



Ein cyf/Our ref ATISN 25018

1 September 2025

Dear ,

ATISN 25018 Clocaenog Windfarm

Information requested

Thank you for your request which was received on 4 August. You seek evidence to support claims made in a 'Diary Case Briefing' released under a previous Freedom of Information request (Ref: ATISN 23303: Peat Resources).

You request information on the sources, data, or other forms of documentation or evidence relating to the following claims:

1. "At Clocaenog, soil from a turbine base had been dumped on a peatland habitat, and other areas of peat soils had been excavated and left to oxidise, erode and degrade."
2. "Although over 5 years into the Habitat Management Plan at Clocaenog, the operators have not engaged at all with the National Peatlands Action Programme team in NRW for advice and guidance on peatland restoration on site."
3. "Local authorities and NRW are not resourced to monitor and enforce peat enhancement conditions."
4. "If wider restoration enhancements are not completed correctly, further damage to peatland habitats will occur and further financial resource will be needed to rectify the damage."

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

There are no exemptions relating to this request and the only item of information held is released (ATISN 25018 Item 1). However, you will note that faces and number plates have been redacted to avoid any inadvertent release of personal data.

Our response

Information relevant to your requested is enclosed as Item 1, and our response to your request is as follows:

Information on the sources, data, or other forms of documentation or evidence relating to the claim made at 1 above

Item 1:

11 no photographs taken by Welsh Government colleagues at a site visit on 11 June 2024, with annotations, including confirmation from a RWE representative that spoil from a turbine base and pad had been tipped on an adjacent area of peatland. The photographs also indicate that new water features had been created that involved excavation of peat soils as part of the Habitat Management Plan and that the peat soils had been left bare to dry and oxidise.

1 no screen shot extract from Datamap Wales of the peat evidence score map for an identified wind turbine used by officials as part of the site visit.

The photographs and the screen shot are compiled in one PDF document referred to as item 1.

We do not hold specific information to support the claims made at 2, 3 or 4

Whilst we do not hold specific information or data relating to these claims, I hope the following explanations provide some reassurance with respect to the basis of the statements made in the 'Diary Briefing'.

Claim 2 reflects verbal discussions on the day of the site visit on 11 June 2024. The purpose of the site visit was to review the first 5 years of the habitat management plan at the site, which includes peat restoration. Members of the [Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm Habitat Management Plan Stakeholder Group](#) were in attendance and this included Welsh Government officials, NRW officers, officers from the relevant local planning authorities (Conwy and Denbighshire) and representatives of RWE.

During the site visit, a Welsh Government official asked if NRW peatland specialists or the National Peatland Action Program (NPAP) staff had been consulted or had input into the development of the Clocaenog Habitat Management Plan or at the 5-year review stage. A RWE representative confirmed that they had not consulted or engaged with the NPAP team or NRW peatland specialists. This position was also confirmed by the NRW Stakeholder group representative on the day.

Whilst specific evidence relating to claim 3 is not held by Welsh Government, Planning Directorate is in the process of implementing various measures to improve the resilience and resources of local authority planning services. Claim 3 was made in the general knowledge that capacity issues within local planning authorities need to be addressed.

Of note is that new Fee Regulations will be introduced by the end of this year, representing the largest single investment in planning services for many years. Increases to planning application fees will significantly increase local planning authority resources and place them

on a more sustainable financial footing moving forward. The increased revenue will be reinvested directly back into planning services to improve resilience and performance. In addition, funding has been made available for a Town Planning Bursary scheme via the Pathways to Planning programme to increase the pipeline of qualified planners across Wales, with the Welsh Government meeting the costs for graduates to obtain a post-graduate planning qualification.

Welsh Government, through the National Peatland Action Programme and Infrastructure Fund, is funding two new peatland casework advisers to increase NRW's capacity to engage in development proposals involving peat consistently and proactively.

Claim 4 is based on the experience of historic restoration attempts. If the restoration is unsuccessful, degradation continues, and further expense is necessary to address the damaging feature(s).

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely