Parc Ynni Calon y Gwynt

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Appendix 5D: Main Site Badger Survey Report - Redacted

JULY 2026

PUBLIC

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wind2 Ltd commissioned WSP UK Ltd to undertake badger *Meles meles* surveys to establish whether badger setts are present or likely to be absent at the proposed Parc Ynni Calon Y Gwynt (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'). The location of the Proposed Development, hereafter referred to as 'Site', is on the hills to the north of the A470 trunk road, centred on British National Grid (BNG) reference SO 001 983.

It is understood that the Proposed Development will comprise 11 turbine locations, a construction compound, substation and tracks. In addition, a battery storage area will be incorporated into the Proposed Development, although the extent and location of this was unknown at the time of survey.

Previous ecological surveys identified grassland habitats present within the Site as suitable habitats for foraging and commuting badgers. However, badger sett building opportunities were considered sub-optimal, due to a limited extent of highly suitable sett building habitats, such as extensive woodland and hedgerows, within the Site.

A badger survey of the Site was undertaken in January 2026 in accordance with good practice guidance[1,2,3] to establish whether badger setts are present or likely to be absent from the Site, and evaluate the importance of the Site for badgers.

During the survey no setts or definitive field signs of badger were identified.

During a habitat survey conducted in support of the Proposed Development in May 2026, an active outlier badger sett was identified within the construction footprint. [redacted] If the badger sett cannot be avoided during works, then it must be excluded and destroyed under licence to permit the works to proceed lawfully. Sett exclusion and destruction is only typically licenced between the months of July and November inclusive, and works in that area should be planned accordingly.

Badger activity within a Site can change quickly given the highly mobile nature of badgers and their interactions with other badgers and humans. These changes in activity can include excavation of new setts and increases in levels of foraging. Therefore, a site walkover is recommended one month prior to submission of the licence application to ensure it is informed by up to date information.

The data within this report represents a robust assessment of badger activity within the Site at the time of survey, but there is potential for sett locations or levels of badger activity to change prior to commencement of any Proposed Development. Avoidance measures, to be secured in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) are recommended to minimise effects on commuting and foraging badgers.

1 Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989) (Report) Surveying Badgers. The Mammal Society, Bristol.
2 Roper, T.J., (2010) Badger. Harper Collins.
3 Andrews, R (2013) The classification of badger *Meles meles* setts in the UK: A review and guidance for surveyors within Edition 82 of In Practice Magazine issued by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM) (Now CIEEM).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

1.1.1. WSP UK Ltd (hereafter referred to as 'WSP')[4] was commissioned by Wind2 Ltd to undertake badger *Meles meles* surveys to establish whether badger setts are present or likely absent at the proposed Parc Ynni Calon Y Gwynt (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'). It is understood that the Proposed Development will comprise up to 11 turbine locations, a temporary construction compound, substation and access tracks. In addition, a battery storage area will be incorporated into the Proposed Development, although the extent and location of this was not known at the time of the survey.

1.1.2. The location of the Proposed Development, hereafter referred to as the 'Site', is centred on British National Grid (BNG) reference SO 001 983. It is located on the hills to the north of the A470 trunk road, approximately 3.5km east of the village of Carno, 3.5km north of the village of Pontdolgoch and 12km north-west of Newtown.

1.1.3. An Access Road is proposed to extend 4.6km south from the Site, comprising 3.1km of newly constructed access road and 1.5km of upgrades to existing access road. In this report, when discussed together, the Site and the Access Road are referred to as the 'Combined Site'. The Site and the Access Road are shown in **Figure 5D.1**.

1.2 ECOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.2.1. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the Site was undertaken in May 2024[5]. The desk study undertaken for the PEA identified one record of badger from 2019 within 1km of the Combined Site (1.3km south of the closest point on the Site boundary). The desk study methodology and results, where relevant to badger, are included within this report to provide a complete summary of badger information. The approximate location of the badger record is shown in **Figure 5D.2**.

1.2.2. An extended Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken to support the PEA identified that the Site was dominated by grasslands, with small pockets of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and scrub, and isolated coniferous woodland parcels. There were several small streams running throughout the Site.

1.2.3. The PEA identified grassland habitats present within the Site as suitable habitats for foraging and commuting badgers. However, habitats for badger sett building opportunities were considered sub-optimal due to a limited extent of habitats within the Site considered to be of high suitability to support badger, such as woodlands and hedgerows. No signs or evidence of badgers were identified within the Site during the extended habitat survey.

1.2.4. Badger surveys of the Access Road were also undertaken over three survey visits in June, July and November 2024, as detailed in **Appendix 5E: Access Road Badger Survey Report** of the Environmental Statement. No evidence of badgers were found during these surveys.

