

RON CARPENTER
LAND AT YR HEN LLAETHDY, ABERFAN
PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

JULY 2020



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SUMMARY

Ecoleg LLP were commissioned by Ron Carpenter to undertake a preliminary ecological appraisal of an area of land at Yr Hen Llaethdy, Aberfan in order establish existing baseline ecological conditions at the site in pursuit of outline planning permission for a detached dwelling (Planning ref: P/20/0113).

Desk based consultation identified that there are no statutory sites designated for nature conservation within 1km of the application site. There are several locally designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) within 1km of the site including West Aberfan and Tarren-y-Gigfran located within a 200m radius. However, these sites are separated by existing residential development and barriers including the A470. As such they were not considered of particular ecological relevance to the site. The data search returned a number of records including a variety of bird, bat, terrestrial mammal, moss, liverwort, invertebrates and fish species within 1km of the application site.

A walkover survey identified the Aberfan site supports a limited range of habitat types with the majority of the site occupied by a mosaic of short perennial /ephemeral and ruderal vegetation with successional scrub and young trees scattered across site and along its southern boundary.

Recommendations are made to consider at least partial retention of the southern boundary as a green link and wildlife corridor as the main feature of ecological value within the context of the site. The lower section of the split-level site is considered the most suitable area for development and is the obvious choice for a detached dwelling with the upper tier left as a garden space.

Further considerations include the avoidance of the bird nesting season during vegetation clearance works (March- August) and the potential opportunity for a bird or bat box to be installed on a retained tree or new building as part of the development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Ecoleg LLP were commissioned by Ron Carpenter to undertake a preliminary ecological appraisal of an area of land at Yr Hen Llaethdy, Aberfan in order establish existing baseline ecological conditions at the site in pursuit of outline planning permission for a detached dwelling (Planning ref: P/20/0113).
- 1.2 The site is located west of a junction between Pleasant View and Yr Hen Llaethdy, Aberfan (central grid reference ST0721899385). It lies within an existing development immediately north of dwelling no. 24 and comprises a small area of <0.05ha as shown in Appendix I. The site mostly consists of previously disturbed/bare-ground areas overgrown with a mix of ephemeral/short perennial and tall ruderal vegetation bordered by scattered scrub and immature trees along the southern edge of site.
- 1.3 This report presents the findings of an ecological desk study and Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey undertaken at Aberfan site in July 2020, as well as identifying any ecological constraints/opportunities associated with the development of the site.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 In order to establish the baseline ecological conditions at the site a combination of desk-based consultation, review of previous ecological reports and Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey were undertaken in July 2020.

Desk study

- 2.2 The desk study involved consultation with the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC) to identify any records of rare, protected or notable flora and fauna at the candidate site and within a radius of 1km extending from the site boundary. The search criteria also included information relating to the location and citation details (where available) for any sites designated for their nature conservation interest such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.3 The fieldwork was undertaken on 10th July 2020 by a suitably experienced ecologist¹ and followed standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey protocol (JNCC, 1990) as amended by the Institute of Environmental Assessment (1995). All habitats within and immediately adjacent to the site boundary, where possible, were classified and mapped as accurately as possible. Habitats considered to have potential to support rare, protected or otherwise notable species of flora and fauna were noted, as were any direct signs of these species (e.g. Eurasian badger *Meles meles* setts and dung-pits). Incidental observations of birds on or flying over the site were also recorded and any incidence of invasive weed species (e.g. Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*) noted.
- 2.4 A map of habitats was drawn up and target notes were used to identify features of ecological interest. Where possible, habitats were cross-referenced to any relevant important UK or Wales priority habitats as identified under Section 7 of the Environment Act (Wales) 2016.
- 2.5 During the field survey any trees or buildings at the site were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats and were categorised in relation to the bat roosting features (BCT, 2016). The categories are as follows:
- **Known or confirmed roost**

¹ Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM), with 6yrs experience of habitat and protected species surveys
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- **High** - A tree or structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
- **Moderate** – A tree or structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
- **Low** – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. Or: A tree of sufficient size & age to contain PRFs (Potential Roost Features) but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.
- **Negligible** – Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bat

