



environmental
solutions ltd

ecology • arboriculture • fisheries • licencing

**PRECAUTIONARY METHOD OF WORKING
PROPOSED WEIR**

**GLAN LLYN – JULIAN'S REEN
LLANWERN
NEWPORT
NP19 4DW**

Prepared for: **Revantage Corporate Services**

Date: **May 2025**

Report Reference: **JN00474/TN03**

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out a Precautionary Method of Working (PMW) for the creation of a new weir at a roughly central point along Julian's reen at Glan Llyn in Newport, on the former Llanwern Steelworks.

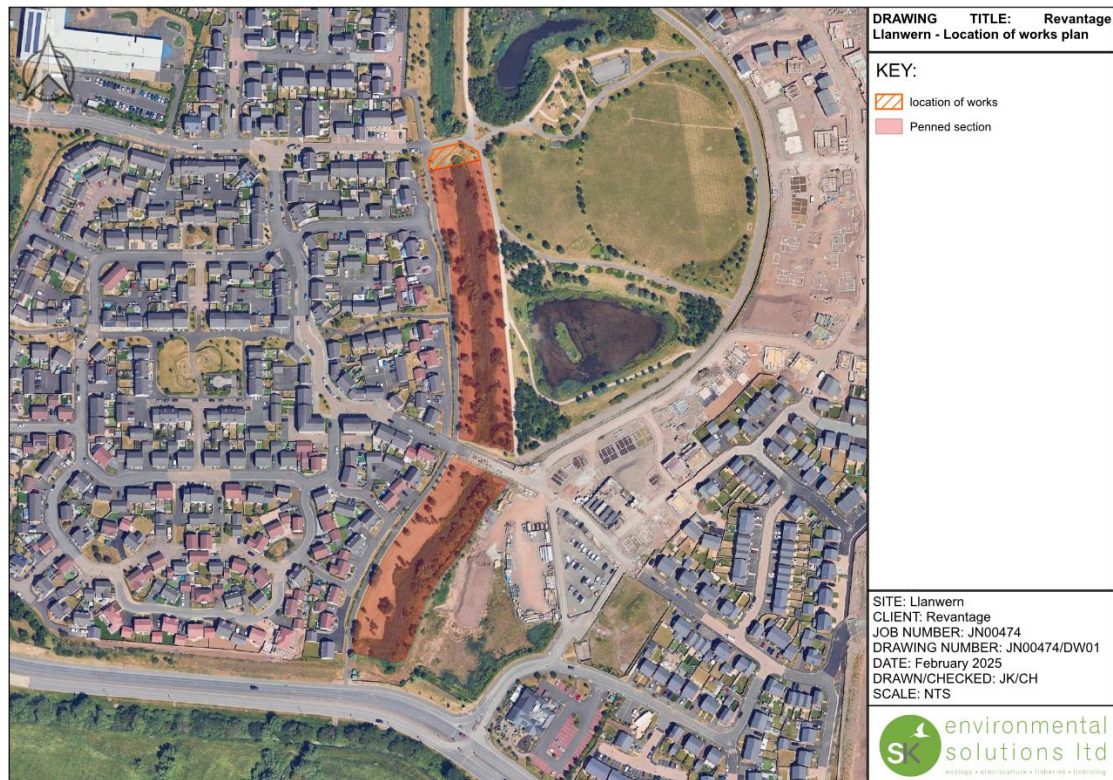


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

- 1.2 The new weir is to be created in order to control the water levels within the reen more effectively. This will include earthworks in a discrete section of the reen, with a working area of approximately 5x5m. Vegetation within this section will need to be cleared as part of the preparatory works.
- 1.3 Survey work of the site was carried out in November 2024 to ascertain whether any water vole *Arvicola amphibius* burrows are present within this specific section. Evidence of water voles was found in the form of latrines and food caches within the wider area and the site itself, confirming presence of the species along the reen, likely as part of the 2024 expansion of the population following a translocation in 2023. The abandoned beginnings of a burrow were also recorded; however, it is not clear when this small excavation was made. Works to install the weir will require some earthworks and thus the presence of burrows would prohibit the works from being carried out.
- 1.4 No signs of the presence of otters was found during the survey work, however their occasional passage along this section of the reen cannot be discounted entirely.

- 1.5 Works must be carried out in line with this Precautionary Method of Working (PMW). The Project Manager will ensure that anyone undertaking construction works on the site (including sub-contractors) is made aware of the potential for the site to support nesting birds and water voles. This information will include where to expect them, their protected status and the procedure to follow in the event that nesting birds, otters or water voles are discovered during works. Where applicable this advice will be given through site inductions, toolbox talks or similar. A copy of this Precautionary Method of Working will be kept on site and available for inspection at all times. The document must be read and applied in conjunction with the approved Method Statement for the works MS-004-24102024.