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[4] WSP have provided this report solely for the use of the recipient and accepts no liability to any third parties or any other party using or reviewing the report or any part thereof. WSP makes no warranties or guarantees, actual or implied, in relation to this report, or the ultimate commercial, technical, economic, or financial effect on the project to which it relates, and bears no responsibility or liability related to its use other than as set out within the scope of the contract under which it was supplied.

[5] **Appendix 5A: Main Site Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.**

1.3 POLICY AND LEGISLATION

1.3.1. The Protection of Badgers Act 1992[6] makes it illegal to wilfully kill, injure or take any badger, or attempt to do so. It also makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any part of a badger sett. Activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under this legislation may be licensed by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) for certain purposes.

1.4 BRIEF AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1. The Applicant commissioned WSP to undertake a badger survey of the Site in accordance with good practice guidance[10,11,12] to:

- establish whether badgers setts were present or likely to be absent from the Site; and
- evaluate the importance of the Site for badgers and make recommendations as to how the Proposed Development should account for the species with respect to legislation, planning and biodiversity policy.

1.4.2. The results of this survey, and subsequent recommendations, are included within this report.

[6] Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents [Accessed 17 June 2026].

2 METHODS

2.1 DESK STUDY

2.1.1. A desk study was undertaken in May 2024 as part of the PEA[5] to review existing ecological baseline information available in the public domain, and to obtain information held by relevant third parties. For the purpose of the desk study exercise, records of legally protected and/or notable species were collated within 1km of the Combined Site boundary. This approach is consistent with current good practice guidance published by the CIEEM[7,8].

2.1.2. Findings of the desk study relating to badgers have been included in **Section 3** below.

2.2 FIELD SURVEYS

2.2.1. The Site (shown as the Main Site on **Figure 5D.1**), which does not include the Access Road[9], was surveyed for evidence of badger by two suitably experienced ecologists with extensive survey experience on 23 January 2026. The survey comprised of a drive through of the entirety of the Site and stopping to do a thorough walkover of any habitats identified as being highly suitable for sett building such as parcels of woodland, areas of dense bracken, lines of trees and scrub habitats.

2.2.2. The Site was searched for evidence of badger following the standard methodology as outlined by Harris, Cresswell and Jefferies[10]; with regards for recent reviews and comments on these methods[11,12].

2.2.3. Evidence indicative of badger presence was searched for, including:

- Setts;
- Latrines;
- Prints and paths or trackways;
- Hairs caught on rough wood or fencing; and
- Other evidence including snuffle holes, feeding remains and scratching posts.

2.2.4. Evidence of badger was also recorded incidentally during other ecological surveys of the Site.

2.2.5. Where setts are identified, they are then classified based on the number, condition and characteristics of sett entrances and other associated evidence. Setts are broadly categorised as follows:

- Main: generally, the largest sett within a badger social group home range, with a relatively large number of sett entrances with well-worn pathways between them, and conspicuous spoil

7 CIEEM (2017a). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition.
8 CIEEM (2017b). Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing.
9 The Access Road has previously been subject to a badger survey, for which the results and reporting are considered to be valid at the time of this report, and are detailed in **Appendix 5E: Access Road Badger Survey Report**. Therefore, the Access Road was not included in this survey, and any recommendations in relation to the Access Road are referred to in **Appendix 5E: Access Road Badger Survey Report**.
10 Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989) (Report) Surveying Badgers. The Mammal Society, Bristol.
11 Roper, T.J., (2010) Badger. Harper Collins.
12 Andrews, R (2013) The classification of badger *Meles meles* setts in the UK: A review and guidance for surveyors within Edition 82 of In Practice Magazine issued by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM) (Now CIEEM).

mounds. This type of sett tends to be occupied throughout the year and is usually used for breeding;

- Annex: normally found within 150m of the main sett and connected to the main sett by a prominent path. Usually comprising multiple entrances, this type of sett may not be occupied throughout the year, but can be used for breeding if there is more than one breeding sow within the social group;
- Subsidiary: similar to an annex sett but typically located further from the main sett and without the prominent connecting path. This type of sett will not be occupied throughout the year and lacks the well-worn paths associated with main and annex setts; and
- Outlier: normally consisting of one or two entrances, this type of sett will tend to be found furthest from the main sett and will only be used sporadically throughout the year.

