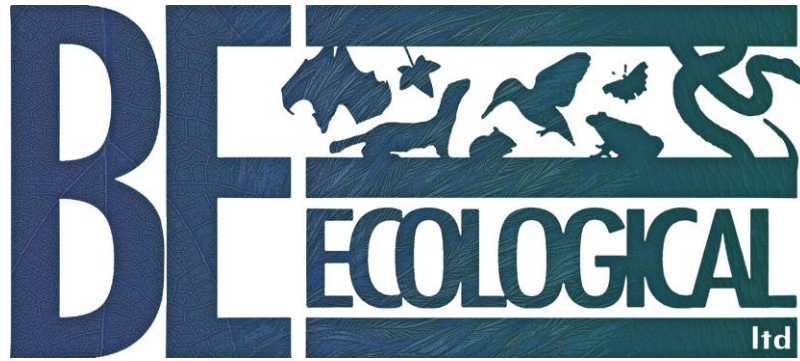




**MERTHYR MOTOR AUCTIONS, PANT ROAD, DOWLAIS,
MERTHYR TYDFIL**

EcIA OF THE HAFOD, MERTHYR TYDFIL

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ISSUE 1VE

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Merthyr Motor Auctions

Proposed Development: The Hafod

Ecological Appraisal

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

BE Ecological Ltd. was commissioned to undertake an Ecological Appraisal (PEA) to identify ecological constraints and potential solutions and to inform the design of a proposed development and planning application to develop land at The Hafod, Pant, Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales.

Therefore, a Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken, extended by the inclusion of a biological records data search and an assessment of the potential for protected species to be present on and adjacent to the site.

A number of habitats were recorded across the application boundary, including:

- Amenity grassland;
- Scattered trees;
- Fence;
- Hedgerow;
- Bare ground;

No evidence of botanical species of conservation concern was recorded during the survey.

No evidence of non-native invasive botanical species was observed on the application site.

There is a potential for the following protected species to be present on or adjacent to the site:

- Reptiles;
- Bats
- Amphibians; and
- Breeding birds

It is considered that the site has a generally low ecological value at a local level and that further ecological surveys are unnecessary.

It is recommended that:

- The site / development areas within the application boundary be cleared in accordance with a method statement to prevent causing harm to reptiles and amphibians;
- Mitigation outlined within the various sections of this report is implemented

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Merthyr Motor Auctions has submitted an application for an extension to their northernmost carpark. The grass is to be replaced with gravel and the area is to be lit on a permanent basis.

1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The red line development site boundary encloses an area of approximately 0.13ha and is located between Pant and Dowlais on the northern edge of Merthyr in South Wales (centred on NGR SO 06500838) (Figure 1). The site is directly adjacent to the northern boundary of the Merthyr Motor Auctions site.

The site is dominated by amenity grassland, there is a single relatively mature willow tree with three smaller scattered trees. The grassland is dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and is subject of intensive management in the form of regular mowing which results in a short tight sward.

The site is bounded to the south by a conifer hedge, approximately 3m in height. The site is fenced to the west. The site is unbounded to the north and east. There is an area of housing immediately to the east.

The site is located in a wholly urban area, being surrounded to the north, west and south by housing, roads and associated infrastructure. The site itself is not lit; however, streets and houses surrounding the site are constantly lit. The car park to the south has extremely large floodlights that light the area throughout the night.

Photos are at Appendix A.

Figure 1 – Detailed view of the site (approximate boundary boxed red)



Figure 2 - aerial overview of the area subject of this application



2 HABITATS SURVEY

2.1 BACKGROUND

A Phase 1 habitat survey was carried out to assess the existing habitats, identify any protected habitats that may be present, determine the impact of the proposed works on them, and identify any mitigation measures that may be necessary. This was done by undertaking both a biological records data search and a field survey.

The survey was undertaken on 3rd November 2019 and updated on 23rd July 2020.

Phase 1 habitat survey is a way of recording the basic habitat data to form a baseline level of knowledge of the ecology of a site and provide recommendations for future surveys if considered necessary.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

2.2.1 Desk study:

A biological data search was undertaken. Data was requested from the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc) relating to protected and priority species, species of local conservation concern and other species of conservation concern within a search area extending to a 2km radius from the centre of the application site in 2019 [Ref: 0190-514].

Please note, the data search was requested for the landholding, not the centre of the site. It is thought that this would cover any species relevant to this site, however, an updated data search will be required prior to full submission.

Refer to **section 4** for results.

2.2.2 Field survey:

Experienced surveyors from BE Ecological Ltd carried out a habitat assessment and mapping exercise in November 2019 that was then updated in July 2020 using the Phase 1 habitat survey technique. Nomenclature follows Stace (1997)¹.

Features of note are assigned Target Notes (TN) and referenced accordingly and described at **Table 7** in section 3.1.2 below and shown at **Figure 3**.

2.3 CONSTRAINTS

There were no other constraints to the surveys and assessments undertaken.

¹ Stace, C (1997). *New Flora of the British Isles* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge University Press

3 RESULTS

3.1 BIOLOGICAL DATA SEARCH

3.1.1 Species

There were no biological records identified by the data provider for the application site. The closest record to the development site was from approximately 40m away from the site. The records refer to black headed gull, kestrel, starling, lapwing and hedgehog.

The closest protected species record was of a brown long-eared bat 555m from the site.

The remaining records included plants, mammals, birds, invertebrates and birds.

3.1.2 Sites

No Nationally or Internationally important sites (e.g. SSSIs, SACs or SPAs) lie within the search buffer.

The following SINCs lie within the search buffer:

- Blaenmorlais
- Bryniau

The sites, despite their proximity to the development site, are notified for features which are not found on the development site and will not be influenced by the development in any way directly or indirectly. Therefore they will not be considered further in this report. The sites are separated from the development by roads and housing.

3.1 FIELD SURVEY

3.1.1 Habitat description

Please refer to **section 1.2** above.

3.1.2 Target notes

Table 7 - target notes:

