

# Prosiect Maen Hir

Solar a Storio Ynni



## Preliminary Environmental Information Report Volume III

Appendix 7-5: Riparian Mammal Report

Prosiect Maen Hir - September 2024

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lightsource bp





# **Environmental Impact Assessment Otter and Water Vole Survey Report**

September 2024



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* and European water vole *Arvicola amphibius* surveys were undertaken for the Maen Hir Project (hereafter referred to as the 'Project') to ascertain the status of both species within the Solar PV Site and determine any potential impacts on this species. Surveys were carried out on accessible waterbodies in spring and summer of 2023 and 2024.
- 1.1.2 The Project will comprise the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) generating panels, a battery energy storage system (BESS), Project substation, associated interconnecting cables, site accesses and mitigation areas – collectively referred to as the 'Solar PV Site'. The boundary of the Site is referred to as the 'Preliminary Ecological Information Report (PEIR) Boundary'.
- 1.1.3 This Technical Appendix details the approach and findings to date of the ongoing surveys for otter and water vole. Baseline data presented in this Appendix has been used to inform 'Chapter 07 Ecology' of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report. This Appendix will be updated following the results of the 2024 surveys to inform the Environmental Statement Report (ES).

## 1.2 Consultation

- 1.2.1 Following discussions with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) on 23 April 2024, it was mentioned that a recent In Practice article (Ref 7-5.1) published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) reported that a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) may be required to facilitate accurate otter holt monitoring. No actions are required at the time of writing this report; however, should an otter holt be identified following further investigation, the requirement will be re-evaluated.
- 1.2.2 NRW did not include any guidance for water voles in relation to the Project during the consultation.

## 1.3 Scope

- 1.3.1 In this report, the following terminology is used to describe the geographic areas in which the survey work has been conducted:

- The Study Area: This refers to the area subject to the collection of background information, such as desk study records for otter and water vole, to supplement the survey work findings. The Study Area comprises the PEIR Boundary plus a 2 km radius.
- The Survey Area: The Solar PV Site was the focus of the survey work for both species

## 1.4 Survey Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aim and objectives of the survey work and the subsequent report presented here are to:

Aim:

- Determine the status and distribution of otter and water vole within the Survey Area in order to inform the ES. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Project and any subsequent mitigation or licensing that may be required in order to enable the Project to proceed with respect to both species.

Objectives:

- Review existing ecological data to identify any records of otter and water vole within the Study Area;
- Identify the presence of potentially suitable waterbodies located within the Survey Area using Ordnance Survey (OS) MasterMap and aerial mapping;
- **Otter:** To identify further breeding and non-breeding holts and/or rest sites (couches), alongside other otter field signs, as well as evidence of otter utilising such holts and rest sites using recognised survey methods;
- **Water vole:** Determine the presence of water vole territories by assessing evidence including droppings, latrines, feeding stations, burrows, lawns, nests, footprints and runways.

1.4.2 Surveys for otter and water vole are ongoing. This report will be updated to inform the ES.



## 2 Legislation and Planning Policy

### 2.1 Relevant Legislation

#### **Otter**

2.1.1 Otter receives full protection under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (Ref. 7-5.2) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Ref. 7-5.3). This legislation, when taken together, results in a level of protection that prohibits the intentional, deliberate or reckless:

- killing, injuring, taking or disturbing otter;
- damaging, destroying or obstructing any place used by otter for the purposes of breeding, sheltering or protection; or,
- selling and/or advertising for sale an otter or any part thereof.

2.1.2 Disturbance is defined as that which is likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young or, to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

2.1.3 An EPSML from NRW would be required for any works likely to constitute an offence in respect to otters.

2.1.4 Furthermore, otter are a species of principal importance for nature conservation in Wales, as listed in Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (Ref. 7-5.4). Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires that public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems; particularly for species, such as otter, that are listed in Section 7.

#### **Water Vole**

2.1.5 Water vole receives full protection under Section 9 of Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (Ref. 7-5.2) and as such it is illegal to intentionally or recklessly:

- capture, kill or injure water voles;
- damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection;
- intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles whilst occupying a structure or place used for that purpose; or,

- possess, sell, control or transport live or dead water voles or parts of them.

2.1.6 A licence from NRW would be required for any works likely to constitute an offence in respect to water vole.

2.1.7 Water vole are also listed as Priority Species under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (Ref. 7-5.4).

## 2.2 Planning Policy

### National Planning Policy Framework 2023

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref. 7-5.5) sets out the Government's planning policies for Wales and how these are expected to be applied by Local Authorities within their Local Development Frameworks (LDF). Chapter 15 of the NPPF '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*' sets out the requirements to consider biodiversity in planning decisions.

### Local Planning Policy Framework

2.2.1 The Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2017 (Ref. 7-5.6) details several policies relating to ecology and nature conservation, these include:

- Strategic Policy PS 19: conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
- Policy AMG 4: coastal protection;
- Policy AMG 5: protection and enhancement of local biodiversity; and
- Policy AMG 6: protecting sites of regional or local significance.

### Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP)

2.2.2 Ynys Mon Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Ref. 7-5.7) contains 23 Priority Species, including otter and water vole. Furthermore, the LBAP contains 20 Priority Habitats, including, but not limited to, ponds, reedbeds, fens and lakes.

## 3 Methods

### 3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 The objectives of the desk study were to review the existing information available in the public domain to identify the following:

- Internationally and nationally designated sites designated for otters and water vole, up to 2 km from the PEIR Boundary using the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (MAGIC, 2024) (Ref. 7-5.8);
- Locally designated sites, designated for otter and water vole, up to 2 km from the PEIR Boundary using data provided by Cofnod Biodiversity Record Centre
- Records of otters and water vole from the last 10 years up to 2 km from the PEIR Boundary, using data provided by Cofnod Record Centre; and,
- Features of ecological interest surrounding the Solar PV Site including features connecting these habitats (e.g. hedgerows, watercourses and ditches), using aerial photographs and OS maps.

### 3.2 Field Surveys

#### Habitat suitability

3.2.1 Fields were subject to walkover surveys based on the presence of suitable aquatic and terrestrial habitat available. The walkover survey consisted of searching the Survey Area for any otter and water vole field signs during the daytime. Field surveys are incomplete, and this report will be updated for inclusion within the ES.

3.2.2 The relative suitability of habitat was determined using professional judgement, based on parameters outlined in 'Water Vole Field Signs and Habitat Assessment' (2021) (Ref. 7-5.80). A Habitat Suitability Assessment (HSA) then determined whether habitat was 'Suitable' or 'Unsuitable' for the relevant species, with the results used to prioritise survey efforts. The following parameters were used to categorise the value of the habitat into optimal, good, suitable but poor, or negligible (Ref. 7-5.9):

- Dry areas for burrows or nests:
- Bank profile

- Bank substrate
- Variation in water level
- Herbaceous vegetation
- Water permanence

3.2.3 All walkover surveys were carried out in daylight hours. In 2024, surveys focused on likely water crossing points as impacts to both otter and water vole are most likely to occur at these locations. The Survey Area includes up to 200 m of affected watercourses (100 m up and downstream from likely water crossing points, where possible) and, extending the search for potential otter holts within suitable terrestrial habitat up to 200 m from the watercourse. Due to evolving design the crossing points are subject to change and surveys will be updated as appropriate for the ES.

#### **Otter Survey**

3.2.4 The survey area consisted of riparian and terrestrial habitats identified within the desk study as being potentially appropriate for otter.

3.2.5 Searches for otter activity were carried out following guidance provided in 'Monitoring the Otter' (Ref. 7-5.10) and 'Ecology of European Otter' (Ref. 7-5.11). The survey method involved a systematic search of suitable habitats, where accessible, and recording all evidence of otter activity, including the following:

- **Holt entrances** – holes characteristically in riverbanks or under tree roots at river edges.
- **Couches** – typically an above-ground nest-like structure used as a rest site.
- **Hovers** – a sheltered structure, for example tree roots, typically used between foraging outings.
- **Footprints/tracks** – five toes which arch around the front of a large pad. Often seen in sand or soft mud deposits along rivers and under river bridges.
- **Otter trails and slides through vegetation** – otters use the same routes within their territory to access rivers, so the paths are usually worn leading down the banks to the river and may have a 'slide' at the end of well-worn

mud as they slide into the water. Where identified, mammal paths were followed by a surveyor to identify any further Field signs associated with the path.

