notable species. Further, the desk study data discussed within this report will supplement this survey data.

¹⁵ JNCC (2016). Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Peterborough.

- The extended Phase 1 habitat map (**Figure 5A.8**) has been reproduced from field notes and plans. Whilst this provides a sufficient level of detail to fulfil the requirements of a PEA, the maps are not intended to provide exact locations of key habitats.
- Some minor changes to the Access Road have occurred since the PEA update walkover. Where these portions of the Access Road sit outside of the Survey Area used during the PEA update walkover, they have been assessed and habitats have been assigned to them based on inspection of aerial imagery and professional judgement. Following review of aerial images of the Access Road and the wider landscape and given the small areas involved, this approach is not considered a limitation to the resurvey.

3 RESULTS

DESK STUDY

AWI parcels

- 3.1.1. Four parcels of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) were identified within the Combined Site, all of which were along the Access Road. The AWI parcels are shown on **Figure 5A.6**.

SITE WALKOVER – HABITATS SURVEY UPDATE

- 3.1.2. The walkover survey of the Survey Area confirmed that the habitats within the Main Site had not significantly changed such that the results from the 2024 Phase 1 survey required amending, in relation to habitat classification, or condition. Habitat extent has changed marginally as the Combined Site boundary has changed since 2024.
- 3.1.3. The site walkover identified the following S.7 Priority Habitats within the Main Site:
- Lowland deciduous woodland (5.53ha)
 - Native hedgerows (2,507.29m)
 - Upland heathland (0.32ha)
 - Montane heaths and grassland¹⁶ (0.39ha)
- 3.1.4. There was no revision of any original determinations made of suitability of the Access Road habitats to support protected and notable species included in the 2024 Protected and Notable Species Assessment.

S.7 Priority Species - Birds

- 3.1.5. Ten bird species that were considered to have potential to use suitable habitats within the Access Road and/or within 1km of the Combined Site have been added to the S.7 Priority Species list. A species identified within 1km of the Combined Site, the reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*, has been removed from the S.7 Priority Species list since the 2024 PEA report.

S.7 Priority Species – Invertebrates

- 3.1.6. Ten invertebrate species that were considered to have potential to use suitable habitats within the Access Road and/or within 1km of the Access Road have been removed from the S.7 Priority Species list since the 2024 PEA report.

Review of all species considered in-light of the recent update to the S.7 Priority Species list highlighted several changes to S.7 Priority Species statuses. These are summarised in

¹⁶ Marshy grassland within the Energy Park is assumed to align with the S.7 Priority Habitat 'Montane heaths and grasslands' in the absence of a definition at this time. Montane habitats are those habitats which are above the tree line (the limit at which trees are able to grow). In Wales, this is between 300m and 600m. As the Energy Park is above 300m, marshy grasslands within the Energy Park have been assumed to qualify as the S.7 Priority Habitat montane heaths and grassland, although it should be noted that most of these were species-poor and dominated by purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*.

3.1.7. Table 1.

3.1.8. Table 1: Changes in S.7 Priority Species Status of species considered during PEA

Species added to S.7 Priority Species list	Species removed from S.7 Priority Species list
Birds	
Fieldfare <i>Turdus pilaris</i>	-
Garden warbler <i>Sylvia borin</i>	-
Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>	-
Grey wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	-
House martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>	-
-	Reed Bunting
Short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	-
Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	-
Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	-
Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	-
Whitethroat <i>Curruca communis</i>	-
Invertebrates	
-	Autumnal rustic <i>Eugnorisma glareosa</i>
-	Broom moth <i>Ceramica pisi</i>
-	Dusky brocade <i>Apamea remissa</i>
-	Feathered gothic <i>Tholera decimalis</i>
-	Galium carpet <i>Epirrhoe galiata</i>

Species added to S.7 Priority Species list	Species removed from S.7 Priority Species list
-	Garden tiger <i>Arctia caja</i>
-	Ghost moth <i>Hepialus humuli</i>
-	Minor shoulder-knot <i>Brachylomia viminalis</i>
-	Oblique carpet <i>Orthonama vittata</i>
-	Shaded broad-bar <i>Scotopteryx chenopodiata</i>

4 SUMMARY

- 4.1.1. An ecological walkover survey determined that habitats on Access Road and within the Survey Area are unchanged since the Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken in 2023 although habitat extent has changed marginally as the Combined Site boundary has changed since 2024.
- 4.1.2. A review of desk study data considering changes to the S.7 Priority Habitats/Species lists, applying the precautionary principle in lieu of definitive habitat descriptions and highlighted no significant changes to the status of Priority Habitats within the Main Site. Habitats within the Access Road are suitable for 10 bird species identified within the 2024 desk study data which have been recently added as S.7 Priority Species.
- 4.1.3. A number of ecological surveys and assessments that were recommended in the previous PEA (**Annex 5B.1**) have now been completed. Therefore, the outstanding ecological surveys and assessments that will be completed prior to full submission of the ES are:
- Undertaking close aerial inspection surveys of trees identified as being suitable to support roosting bats, and at risk of being impacted by the Access Road. These are detailed further in **Appendix 5H**.
 - A discussion of the definitive status of the ASNW parcels within the Access Road as Ancient Woodland with NRW. A survey will be undertaken to verify whether any veteran trees are present, given their significance as 'irreplaceable habitat'.
- 4.1.4. It is recognised that, in accordance with the step-wise approach required for NBB, the design of the Proposed Development is such that the impact upon protected and/or notable species and habitats has been minimised as far as possible. This includes ensuring that no construction occurs within Llyn Mawr SSSI; and minimising construction within Priority Habitats and ASNW as far as possible. The stepwise approach in relation to the Proposed Development is further detailed in **Appendix 5O: Net Benefit for Biodiversity Report**.
- 4.1.5. No changes to standing recommendations in relation to avoidance, or mitigation and enhancement measures detailed within the 2024 PEA report (**Annex 5B.1**) are made. Avoidance and mitigation measures are included within the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP).

FIGURES

Figure 5B.1 – Site location

Figure 5B.2 – Statutory designated sites within 2km

Figure 5B.3 – Statutory designated sites of international importance within the relevant search areas of the Site