Target note (TN#)	Description
TN1	Willow tree with potential PRF

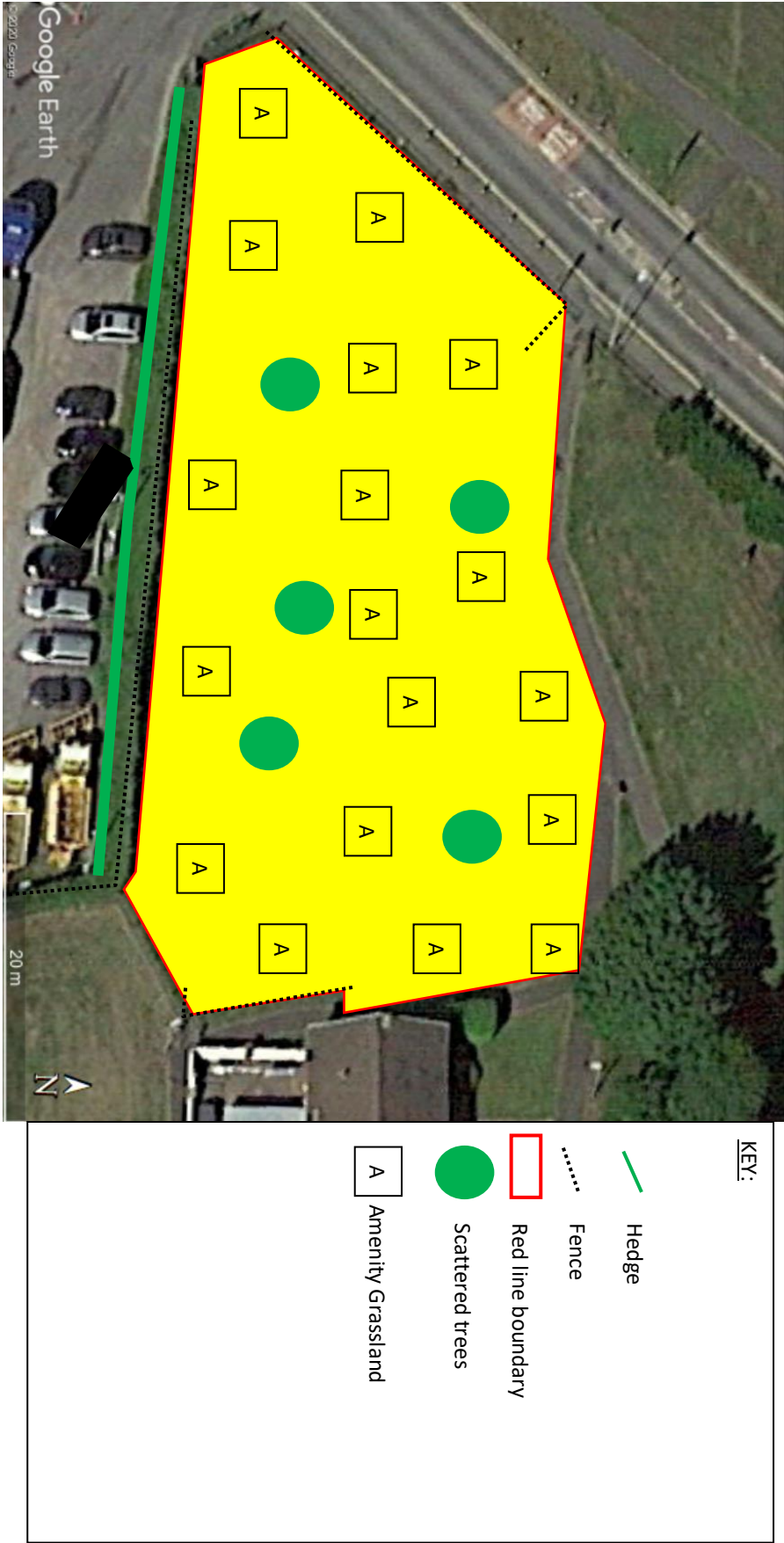
3.1.3 Habitats

A number of habitats were recorded across, and adjacent to, the survey area. These included:

- Amenity grassland
- Bare ground
- Scattered trees
- Fence

Please refer to **Figure 3**.

Figure 3 – Habitat survey results



4 HABITATS - EVALUATION, IMPACT CHARACTERISATION & ASSESSMENT

4.1 SCATTERED TREES

4.1.1 Scattered trees – evaluation

There is a single tree, a willow (*Salix sp.*) in the middle of the site. This species is native, common and widespread in the wider area. A large fissure has formed on the tree as a result of arson. This does not provide bats with any real roosting potential and no evidence of bats was found. The fissure is deep, upwards facing, fills with water and all areas of the fissure can be seen. It appears that the tree is the subject of antisocial behaviour on a regular basis.

There are an additional four much younger specimens throughout the site. These individual trees are semi-mature and do not provide potential roosting features (PRFs) useable by bats. The trees are a willow sp.

The trees are therefore considered to be of a **low local (site)** ecological importance.

4.1.2 Scattered trees - impact characterisation

It is anticipated that the trees will be removed.

4.1.3 Scattered trees - impact assessment without mitigation

It is considered that the removal of the trees will result in a certain permanent adverse impact on the habitat but have **no adverse** ecological impacts other than in relation to protected species which will be discussed in a later section of this report.

4.1.4 Scattered trees – potential mitigation measures

Mitigation in the short term is not required; however, consideration will be given to the planting of native species within the retained greenspace. A minimum of five specimen trees will be planted within the retained green space. Please see attached layout plan.

4.1.5 Scattered trees - impact assessment with mitigation

It is considered that with mitigation, the impacts will be low and at a local level only. Over time the new trees will grow and be of a better quality than those that are there currently.