2.2.6. Sett use or level of activity can be broadly categorised as follows:

- Well used sett / hole: shows evidence of current use, such as fresh spoil or bedding, well-worn pathways between entrances and the presence of badger hair;
- Partially used sett / hole: no evidence present indicating current occupation (though hairs may be present, as these can persist for some time), but the sett cannot be categorically described as disused and could easily be re-occupied (for example, it may contain some leaves or sticks in tunnel entrances, but these would not be blocked and it would take little effort for a badger to reoccupy it); and
- Disused sett / hole: a badger sett that appears to have been abandoned by a badger social group is described as ‘disused’; these differ from partially used setts which can be temporarily disused. Disused setts are often completely blocked with vegetation or have collapsed.

2.2.7. Setts with well used and / or partially used holes would be considered to be active i.e. in use by badgers.

2.2.8. Where encountered, other mammal excavations were also recorded during the survey. Information including the location, a description of the type of evidence (i.e. pathway or burrow) and, where applicable, any signs of current use were recorded. Mammal entrances identified as being of suitable size and shape to be badger in origin but not currently displaying signs of current use by badgers, or clearly occupied by other species, were not recorded as setts.

2.2.9. The overall suitability of the habitats within the Site for badger sett-building and foraging was also assessed during the field survey[13].

2.2.10. Due to the scale of the Site, there is the potential that some evidence of badger, such as hairs or snuffle holes, may have been present but undetected within the Site. Similarly, dense vegetation, especially in areas of bracken, may have concealed sett entrances.

[13] Badger Trust (2023) Badger Protection: Best Practice Guidance for Developers, Ecologists and Planners.

3 RESULTS

3.1 DESK STUDY

3.1.1. The desk study undertaken in May 2024 returned one record of badger from the last ten years within 1km of the Combined Site boundary.

3.1.2. The record was a sighting of live badger from 2019 and was located approximately 445m west of the Access Road and 1.3km south of the Site. The approximate location of the record is shown in **Figure 5D.2**.

3.2 FIELD SURVEY

3.2.1. No setts or definitive field signs of badger were identified during the targeted badger survey. Badger sett building opportunities were considered suboptimal due to limited extent of highly suitable habitats on Site, such as extensive woodland areas and hedgerow or line of trees.

3.2.2. There were no signs of badger activity observed across the Site during the badger survey.

3.2.3. There was however a network of mammal holes identified as rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* burrows, shown in **Photograph 1** in **Annex 5D.1**. The approximate location of the network of mammal holes is shown in **Figure 5D.2**.

3.2.4. During a National Vegetation Classification (NVC) habitat survey undertaken from 11 to 15 May 2026, a badger sett with two entrances was identified within the Site, the location is shown on **Figure 5D.2**. [redacted]

3.2.5. Two entrances of a size and shape indicative of having been excavated by badgers were recorded. The spoil heaps were relatively small and compacted and showed no evidence of recent excavation. The entrances were open but with no evidence of current use and a small accumulation of vegetation debris present, indicating partially used status. No noticeable mammal paths were identified. The characteristics of the sett indicate it is an active outlier sett. The area immediately surrounding the sett was densely vegetated with bracken.

INCIDENTAL RECORDS OF OTHER SPECIES

3.2.6. Hares *Lepus europaeus* were sighted towards eastern section of the Site during the badger survey, confirming their presence within Site. The approximate location of the hare sightings is shown in **Figure 5D.2**.

4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1.1. A record of badger from 2019 was returned from the desk study approximately 445m from the Access Road and 1.3km from the Site. No setts or other field signs of badger were recorded on Site during the badger survey. However, an active badger sett was identified during a subsequent habitat survey.

4.1.2. [redacted]

4.1.3. [redacted] A licence granted by NRW will be required to permit the works to proceed lawfully. The licence will include a method statement detailing measure that will be taken to safely exclude badgers from the sett prior to destruction. NRW generally only grant licences to interfere with badger setts between July and November inclusive to avoid impacts to badgers during the breeding season. This time restriction should be factored into the works program.

4.1.4. Badger activity within a Site can change quickly given the highly mobile nature of badgers and their interactions with other badgers and humans. These changes in activity can include excavation of new setts and increases in levels of foraging. The data within this report represents a robust assessment of badger setts within the Site at the time of survey but there is potential for sett locations to change prior to commencement of the Proposed Development. Therefore, a walkover survey to confirm the presence and characteristics of the sett, and to check for any new setts should be conducted one month prior to submitting the licence application to ensure all relevant information is captured. This should be done following consent of the Proposed Development. Additional pre-works checks, prior to the commencement of construction, may also be required.