Survey Constraints

2.6 No significant survey constraints were observed.

3.0 RESULTS

Desk Study

SEWBreC Records

3.1 Consultation with SEWBreC confirmed that there are no statutory designated sites for nature conservation located within 1km of the site. However, the data search did identify that there are a number of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) located within 1km search radius including Afon Taf, Mynydd y Capel Common, West of Aberfan, Tarran y Gigfran, St Tydfil Forest and Merthyr. The nearest of which is West of Aberfan, located approx. 67m north, and Tarran y Gigtan St Tydfil Forest, located approx. 170m south west. A summary of each SINC returned by the SEWBreC desk study is set out in Table 1. below.

Table 1. List of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) Within 1km Search Buffer

Afon Taf	208	The major river in the County Borough. Includes areas of bankside habitats, particularly towards the south where the river corridor is less industrialised than further north. Associated habitats are chiefly semi-natural woodland, including areas of ancient semi-natural woodland and linear wet woodlands. There are also numerous neutral grasslands, scrub patches and bracken stands, as well as small areas of marshy grassland and tall herb vegetation. Notable features of the river course include cobble banks which support localised plants. Otter occurs throughout the length of the river which is known to be of value to a wide variety of birds, fish, bats and reptiles.
Mynydd -y-Capel Common	741	Area of upland common land and ffridd occupying part of the hilltop between the Taf and Bargoed Taf valleys. Supports a mosaic of habitats characteristic of dry acid soils, particularly unimproved and semi-improved acid grasslands, with bracken slopes and small areas of heathland gorse scrub. There are numerous outcrops of acidic rock and small disused quarries.
West Aberfan	67	Two parcels of land situated on the lower slopes of the Taff valley between Aberfan and the A470. The southern areas of the site support a mosaic of damp neutral grasslands, semi-natural broadleaved woodlands along minor streams and bracken stands. The woodlands include areas of wet woodland) and drier areas. The neutral grasslands are generally species-rich and include both unimproved and semi-improved areas. The northern portion of the site consists of a colliery spoil substrate that has revegetated with a mosaic of neutral grasslands and mixed species scrub.
Tarren-y-Gigfran	170	Semi-upland valleyside slopes above the A470, including a large disused quarry with scree and outcrops, supporting dry heathland, bracken slopes and semi-improved acid grassland. Also includes numerous areas of semi-natural woodland, including ancient semi-natural woodland and wet woodland along the course of small streams. A second, smaller parcel of land to the west of the main part of the site comprises a hilltop heathland. The site is partially enclosed by conifer plantation.
Merthyr Vale	549	Complex mosaic of ffridd habitats above the Afon Taf. These comprise mainly semi-natural woodlands, acid grasslands, dry heathlands and bracken slopes. Other habitats include dense and scattered scrub, marshy grassland and neutral grassland. There is also a large disused quarry with associated spoil tips which have re-vegetated with heathland. In the north of the site is a large regraded colliery spoil tip supporting acid grassland with several species of interest.

3.2 While some of the SINCs lie close to site, the immediate surrounding residential development and infrastructure such as the A470 makes the SINCs ecologically relevant only to the more mobile

species such as birds and bats. As such, the occasional visit to site from a commuting and/or foraging individual – bird or bat – from the surrounding SINC's cannot be precluded.

- 3.3 The data search returned 301 species records, 132 of which are priority species, 44 of conservation concern and 99 which are locally important. There are also 26 records of invasive species within 1km of the application site.
- 3.4 One plant species of conservation concern was noted; Charlock *Sinapsis arvensis*. Several locally important species of Moss (12) e.g. Brunton's Dog-tooth *Cynodontium bruntonii* and Liverworts (7) e.g. Grove Earwort *Scapania nemorea* were also noted.
- 3.5 Invertebrate species recorded include a number of moths and butterflies that are likely associated with the neighbouring woodlands. Also, one or two species such as Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus* and Small Pearl-Bordered Fritillary *Boloria selene* damselflies which could be supported on the site itself.
- 3.6 The 119 bird species returned included Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*, Tree pipit *Anthus trivialis*, Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*, Song thrush *Turdus philomelos* and Barn owl *Tyto alba*.
- 3.7 Amphibians known to occur in the area are Common Frog *Rana temporaria* and Common Toad *Bufo bufo* with 14 counts of Slow Worm *Anguis fragilis* and one Common Lizard *Zootoca vivipara* comprising the reptile records.
- 3.8 Mammals recorded include the typical range of bat species including the rarer Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, Weasel *Mustela nivalis amphibius*, Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* and Otter *Lutra lutra*.
- 3.9 Records of invasive non-native species including Himalayan Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster simonsii*, Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, Canadian Waterweed *Elodea nuttallii*, Himalayan Honeysuckle *Leycesteria formosa*, Rainbow Trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss* and Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* were also associated with the surrounding 1km area.

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 3.10 Type and extent of habitats recorded in July 2020 at the candidate site are illustrated on the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Plan with accompanying Target Notes in Appendix III. The Aberfan site

supports a limited range of habitat types with the majority of the site occupied by short perennial and ephemeral vegetation. However, this habitat also showed evidence and encroachment of earlier - as well as later - successional communities such as interspersed tall ruderal vegetation, scattered scrub (Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* dominated young ground level growth), immature trees and hardstanding - including a small metal storage container/ shed. The site is split over two levels; A steep bank separates the intended (lower) building plot area from the intended (upper) garden area to the west (see plate 1).

Ephemeral/Short Perennial

- 3.11 The majority of the site comprises the intended garden area; a strip of the field above the lower section which is characterised by patchy low growing perennials of limited floral diversity interspersed with ruderal herbs, grasses and as mentioned immature Bramble (Plate 2). As such this top area was mapped as Ephemeral/Short Perennial (see Appendix III), although it should be noted that succession toward a species poor/rank grassland habitat as well as encroachment of scrub (Bramble thicket) are likely tendencies if left unmanaged.
- 3.12 Docks *Rumex sp.* (Broad-leaved *obtusifolius*, Curly *crispus*), Cow Parsnip *Heracleum sphondylium* and Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* dominate much of the upper section of site with frequent distribution of Common Sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*. Other species present included Soft Rush *Juncus effusus*, Self-Heal *Prunella vulgaris*, Horsetail *Equisetum sp.*, White Clover *Trifolium sp.*, Bird's Foot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, Dandelion *Taxicum officinale* and grasses such as Cock's Foot *Dactylis glomerata* Meadow Foxtail *Alopus pratensis* and Bent grasses *Agrostis sp.*

Plate 1 – Split level separating potential building plot from garden



Tall Herb & Fern

- 3.13 The site contains interspersed examples of tall ruderal vegetation predominantly in the form of Willowherbs (Great *Epilobium hirsutum* and Rosebay *Chaemaeneion angustifolium*), Cow Parsnip, Cocks Foot and Nettles which were also present on the more disturbed lower section of the site. Other non-ruderal vegetation such as Lady Fern *Anthyrium filix-femina* and *Dryopteris* sp. also occurred.

Scattered scrub and trees

- 3.14 Woody species were generally limited to the site border and land immediately adjacent to site, such as a group of Alders *Ulmus glabra* and a Silver Birch *Betula pendula* north of the site boundary. The southern edge of site was marked by scrub and semi-mature trees dominated by Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* but included incidental Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Hazel *Corylus avellane* and Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*.

Bare ground

- 3.15 This feature was more prominent in previous years with much of the entire site being disturbed around 2002 according to the client, this is consistent with historical aerial photos of the site on google earth. In recent years - although patchy in the upper area - bare ground has mainly become limited to the lower half of the site and is slightly overgrown.

Invasive species

- 3.16 No evidence of any plant species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) was noted during the survey.

Buildings

- 3.17 No buildings were located on site. structures within the site boundary are temporary and were considered of negligible potential to support roosting bats or other species of concern.

Plate 2. Patchy vegetation and successional communities



Fauna

- 3.18 In the course of the survey, a search of field signs for protected or notable species was undertaken and the potential of the habitats to support these species considered. In the context of this report, these species meet any of the following criteria:
- Species protected by British or international law;
 - Priority species included on Section 7 (Environment Act, Wales);
 - Nationally rare or nationally scarce species;
 - Species of Conservation Concern (e.g. JNCC Red List, RSPB/BTO Red or Amber Lists);

- 3.19 Given the location, size, types and extents of onsite habitats (their general unsuitability) and the desk study records (or lack thereof); no evidence to suggest the current use of the site by Badger, Dormice, Otter, Barn Owl, Water Vole or Great Crested Newt exists and as such these species are not considered further in this report.

Roosting Bats

- 3.20 No trees located within, or adjacent to, the site boundary were considered to have potential to support roosting bats. Mostly, the trees were akin to immature scrub or semi-mature and lacked any features which could be used by bats such as rot holes, fractured limbs, deadwood, dense ivy etc.

Commuting/Foraging Bats

- 3.21 Similarly, there were few opportunities identified for foraging and commuting bats with exception to the scrub and scattered trees providing a link and potential flight path and/or foraging routes. Although the site is surrounded by residential plots, occasional use by a foraging or commuting bat cannot be precluded, in particular the southern boundary line of scrub and trees.

Birds

- 3.22 A number of birds typical of area (residential/agricultural fringe) were observed during the survey including S7 priority species such as House Sparrow, Starling as well as red and amber listed Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* and Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* (Birds of Conservation Concern 4). Other species observed at the site included Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*, Blackbird *Turdus merula*, Magpie *Pica pica* and Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*.

Reptiles

- 3.23 Several records of Slow Worm were identified by the desk study and are located over 650m from the site and a single Common Lizard record was returned on the edge of the search buffer (at 1003m dist.) Grasses have not yet established themselves enough to provide significant foraging opportunities or vegetative/protective cover such as with rough grasslands. Given the recent history of the site, lack of nearby records and no existing suitable adjacent habitat or links to habitat further afield, it is considered that any reptile presence is unlikely and development of a single plot on this land is unlikely to have any impact on UK reptile species. Therefore, reptiles will not be considered further in this report.

Invertebrates

- 3.24 With the exception of a Small Pear-Bordered Fritillary *Boloria selene* 1.9km south of the site, other invertebrate records were of common and/or widespread species of little conservation concern. There is a large distance (nearly 2km) between the *B. selene* record and the site although one or two of the food plants (self-heal and trefoil) were present on site. However, the area on site is small and any development application is likely to use the vegetated upper area of site as the garden. The current proposal is unlikely to adversely impact available opportunities for invertebrates and as such they will not be considered further in this report.

4.0 POLICIES AND PLANS

- 4.1 The following local and national planning policy relating to nature conservation and biodiversity are considered of relevance to the site.

Planning Policy Wales (2018)

- 4.2 This document sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government with Chapter 6 dealing with Distinctive and Natural places which covers Biodiversity and Ecological Networks. The advice contained within PPW is supplemented for some subjects by Technical Advice Notes (TAN's), with TAN 5 addressing Nature Conservation & Planning.
- 4.3 TAN 5 identifies a number of key principles, which the town and country planning system in Wales should consider. Those relevant are detailed below:
- Work to achieve nature conservation objectives through a partnership between local planning authorities, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), voluntary organisations, developers, landowners and other key stakeholders;
 - Integrate nature conservation into all planning decisions looking for development to deliver social, economic and environmental objectives together over time;
 - Ensure that the UK's international obligations for site, species and habitat protection are fully met in all planning decisions;
 - Look for development to provide a net benefit for biodiversity conservation with no significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally;
 - Promoting approaches to development which create new opportunities to enhance biodiversity, prevent biodiversity losses, or compensate for losses where damage is unavoidable. Minimising or reversing the fragmentation of habitats and improving habitat connectivity through the promotion of wildlife corridors;
 - Local planning authorities should seek to protect trees, groups of trees and areas of woodland where they have natural heritage value or contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality;
 - The presence of a species protected under European or UK legislation is a material consideration when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in disturbance or harm to the species or its habitat.

Environment (Wales) Act, 2016

- 4.4 Part 1 of the Environment Act Wales' came into force in May 2016 and sets out the approach to planning and managing natural resources at a national and local level with a general purpose linked to statutory 'principles of sustainable management of natural resources' defined within the Act.