4.1.6 Scattered trees – significance of the impact

Without mitigation:

It is anticipated that the significance of the impacts due to the development will be **slight**.

With mitigation:

It is anticipated that the significance of the impacts due to the development will be **neutral**.

4.2 AMENITY GRASSLAND

4.2.1 Amenity grassland - evaluation

This habitat covers the majority of the site and is common and widespread. There does not appear to be any diversity to the seed mix and species are dominated by perennial ryegrass with occasional species such as buttercup, clover and daisy.

4.2.2

Amenity grassland- impact characterisation

It is considered that without mitigation the entire area of this habitat would be lost to the development.

4.2.3 Amenity grassland - impact assessment without mitigation

It is considered that without mitigation there would be a **certain significant permanent adverse impact** on this habitat as a result of the development.

4.2.4 Amenity grassland – potential mitigation measures

Specific mitigation will not be required due to the low ecological value of this habitat type. The habitat is common and fast growing.

Mitigation will be provided in the form of enhancement of the grassland. Enhancement will then include maintenance and management of the retained grassland to benefit both reptiles and invertebrates, for example with a grass cut once or twice a year. Cuttings would be removed and used to create onsite compost areas (to benefit reptiles) and a hibernacula could be introduced (some of the onsite rubble could be used as part of this). The grass cutting regime would be designed to allow grasses and wildflowers to seed the area for the following season. These habitats will be cut twice per year using hand tools once in March/April and again no earlier than 15th July in order to mimic hay meadow management. Emorsgate EM2 is the suggested species mix. Supplementary planting of wildflower species could be used to enhance the area (yellow rattle would also be a useful addition to reduce the growth of the more vigorous grasses).

4.2.5 Amenity grassland - impact assessment with mitigation

It is considered that with mitigation there will be a **certain minor short term adverse impact** on this habitat as a result of the development.

4.2.6 Amenity grassland - significance of the impact

Without mitigation:

It is considered that the impacts of the development would be of a **slight** significance.

With mitigation:

It is considered that the impacts of the development would be of a **neutral** significance.

4.3 HEDGES

4.3.1 Hedges - evaluation

There is a single hedgerow to the south of the site. The hedge is a single species evergreen conifer hedge. The hedge is fast growing and appears to have been planted for screening of the existing carpark.

Within the context of the proposed development and the application site, it is therefore considered that the hedges within the survey area are of a **low** ecological value at a **local (site)** level. The only real value will be to those species it may provide shelter for in addition to foraging and commuting bats.

4.3.2 Hedges - impact characterisation

The hedge will be retained in its entirety.

4.3.3 Hedges - impact without mitigation

It is considered that without mitigation there would be a **certain minor permanent adverse** impact at a **local (site)** level.

4.3.4 Hedges - potential mitigation measures

Mitigation will not be required, enhancements will include:

- Planting a new evergreen hedge and a new native species hedge
- Providing ongoing management to ensure that all hedges remain as dense barriers as well as being of a conservation benefit and aesthetically pleasing.
- Please see included landscaping plan for details

4.3.5 Hedges - impact with mitigation

It is considered that with mitigation there would be no impact at a **local (site)** level.

4.3.6 Hedges - significance of the impact

Without mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **neutral**

With mitigation

It is considered that with appropriate mitigation, the significance of the impact is moderate **positive**.

5 SPECIES - EVALUATION, IMPACT CHARACTERISATION & ASSESSMENT

5.1 BATS

5.1.1 Bats – evaluation

Please see BE Ecological Ltd, The Hafod, Bat Survey, 2020) for full details.

Bats are protected by international and domestic legislation, a reflection of their increasingly threatened status; bats are therefore of **high** international value.

There are trees on the development site; however, they do not offer bats any potential roosting habitat and are classified as being of a negligible potential for them.

Overall, within the context of the surrounding land use, it is considered that the development site is of negligible value to and for roosting bats.