- **Spraint (faeces)** – found in prominent locations adjacent to or along a river, for example on tree stumps, large rocks and ledges under bridges. Fresh spraint is usually black, tarry and sticky. It has a distinctive sweet-musky odour, which is not unpleasant.
- **Anal jelly** – a jelly-like secretion that smells strongly of otter and can vary in colour from pale brown to greenish and amber.
- **Other signs** – for example, dead otters.

### Water Vole Survey

3.2.6 The water vole field survey method was in accordance with ‘The Water Vole Conservation Handbook’ (Ref. 7-5.12) and ‘The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook’ (Ref. 7-5.8). This consisted of identifying the extent and distribution of water vole through searches of the riverbank for field signs indicating recent activity of water vole (i.e. feeding stations and latrines). Signs of past and potentially present activity (i.e. burrows) were also searched for during the survey.

3.2.7 The survey methodology involved recording all evidence of water vole activity, including:

- **Droppings** – these are 8-12 mm long and 4-5 mm wide, with a smooth ‘tic tac’ like shape, varying in colour from green to black, and odourless with a putty-like texture.
- **Latrines** – found throughout the territory, often comprising a pile of flattened droppings, with fresh droppings on top, used to mark range boundaries or favoured spots close to burrows.
- **Feeding stations** – comprise a neat pile of chewed feeding remains, often comprising lengths of vegetation up to 10 cm long, showing the marks of the two large incisors.
- **Burrows** – these are typically wider than they are high, with a diameter of 4-8 cm, and usually located along the water’s edge. Burrows are often

used by other small mammals and are not indicative of water vole presence in the absence of supporting Field signs.

- **Lawns** – around burrows there is often an area of grazed vegetation, surrounded by taller vegetation, these are most often produced when the female is nursing young.
- **Nests** – these comprise a large ball of shredded material, often woven into the bases of rushes and reeds, and are normally found in areas where the water table is high, such as wetlands.
- **Footprints** – as with other rodents, the footprints of the fore foot, show four toes in a star arrangement, with the hind foot showing five toes. The size of footprints for the hind foot is 26-34 mm.
- **Runways** – these are low tunnels within the vegetation, often adjacent to the water's edge.

3.2.8 Details of each survey visit for both otter and water vole are contained within Annex I: Walkover Survey Record.

### 3.3 Limitations

3.3.1 The desk study search area was based on the PEIR Boundary included as part of the Project at the time of request. Due to ongoing design development the PEIR Boundary has undergone updates, including additional land for potential Highway Works, which have not been included within this reporting. As a result, some non-statutory designated sites and species records are located >/< 2km from the PEIR Boundary. Figure 7-3 highlights current gaps between the requested 2 km desk study search area and the 2 km buffer of the updated PEIR boundary. These gaps only apply to data held by Cofnod, and an updated desk study will be undertaken and provided in the ES.

3.3.2 No access was available to the following Fields due to safety concerns: 162, 163, 152, 133, and 39. As a result, these fields have not yet been surveyed.

3.3.3 Dense vegetation occasionally obscured the watercourse banks. As a result, some field signs may have been missed during the surveys. However, in most cases dense vegetation did not obstruct the whole watercourse length, and thus survey efforts are deemed sufficient and missing a small number of field signs is

not a significant limitation to this report as presence/likely absence would have still been determined.

- 3.3.4 Field surveys to inform this PEIR have been undertaken within the Solar PV Site only, with no formal surveys undertaken to date within the proposed Cable Route Corridor, proposed Grid Connection Corridor or proposed Highway Works Land. The exact locations and design of these project elements have not been finalised and are subject to refinement. Surveys to date focused on likely crossing points for access upgrades where direct impacts to the watercourses are likely to occur. Surveys for otter and water vole are ongoing and will be reassessed following any changes to include any new or confirmed impacts on watercourses, such as access or cabling routes. This information will be presented in the final ES and submitted as part of the DCO application.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 Cofnod returned 31 recent records for otter within the Study Area, with no otter records located within the PEIR Boundary. Cofnod returned 26 recent records for water vole within the Study Area, with no water vole records located within the PEIR Boundary.

4.1.2 There are no designated sites with otter or water vole as qualifying features within the Solar PV Site or wider PEIR Boundary. However, a review of designated sites within 2 km of the PEIR Boundary, identified Llyn Fens Ramsar (0.26 km east of the Solar PV Site), which has otter listed as noteworthy fauna. As otter are a highly mobile species, their habitat will extend beyond the boundary of designated sites and therefore they are likely to occur within the PEIR Boundary.