4.1.5. Badgers are also likely to be using the Site to forage or commute. It is recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is produced. An outline CEMP (oCEMP) has been produced, and details the following measures with respect to badgers:

- provision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) to carry out pre-construction surveys and advise on ecological and environmental matters during the construction of the Proposed Development;
- covering of excavations at night (or provision of an escape route);
- restrictions to vehicle movement outside of daylight hours and speed controls;
- night working restrictions;
- restrictions on light spill onto habitats that may be used by badger;
- pollution prevention measures;
- noise, vibration and dust control measures; and
- biosecurity measures.

5 FIGURES

Figure 5D.1 - Site Location Plan

Figure 5D.2 – Survey and Desk Study Results

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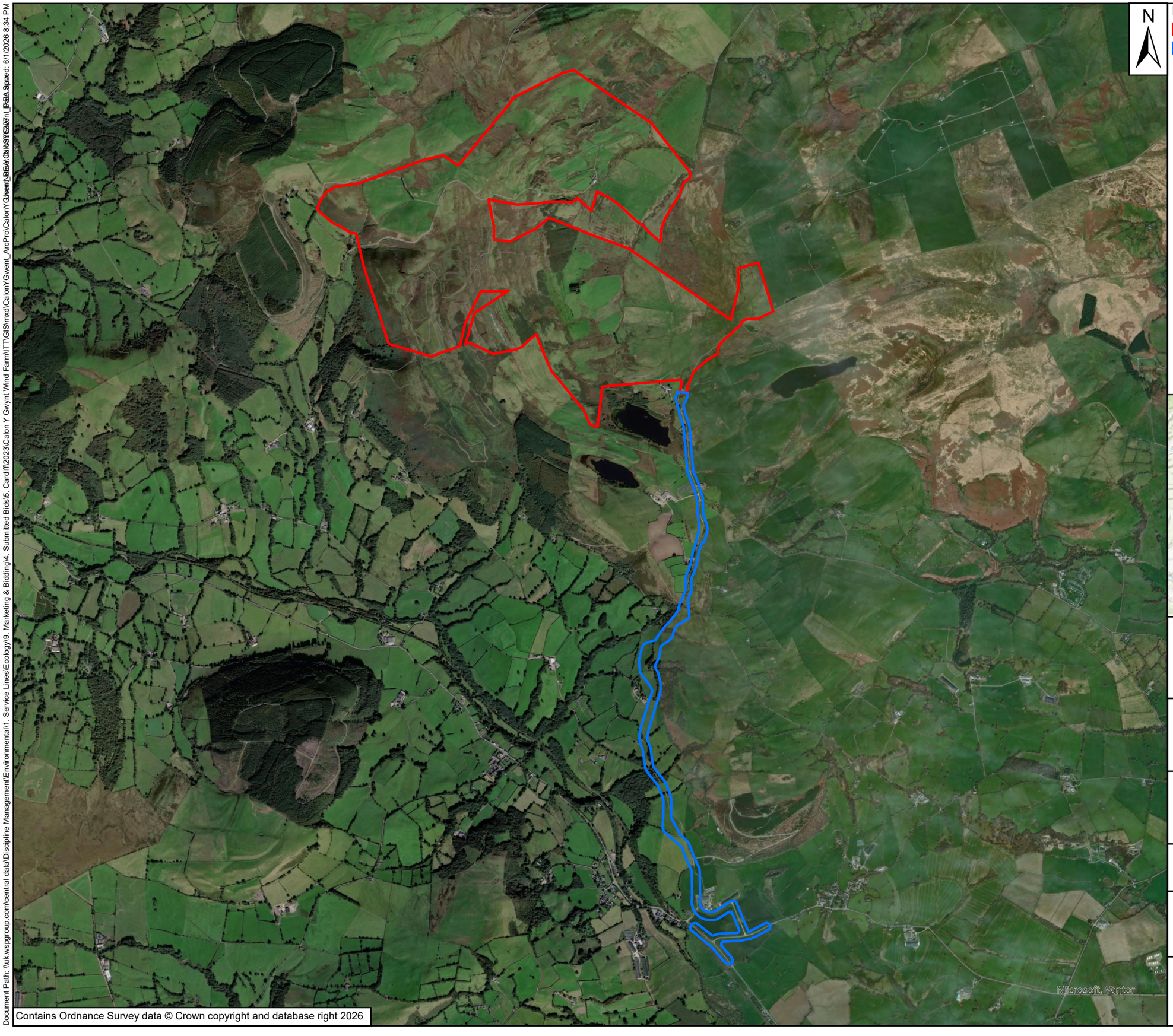