The site provides some foraging habitat for bats. Please see BE Ecological Ltd, The Hafod, Bat Survey, 2020) for full details.

5.1.2 Bats – Impact characterisation

It is considered that there will be no adverse impacts on roosting bats providing that appropriate mitigation is implemented.

Bats will be able to continue using the boundaries of the site, new hedgerows and the specimen trees for foraging purposes during the operational phase of the development.

5.1.3 Bats - impact assessment without mitigation

It is considered that there will be a **certain minor medium term adverse impact** on bat foraging activity at a **local (site)** level.

5.1.4 Bats - potential mitigation measures

Although it is unlikely that bat roosts will be affected by the proposed development and bat commuting and foraging habitat is not protected *per se* it is proposed to undertake the following actions:

- All lighting requirements will be minimised and be of a type which causes least impact on bats;
- All lighting will be directed away from retained vegetation and boundary features;
- New hedgerows will be planted on the site. These hedgerows will take the form of a new evergreen hedge and a new native species hedge. Plants that will be used will be older plants so they do not take long periods of time to grow
- A licensed bat ecologist will be “on call” for the duration of the project in the unlikely event that bats are discovered, in which case the work will cease immediately, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) will be contacted. A development licence may be required prior to any further work being carried out. No further work will be undertaken without the approval of NRW.
- A lighting plan will be provided for the site to ensure that dark corridors are available should bats choose to use them

Please see landscaping and lighting plans provided for confirmed detail.

5.1.5 Bats - impact without mitigation

It is considered that without mitigation there would be an **unlikely minor short term adverse** impact at a **local (site)** level.

5.1.6 Bats - significance of the impact

Without mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **slight**.

With mitigation

It is considered that with appropriate mitigation, the significance of the impact is **neutral**.

5.2 BREEDING BIRDS

5.2.1 Summary

Breeding birds are likely to use the hedgerow and trees on the site. The amenity grassland is cut regularly and it is too disturbed for ground nesting birds to make use of it.

5.2.2 Breeding birds - evaluation

Due to the legislative protection afforded to them, breeding birds are considered be of **medium – high national** importance.

There is suitable habitat for birds to utilise on the site.

Within the context of the site and the proposed development, it is considered that breeding birds are of **low local** importance.

5.2.3 Birds - impact characterisation

The removal of any hedge and trees would reduce the number of opportunities available to breeding birds in terms of nesting area, cover / shelter and foraging.

If vegetation removal was to be undertaken during the breeding season, there is the potential for birds to be disturbed killed or injured and / or their nests to be disturbed, damaged or destroyed.

5.2.4 Birds - impact without mitigation

It is considered that without mitigation, there would be an **probable minor short term adverse** impact at a **local (site)** level.

5.2.5 Birds - potential mitigation measures

Mitigation will be required and should include (but not be limited to) the following measures:

- All vegetation and brash removal should be undertaken outwith the breeding season i.e. between mid-August / September and April inclusive;
- Any clearance close to the start and end of this period should only be undertaken following an assessment by a suitably experienced ecologist as the breeding season is not fixed and is subject to annual variation;
- Where clearance is required during the breeding season, all areas should be subject to an assessment no more than 48 hours in advance to check for the presence of breeding birds;
- Should evidence of breeding birds, in particularly nests, be recorded, no clearance may be undertaken within 15m of any nest site until such time as the nest is vacated naturally; and
- A new evergreen hedge, at least three specimen trees and a single native species hedge will be planted on the site.

5.2.6 Birds - impact with mitigation

It is considered that with mitigation, there would be a **very unlikely minor short term adverse** impact at a **local** level.

5.2.7 Birds - significance of the impact

Without mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **slight**.

With mitigation

It is considered that with appropriate mitigation, the significance of the impact is **neutral**.

5.3 AMPHIBIANS

5.3.1 Summary

There are records of great crested newt within the data search, however, they are isolated by roads and housing.

There are no waterbodies on the site which would provide great crested newts or other amphibians with breeding habitat.