### 4.2 Field Surveys

#### **Otter Field Surveys**

4.2.1 Based on habitat suitability assessments and observed field signs, the smaller ditches and streams were confirmed to provide commuting habitat for otters between larger rivers, ponds and lakes which are used for foraging. One potential otter resting site was identified within Maen Hir North Field 9, see Figure 7-5-1. The scope of survey to date, includes only areas with existing/proposed crossing point upgrades. Therefore, although Figure 7-5-1 shows all watercourses, only the currently surveyed lengths are depicted as suitable vs unsuitable at this stage.

4.2.2 The survey results for otter are contained within Table 7-5-2.



**Table 7-5-1. Otter Survey Results to Date**

<b>Field Number</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Results</b>
1	Stream	Many paw prints differing in sizes on the east bank toe under hawthorn on silty substrate. The 5th toe had slightly visible claw marks.
9	Ditch	One otter spraint on the ditch grassland margins and a potential otter resting site.
23	Stream	Two records for anal jelly and one spraint recorded along the stream bank.
25	Ditch	On the bank of the ditch there are several mammal runs and two otter spraints.
103	Stream	Spraint on the stream bank.

### **Water Vole Field Surveys**

- 4.2.3 Based on habitat suitability assessments, many streams and ditches provided suitable aquatic habitat to sustain water vole populations. Water levels were suitable whilst abundant marginal vegetation provided sufficient cover from predation.
- 4.2.4 The survey results for water vole are contained within Table 7-5-3 and displayed on Figure 7-5-2. Photographs of field evidence found are presented in Annex 1.

**Table 7-5-2. Water Vole Survey Results to Date**

<b>Field Number</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Results</b>
1	Stream	Adjacent to the stream a total of 26 latrines, 31 burrows, nine droppings, one feeding remains and one live observation was recorded.
9	Ditch	Three latrines and one feeding remains.
7	Stream (northwest)	Along the stream there were 12 latrines, eight burrows and three droppings.
11	Stream (centre)	One burrow and one latrine.
12	Stream (south)	Two latrines and one burrow.
14	Stream	One dropping
21	Ditch	Two latrines to the north of the ditch surveyed.
32	Ditch	Two burrows in use.
33	Stream (west)	Eight burrows, six droppings and 11 latrines.
33	Stream (north)	One latrine, one burrow, one dropping, two feeding remains.
33	Stream (east)	Four latrines and two burrows.
129	Stream	Two burrows and one dropping.
252	Ditch	One burrow.
262	Ditch	One burrow.

## 5 Summary

### **Otter**

- 5.1.1 Otter field observation clusters were highest in within Maen Hir North specifically Fields 1, 7 and 9, through to the Former Oil Depot in Fields 14 and 34 and Fields 25 and 26. It is likely that otter are using watercourses throughout the Solar PV Site for commuting and resting. The streams, ditches and ponds within the Solar PV Site will likely form part of otter territory that extends into higher quality foraging areas such as Llyn Alaw and various stream catchments, including the Wygyr and Goch tributaries which extend beyond the PEIR boundary.
- 5.1.2 There is limited evidence of otter activity within Maen Hir Central; however, presence was confirmed via a spraint within Field 103 north of Llyn Alaw. Otter activity in the Maen Hir Central area is likely concentrated within and around Llyn Alaw, which occurs beyond the Solar PV site and was not surveyed as part of the assessment.
- 5.1.3 No otter evidence was identified within Maen Hir South A or B. The streams are generally smaller through the southern portion of the Project and less well connected to better quality habitat. Surveys are ongoing and any additional observations in Maen Hir South will be reported in the ES.

### **Water Vole**

- 5.1.4 There were a total of 129 observations across 13 locations for water vole. Water vole field observations were concentrated within Maen Hir North, with the highest frequency in Fields 1 and 7 (91 observations). Observations were also frequent around the Former Oil Depot, in Fields 33 and 34.
- 5.1.5 Water vole observations were generally less frequent within the Maen Hir Central, with only three observations identified along the southern perimeter of Field 129.
- 5.1.6 Similarly, water vole observations were generally less frequent within Maen Hir South, with only two field observations along a ditch in Field 252 and 258 (Maen Hir South B).