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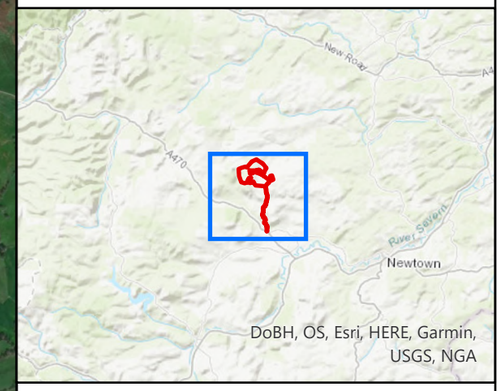
Main Site

Access Road



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Project: Parc Ynni Calon y Gwynt

Title: Site Location Plan

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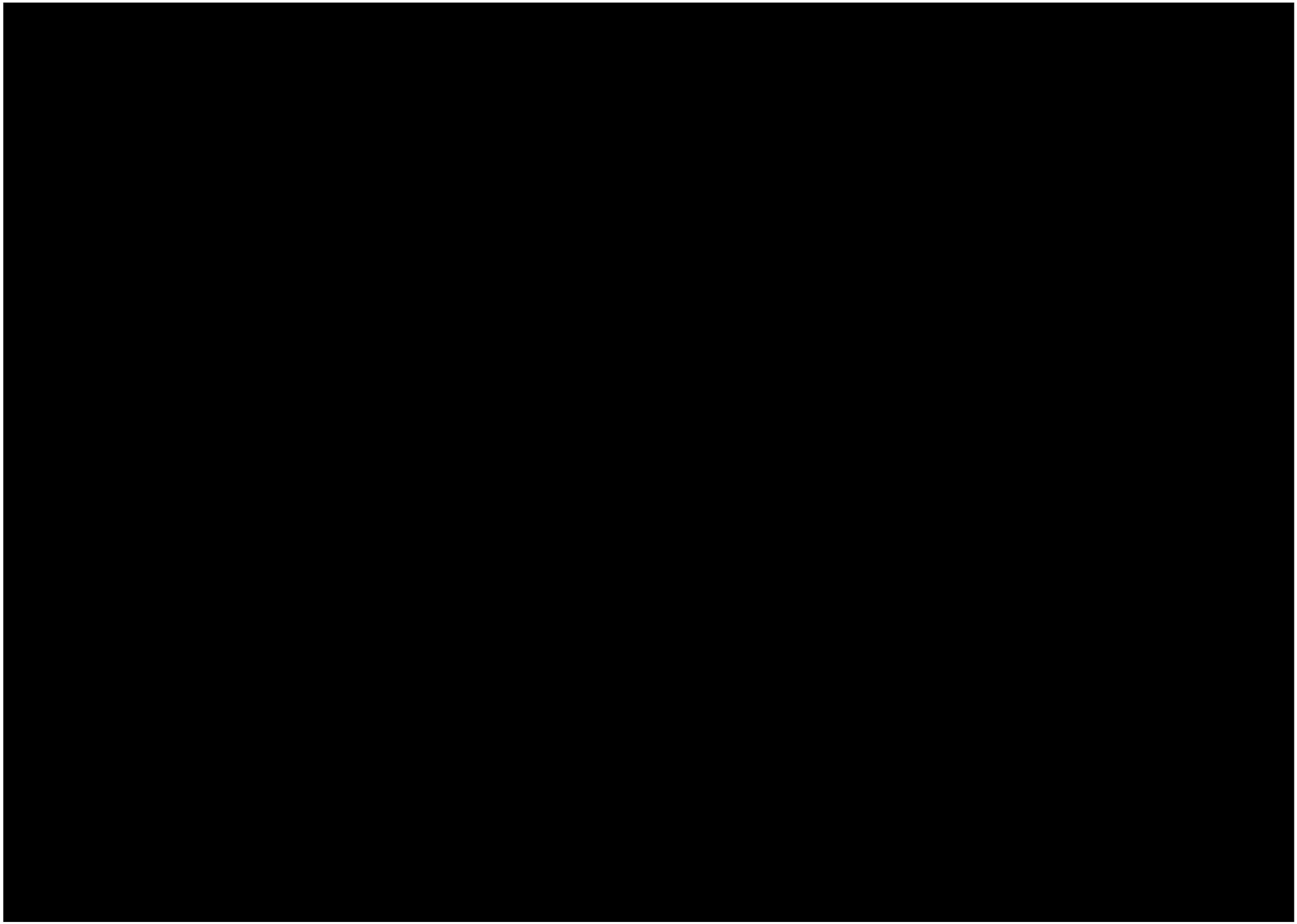

Annex 5D.1

PHOTOGRAPHS

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Photograph 1 – Network of mammal holes, identified as rabbit burrows.

Photograph 2 – Badger sett [redacted].

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