The grassland is so intensely managed, it is considered unlikely that this species will make use of the site.

Given the lack of waterbodies on the development site and the general management of the site, it is considered unlikely that great crested newts will be present on the site.

5.3.2 Amphibians - evaluation

Amphibians are protected by UK legislation and therefore they are of **medium to high national** ecological importance. Great crested newts are protected by international legislation incorporated into UK legislation by the Habitat Regulations (as amended).

Overall the site appears to be of a generally **low** value to this group as the dominant habitat type (improved grassland) appears to be less suitable due to constant heavy mowing pressure.

5.3.3 Amphibians - impact characterisation

It is possible but thought unlikely that animals may be killed or injured if they make use of the development site

There is no suitable hibernation habitat present on the site.

5.3.4 Amphibians - impact characterisation without mitigation

It is considered that in the absence of mitigation there would be a **probable minor short term adverse** impact at a **local (site)** level.

5.3.5 Amphibians - mitigation measures

As long as amphibian presence is assumed in potentially low numbers and site clearance is undertaken in accordance with an appropriate method statement, it is considered that a full trapping and translocation exercise is not required, and that habitat manipulation and denial is an appropriate method of ensuring that reptiles are not harmed during the site clearance.

Therefore, the following measures will be adopted:

- Clearance will be conducted in accordance with a Method Statement to ensure that should amphibians be found in the course of site clearance or any other development activity, they will not be harmed and can be adequately cared for
- Clearance will only be undertaken during the active season (March-October, inclusive);
- Clearance outwith this period is possible, but depends on weather and temperatures being suitable to ensure that animals are likely to be active;

- There will be no clearance of hibernation features outwith the active season; and
- Animals will be excluded from entering or re-entering the site during clearance/operational phase of works by ensuring that the site is kept as bare ground i.e. clear of any vegetation or other shelter.

5.3.6 Amphibians - impact characterisation with mitigation

It is considered that there will be an **unlikely minor short term adverse impact** at a **local (site)** level as a result of the proposed development.

5.3.7 Amphibians - significance of the impact

Without mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **slight**.

With mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **neutral..**

5.4 REPTILES

5.4.1 Summary

No reptile survey was undertaken due to the fact it is considered likely that the site does not support reptiles, or if it does, it will be in low numbers due to the short sward of the amenity grassland and the lack of species diversity. The area is disturbed frequently.

The habitat assessment looked for features which would be attractive to reptiles such as:

- south facing banks;
- varied profile ground form;
- basking areas;
- vegetation cover;
- structurally diverse vegetation;
- potential hibernation sites; and
- evidence of suitable prey sources.

5.4.2 Reptiles - evaluation

Reptiles are protected by UK legislation and therefore they are of **medium to high national** ecological importance.

Overall the site appears to be of a generally **low** value to reptiles as the dominant habitat type (improved grassland) appeared to be generally unsuitable due to mowing pressure and disturbance.

5.4.3 Reptiles - impact characterisation

It is possible that reptiles may be killed or injured during works if the grass is left to grow prior to the clearance of the development. The site is mowed regularly during the summer months.

There is no suitable hibernation habitat present on the site.

5.4.4 Reptiles - impact characterisation without mitigation

It is considered that in the absence of mitigation there would be a **probable minor short term adverse** impact at a **local (site)** level.

5.4.5 Reptiles - mitigation measures

As long as reptile presence is assumed (in the unlikely event of) and site clearance is undertaken in accordance with an appropriate method statement, it is considered that a full trapping and translocation exercise is not required, and that habitat manipulation and denial is an appropriate method of ensuring that reptiles are not harmed during the site clearance.