## 6 References

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- Ref. 7-5.11. Chanin, P. (2003). Ecology of European Otter. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Ecology Series No.10 English Nature.
- Ref. 7-5.12. Strachan, R. Moorhouse, T. and Gelling, M. (2011). Water Vole Conservation Handbook. Third Edition. WildCRU, University of Oxford.

**Annex I: Walkover Survey Record**

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
CS and AC & CS and TA	1	1; 57	04/06/2024	06/09/2023	2023: 21°C, partly cloudy, light breeze, dry and excellent visibility. 2024: 14°C, overcast, gentle breeze, dry and excellent visibility. Surveys required.
N/A	4	2	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024
JM and AC	8	6	Screened out	14/09/2023	Crossing point discontinued in 2024 2023: 18°C, overcast, gentle breeze, dry and excellent visibility.
CS and AS	9	63	15/05/2024	23/07/2024	May: 17°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility. July: 18°C, clear cloud, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility. Could not survey west and north - no access. Only southern section done.
CS and AS	9	64	15/05/2024	24/07/2024	May: 17°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility. July: 16°C, overcast, moderate breeze, light drizzle and excellent visibility. Could not survey west and north - no access. Only southern section done.

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
CS and AS	11	None	15/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility.
JM and AC	11	6	Screened out	14/09/2023	Crossing point discontinued in 2024 2023: 18°C, overcast, gentle breeze, dry and excellent visibility.
AS	12	7; 9	15/05/2024	25/09/2023	2023: 17°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility. 2024: 17°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility. Very dense scrub over watercourse and access was very difficult.
CS and TA	14	8	11/04/2024	28/09/2023	2023: 16°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility. 2024: 12°C, overcast, moderate winds and slight rain.
CS and TA	21	None	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 7°C, broken/heavy clouds, gentle breeze, excellent visibility but recent rain.
CS and TA	25	60	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 7°C, broken/heavy clouds, gentle breeze, excellent visibility but recent rain.
CS and TA	27	3	12/04/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 12°C, scattered clouds, slight breeze, good visibility and dry. Dry ditch.

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
CS and TA	27	4	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 7°C, broken/heavy clouds, gentle breeze, excellent visibility but recent rain.
CS and TA	27	59	12/04/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 12°C, scattered clouds, slight breeze, good visibility and dry. Dry ditch.
CS and TA	29	5	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 7°C, broken/heavy clouds, gentle breeze, excellent visibility but recent rain. No ditch habitat present.
CS and AS	31	9	16/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
CS and AS	32	10	10/04/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 8°C, heavy clouds, fog and strong winds. Waterbody is a floating mat of vegetation.
CS and RR & CS and TA	33	9; 11	09/04/2024	26/09/2023	2023: 17°C, cloudy, moderate breeze, dry, excellent visibility. 2024: 8°C, overcast, strong breeze, good visibility and recent rain but dry during the survey
CS and RR & CS and TA	34	7; 8; 12	16/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
CS and RR	36	11	16/05/2024	29/09/2023	2023: 16°C, scattered clouds, gentle breeze, dry, excellent visibility. 2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
CS and RR	39	12; 13; 66	10/04/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 8°C, heavy clouds, fog and strong winds.
CS and RR	54	68	16/05/2024	12/09/2023	2023: 16°C, cloudy, gentle breeze, dry, excellent visibility. 2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
CS and RR	57	67; 68	16/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
JM and AC	58	67	16/05/2024	12/09/2023	2023: 16°C, cloudy, gentle breeze, dry, excellent visibility. 2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
JM and AC	64	14; 15	11/04/2024	07/09/2023	2023: 27°C, clear skies, gentle breeze, some light rain and excellent visibility. 2024: 15°C, scattered clouds, gentle breeze, dry with some light rain the day before and excellent visibility.



Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
AJ and EB	70	104	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, scattered clouds, still wind, recent rain and excellent visibility
AJ and EB	73	69	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, scattered clouds, still wind, recent rain and excellent visibility
AJ and EB	76	17	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, scattered clouds, still wind, recent rain and excellent visibility
N/A	78	18	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024
N/A	81	20	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024
N/A	85	103	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024
AJ and EB	88	70	05/06/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 12°C, scattered clouds, moderate winds but dry. Unsuitable habitat.
AJ and EB	98	21	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, scattered clouds, still wind, recent rain and excellent visibility
AJ and EB	103	55; 71	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, scattered clouds, still wind, recent rain and excellent visibility

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
AJ and EB	105	72; 110	14/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, scattered clouds, still wind, recent rain and excellent visibility
AJ and EB	114	73	15/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility
AJ and EB	125	106	15/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17 °C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility
AJ and EB	129	75	15/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, overcast, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility
TA and SR	133	107	07/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 14°C, overcast, no winds and fair visibility with no rain during the survey
TA and SR	137	102	07/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 14°C, overcast, no winds and fair visibility with no rain during the survey
TA and SR	138	102	07/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 14°C, overcast, no winds and fair visibility with no rain during the survey
TA and SR	144	81	08/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 12°C, overcast, low winds with slight drizzle.
TA and SR	145	81; 82	08/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 12°C, overcast, low winds with slight drizzle.

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
TA and SR	146	82	08/05/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 12°C, overcast, low winds with slight drizzle Unsuitable habitat.
TA and SR	148	99	07/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 14°C, overcast, no winds and fair visibility with no rain during the survey.
TA and SR	149	29	07/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 14°C, overcast, no winds and fair visibility with no rain during the survey.
TA and SR	150	29	07/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 14°C, overcast, no winds and fair visibility with no rain during the survey.
TA and SR	152	83; 84	05/06/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 14°C, overcast, gentle breeze, dry and excellent visibility. Unsuitable habitat.
TA and SR	153	83	05/06/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 14°C, overcast, gentle breeze, dry and excellent visibility Unsuitable habitat.
N/A	161	28	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024.
TA and SR	162	109	05/06/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 14°C, overcast, gentle breeze, dry and excellent visibility. Unsuitable habitat.

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
TA and SR	166	52	08/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 12°C, overcast, low winds with slight drizzle.
N/A	174	31; 32	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024.
TA and SR	180	50	10/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, sunny and clear with low winds. TA/SR - only 30% accessed in May.
TA and SR	181	87	10/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, sunny and clear with low winds.
TA and SR	182	86	06/06/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 11°C, partial clouds / /sunny, moderate winds and good visibility. Unsuitable habitat.
TA and SR	183	85	10/05/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 18°C, sunny and clear with low winds. Dry ditch.
TA and SR	185	87	10/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 18°C, sunny and clear with low winds.
AJ and EB	189	93	16/05/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility Dried out at crossing point.
N/A	197	51	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024.
AJ and EB	199	47	15/05/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 11°C, partial clouds / /sunny, moderate winds and good visibility.

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
					No watercourse - culverted.
N/A	201	33	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024.
N/A	202	34	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024.
AJ and EB	203	None	16/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
AJ and EB	204	90; 91	16/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
AJ and EB	217	101_a	15/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 11°C, partial clouds / /sunny, moderate winds and good visibility.
N/A	218	45; 46	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024.
AJ and EB	221	49	15/05/2024	N/A – Unsuitable	2024: 11°C, partial clouds / /sunny, moderate winds and good visibility. No watercourse - culverted.
N/A	225	35	Screened out	Screened out	Crossing point discontinued in 2024.
AJ and EB	229	96	16/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
AJ and EB	230	39; 95	16/05/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 17°C, scattered clouds, light air, dry, excellent visibility.
AJ and EB	251	97	06/06/2024	Unsurveyed	2024: 11°C, partial clouds / /sunny, moderate winds and good visibility.

Surveyors	Field Number	Water Crossing	Early Season Survey	Late Season Survey	Weather & Other Comments
TA and SR	252	98	09/05/2024	Unsurveyed	19°C, broken/heavy clouds, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility but some rain patches.
TA and SR	256	99_a	09/05/2024	Unsurveyed	19°C, broken/heavy clouds, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility but some rain patches.
TA and SR	258	40; 41	09/05/2024	Unsurveyed	19°C, broken/heavy clouds, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility but some rain patches.
TA and SR	262	100_a	09/05/2024	Unsurveyed	19°C, broken/heavy clouds, moderate breeze, dry and excellent visibility but some rain patches.

## Annex II: Field Evidence Example Photographs



Photograph 1: Water vole latrine



Photograph 2: Water vole burrow



Photograph 3: Water vole feeding remains



Photograph 4: Mammal run



Photograph 5: Otter anal jelly



Photograph 6: Otter spraint