Figure 5B.4 – SSSI sites designated for bats within 30km

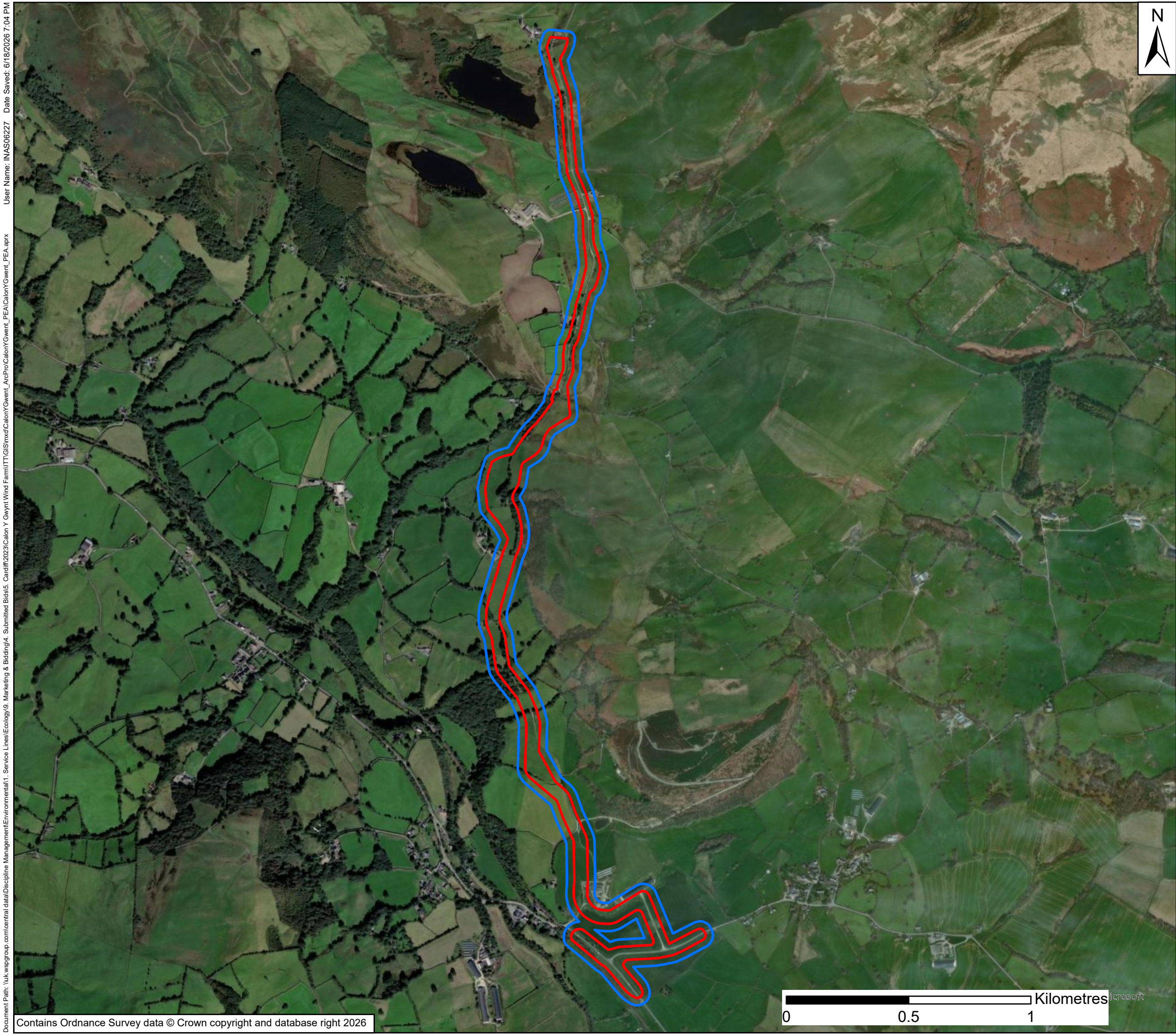
Figure 5B.5 – Non-statutory designated sites within 2km

Figure 5B.6 – Priority Habitats and AWI areas identified within the desk study, within the Combined Site

Figure 5B.7 – Waterbodies within 500m of the Combined Site

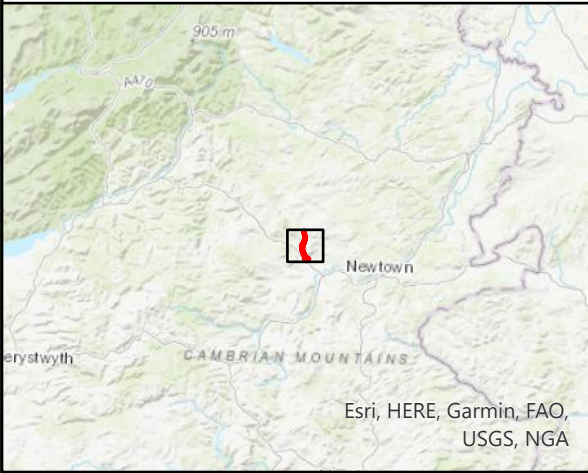
Figure 5B.8 – Habitats of conservation importance

Figure 5B.9 – Phase 1 habitat map



Legend

-  Site
-  Survey Area



Client:	WIND2		
Project:	CALON Y GWYNT - ACCESS ROAD PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL		
Title	SITE LOCATION		
Drawing No:	Figure 5B.1	Drawn:	AM
Date:	7/8/2026	Checked:	CW
Scale:	1:15,000 @ A3	Approved:	MB