Toolbox Talk

- 1.6 The details of this PMW will be presented to all operatives working on the site through a Toolbox Talk prior to the commencement of works. The Toolbox Talk will be specific to the time of year works are undertaken and will be delivered by a suitably experienced ecologist. The toolbox talk will include guidance on:

- protected species which are present/could be encountered, including identification;
- what to do should any protected species be found;
- good working practices; mitigation methods and measures; and
- what is and is not permitted (including potential legal consequences of not adhering to the PMW).

General

- 1.7 The following general precautions should be adhered to at all times, where possible.
- Works must be carried out at day-time temperatures above 5°C;
 - There will be no lighting used to facilitate the works;
 - There will be no working during dusk or dawn; and
 - No hazards must be left overnight, and any holes/trenches left overnight must have escape routes installed to prevent the trapping of wildlife. Excavations will be inspected first thing in the morning, should a protected species be found in an excavation an ecologist must be contacted immediately for advice.

Birds

- 1.8 Suitable breeding bird habitat includes some of the scrub growth along the reens.
- 1.9 If vegetation clearance is required during the breeding season (March-August inclusive), then a suitably experienced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will supervise the works and carry out a nesting bird check on all suitable habitats to be removed. If a nest is subsequently identified, then an exclusion zone will be implemented and works within the area will not be allowed to commence until nesting has ceased.

- 1.10 Following the nesting bird check, clearance works may need to be supervised by the Ecologist, if they deem it necessary.

Water voles

- 1.11 A suitably qualified and licenced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will make an inspection of the area to be cleared immediately prior to the start of works. If a burrow is found present, works cannot proceed. If no burrow is found, vegetation must be cut to knee height above water level in the first instance. All cuttings must be removed.
- 1.12 The ECoW must then make another inspection of the area.
- 1.13 Following this, vegetation may be removed to ground or water level. All arisings must be removed.
- 1.14 If works are then not started immediately, a monthly inspection must be made and additional cutting be carried out if vegetation re-growth has occurred. This will not require the presence of the ECoW, although one can be on site if required. This will reduce the likelihood of burrows being dug within the area.
- 1.15 Works to install the weir must be carried out as soon as possible, as this will greatly reduce the chance of burrows being dug within the required area.
- 1.16 If water voles are identified at any time during the works, then work must cease immediately, and advice sought from a licensed ecologist.

Otter

- 1.17 During the check for water voles prior to works commencing, the ECoW will also check for signs of use by otter. Any sign of a resting place for otter will result in no works proceeding. However, presence of otter on site is likely restricted to passage through the site. In order to avoid any potential harm to otter, the following measures must be observed:
- No pipes or trenches to be left open overnight
 - No night lighting
 - Fencing to be placed strategically so that otters are not forced towards gardens or roads.
- 1.18 Otters are inquisitive by nature and the site must therefore be secured at the end of the day in such a way that otters cannot get into materials potentially harmful to them.
- 1.19 If otters are encountered at any time during the works, then work must cease immediately, and advice sought from the ECoW.

Hand and Destructive Searches

- 1.20 Hand searches comprise the dismantling and removal of potential refuges by hand. This will be undertaken prior to each phase of vegetation removal.

- 1.21 Destructive searches comprise the careful stripping of potential refuge areas or habitat piles that could not be easily dismantled by hand (i.e., larger/heavier/partially buried/labour intensive refugia). Where possible, stripping of these areas will first be undertaken with use of non-mechanical hand tools, followed by machinery for any remaining areas.

Ecological Management and Pollution Prevention

- 1.22 Ecological Management at this site largely revolves around the prevention of pollution and ensuring the footprint of the works stays as small as possible. Measures laid out in the Method Statement for the works largely lay out how this will be achieved. A temporary bund will be installed and the water will be over-pumped. In order to protect aquatic invertebrates, the pump must not be installed directly in the open water, but either banded by sandbags or fitted with a fine wire mesh, or both. The mesh must be checked regularly to ensure it is not being blocked by debris.

- 1.23 Pollution prevention measures must include:

- A spill kit (240l) including all necessary equipment must be located in a designated place, the foreman must check this daily and all workers on site must know its location at all times and be trained how to use it;
- A perimeter fence must be erected in order to keep vehicle movements in particular contained to as small an area as possible;
- For containment of sediment, straw bales, mats or similar measures must be used in the watercourse;
- During wet periods, consideration must be given to the installation of mats for vehicles and machinery to track on, in order to avoid excess churning up of the banks;
- Works must stop during periods of high rainfall;
- No materials will be stored within 12m of the watercourse;
- No refuelling to take place within the works area; and
- Measures for the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health have been detailed in the method statement, following these measures will also ensure that adverse impacts on ecology are avoided.

Decommissioning

- 1.24 The works described above are temporary. The weir is therefore due to be removed at the appropriate time. As water voles are in the process of colonising the area, it is of paramount importance that survey work is carried out prior to the removal, in order to ascertain to what level water voles have become established and what working methods need to be employed to ensure no adverse impacts occur. Supervision by an Ecological Clerk of Works during the actual works is also likely to be required, the precise measures to be followed will need to be informed by the aforementioned survey work.