Therefore, the following measures will be adopted:

- Clearance will be conducted in accordance with a Method Statement to ensure that should reptiles be found in the course of site clearance or any other development activity, they will not be harmed and can be adequately cared for
- Clearance will only be undertaken during the reptile active season (April-October, inclusive);

- Clearance outwith this period is possible, but depends on weather and temperatures being suitable to ensure that reptiles are likely to be active;
- There will be no clearance of hibernation habitat outwith the active season;
- Reptiles will be excluded from entering or re-entering the site during clearance/operational phase of works by ensuring that the site is kept as bare ground i.e. clear of any vegetation or other shelter

5.4.6 Reptiles - impact characterisation with mitigation

It is considered that there will be an **unlikely minor short term adverse impact** at a **local (site)** level as a result of the proposed development.

5.4.7 Reptiles - significance of the impact

Without mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **slight**.

With mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **neutral**.

5.5 INVERTEBRATES

5.5.1 Summary

A brief habitat assessment indicated that the site can provide some limited habitat for common species of invertebrate.

5.5.2 Invertebrates - evaluation

No invertebrates are protected by legislation with the exception of the large blue butterfly (*Phengaris arion*); this species is not found in this region and will therefore not be considered further. Other species of invertebrate are listed on Schedule 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and are therefore of a **high national (Welsh)** ecological importance. Of these, the marsh fritillary butterfly (*Euphydryas aurinia*) is present in good numbers in the area surrounding the development site with the Blaen Cynon SAC being designated for its presence.

The food plant for the marsh fritillary butterfly (Devil's-bit scabious – *Succisa pratensis*) is not present on the site.

Overall the site appears to be of a generally **low** value to invertebrates as the dominant habitat type amenity grassland appears to be kept as a short sward as a result of constant mowing; it is considered that the hedgerow and trees may provide some habitat, however, species diversity at these locations are also low.

5.5.3 Invertebrates - impact characterisation

It is probable that the site clearance will result in the loss of habitats suitable for this group and that slow moving species may be killed or injured during the clearance.

5.5.4 Invertebrates - impact characterisation without mitigation

It is considered that in the absence of mitigation there would be a **probable moderate short term adverse** impact at a **local (site)** level.

5.5.5 Invertebrates - mitigation measures

Therefore, the following measures will be adopted:

- Minimisation of vegetation removal through design;
- A phased site clearance to ensure that not all the habitat is cleared at once;
- A new native species hedgerow will be planted
- A wildflower seed mix will be used within the onsite rain garden

5.5.6 Invertebrates - impact characterisation with mitigation

It is considered that there will be an **unlikely minor short term adverse impact** at a **local (site)** level as a result of the proposed development.

5.5.7 Invertebrates - significance of the impact

Without mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **slight**.

With mitigation

It is considered that the significance of the impact is **neutral**.

6 CONCLUSION

A number of habitats were identified at the proposed development site. Of the habitats identified, it was determined that the majority were of a relatively low value as a result of a low species diversity.

Overall, it is concluded that the site is of a low ecological value at a local site level.

The presence of reptiles and amphibians should be assumed in very small numbers, however, this is considered less likely.

The presence of breeding birds should be assumed between March and August in the trees and hedgerow.

Mitigation will be required as described in the individual sections above.

This PEA and the recommendations as described in the sections above will require updating on completion of a final design and layout and in light of any planning requirements.

7 REFERENCES

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2016). *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal*, 2nd Edition. (Winchester)

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2001) *Handbook for phase 1 habitat survey: A technique for environmental audit*. JNCC.

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The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) (as amended) (HMSO).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Welsh Assembly Government (2007). *Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning*.

APPENDIX A - PHOTOS

Plate 1 – view looking east



Plate 2- view looking west



Plate 3- view looking north



Plate 4- view looking south



Plate 1- Photograph of single Willow tree



Plate 2- photograph of Willow and short sward of amenity grassland beyond



Appendix B – Reptile Method Statement

A brief walkover of the site will be undertaken in the first instance to ensure that there are no species present on this site not covered by the below method statement.

1. All clearance will be supervised by a suitably experienced ecologist until such time as the ecologist states that direct supervision is not necessary.
2. The ecologist will be on call for the duration of clearance works.
3. Vegetation will be cleared from directly affected areas only and the area minimised wherever possible.
4. All vegetation and brash removal will preferentially be undertaken during the winter months i.e. between November and February inclusive.
5. If this is not possible, all areas to be cleared must be subject of a finger-tip search by an ecologist immediately prior to and during any clearance work; the ecologist should also be present while all post hole excavation (or other ground breaking should it be required) is being undertaken.
6. Should evidence of breeding birds, in particularly nests, be recorded, no clearance may be undertaken within 5m of any nest site until such time as the nest is vacated naturally.
7. No spraying of vegetation to be carried out. Vegetation will be maintained close to ground using repeated cutting only..
8. Woody vegetation will be cleared (ONLY IF NECESSARY) to ground level using a chainsaw with all arisings stacked in unaffected areas NOT on areas of tall vegetation (over 300mm). Where necessary, stumps and roots will only be removed by machine (under ecological supervision) once the clearance is complete.
9. All woody vegetation will be checked by the ecologist prior to cutting for the presence of bird nests.
10. Vegetation will be cut in three phases. The first phase will reduce the vegetation height to 150mm; the second will reduce it to ~50mm; the third phase will reduce the height to as close to ground level as possible. All cuts will have a period of 24 hours between each cut.
11. All vegetation cutting will be directional. This ensures that any animals present will be pushed from the site into adjacent retained habitats.
12. After clearance, if the vegetation is allowed to regrow above 150mm high, it will be cut and raked as described above.
13. Where necessary, potential hibernacula (brash, log piles, stumps, roots etc) will only be cleared during the active season (March-October) while day time temperatures are consistently over 12°C for a period of at least seven days prior as otherwise reptiles may be killed or injured as a result of inconsistent (low) temperatures (during the day and night) and/or low prey availability. Potential hibernacula will only be dismantled by hand unless the supervising ecologist gives the approval for machine dismantling.
14. If a bird's nest is observed on the site, the ecologist will assess it to determine whether or not it is active, the species concerned, the lifecycle state of any occupants and provide advice on next steps.
15. If reptiles are observed within the clearance area during the works, a decision on how to deal with them will be made on site in light of the conditions on site at the time and the state of the animals themselves. There are three options for dealing with them:
 - It may be possible to leave the animals alone to find their own way into cover, depending on where they are seen, what they are doing and their apparent activity levels; or

- Capture, remove from site and take into temporary captivity until such time as they can be released adjacent to the cleared area (a vivarium has been prepared in case it is required); or
- Should conditions allow, capture and translocate the animals to a safe area immediately adjacent to the site.

16. Habitat and the unlikely presence for other species (e.g. dormice, otter, great crested newts & other amphibians etc.) can be identified and avoided by following this method statement.

17. In the event that a European Protected Species such as great crested newt or dormouse is observed during the clearance,, all work will stop, and the ecologist consulted. It will be necessary to consult with Natural Resources Wales; further surveys and a development licence may be required before work can recommence.

If large numbers of reptiles are discovered, an offsite receptor area should be suggested to be agreed by the County Ecologist.

NOTE: should it be required, a Natural Resources Wales development licence for European Protected Species is likely to take up to 30 working days to be issued following submission

Please note, the above methodology will also allow for the safety of other animals such as other amphibians and hedgehog.

The site will be kept as close to bare ground as possible via repeated cutting to ensure that reptiles do not re-colonise the site.

1. Vegetation reduced to 150mm	Any time of year (following an inspection for breeding birds if undertaken during active season)
2. Vegetation reduced to 50mm	24 hours after first cut
3. Vegetation cut to ground level	24 hours after second cut
4. Removal of potential hibernacula (stumps, rubble piles etc)	Preferably March to October or when temperatures have been above 12 degrees for a period of seven days or more
The site will be kept as close to bare ground as possible via repeated cutting to ensure that reptiles do not re-colonise the site.	

LAYOUT PLAN