Section 6 - Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty

- 4.5 Section 6 of the Act places a duty on public authorities to 'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity' so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions. In so doing, public authorities must also seek to 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'.

Section 7 - Biodiversity lists and duty to take steps to maintain and enhance biodiversity

- 4.6 This section lists living organisms and types of habitat in Wales which are considered of key significance to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales. The Welsh Ministers are required to take all reasonable steps to maintain and enhance the living organisms and types of habitat included in any list published under this section and encourage others to take such steps.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.7 The council's current planning policies are set out in the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan up 2016 - 2031. The following policies from the LDP are of relevance to the proposed development based on the existing ecological conditions described above.

Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Development proposals will be required to promote the resilience of ecosystems. In particular, proposals will be required to maintain and enhance biodiversity interests unless it can be demonstrated that:

1. The need for the development clearly outweighs the biodiversity value of the site; and
2. The impacts of the development can be satisfactorily mitigated and acceptably managed through future management regimes.

Policy EnW2: Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species

Development likely to have an adverse effect either directly or indirectly on the conservation value of an internationally or nationally designated site, including the area, structure and function of designated features, will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that:

1. There is no suitable alternative to the proposed development; and
2. It can be demonstrated that the benefits from the development clearly outweigh the special interest of the site; and
3. Appropriate compensatory measures are secured; or
4. The proposal contributes to the protection, enhancement and positive management of the site.

Development proposals likely to affect protected species will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that:

1. The population size, range, distribution and long-term prospects of the species will not be significantly adversely impacted;
2. There is no suitable alternative to the proposed development;
3. The benefits of the development clearly outweigh the adverse impacts on the protected species; and
4. Appropriate, avoidance, minimisation, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are provided.

Policy EnW3: Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species

Development proposals likely to have an adverse impact on Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves, or Priority Habitats and Species will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

1. The need for the development clearly outweighs the conservation value of the site;
2. Adverse impacts on nature conservation features or geological features can be avoided;
3. Appropriate and proportionate mitigation and compensation measures can be provided; and
4. The development maintains and where possible enhances biodiversity and geodiversity interests.

Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate they will not result in an unacceptable impact on people, residential amenity, property and / or the natural environment from either: ●

Pollution of land, surface water, ground water and the air;

- Land contamination;
- Hazardous substances;
- Land stability;
- Noise, vibration, dust, odour nuisance and light pollution; or
- Any other identified risk to public health and safety.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The combination of desk study and Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey identified a limited range of habitats at the Aberfan site including a tall ruderal and ephemeral/short perennial mix with bare ground/hard standing, scattered scrub and trees. As a general principle, site features with greatest intrinsic ecological value - albeit limited - were largely associated with boundary features, in particular the southern boundary scrub and trees.
- 5.2 The southern boundary vegetation was considered likely to provide some limited foraging and commuting opportunities for bird and bat species, possibly some additional bird nesting opportunities. The metal storage shed was considered unlikely to support roosting bats (negligible potential) and no evidence of this type of use was identified.
- 5.3 The proposed application is intended to be for a single dwelling at the roadside. Hardstanding/bare ground areas of the site have the least intrinsic ecological value and represent areas most suitable for development. Currently the intention is to retain the southern boundary vegetation. Agreeably, being the feature with greatest intrinsic ecological value within the context of the site, its retention at least in part, is recommended so as to provide a potential green link for the assumed presence of low numbers of mobile commuting species such as birds and bats.
- 5.4 Clearance of woody vegetation (trees and scrub) associated with any future development should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (i.e. clearance possible between September and February inclusive) or preceded by a thorough check for the presence of nesting birds. All wild birds are protected against killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and their nests against damage or destruction whilst in use or being built.
- 5.5 Any additional lighting associated with the development of the application site should be sensitive to commuting and foraging bats, in particular should ensure that no increase in current levels of illumination would arise with respect to this line of trees – i.e. retain their existing corridor function. An advice sheet relating to bats and street lighting is included in Appendix IV.
- 5.6 While unnecessary given the low impact of a development of this nature, cost-effective ecological enhancement opportunities exist for the client as part of the development which could include incorporation of a bat box and a bird box on the new building or retained trees.

REFERENCES

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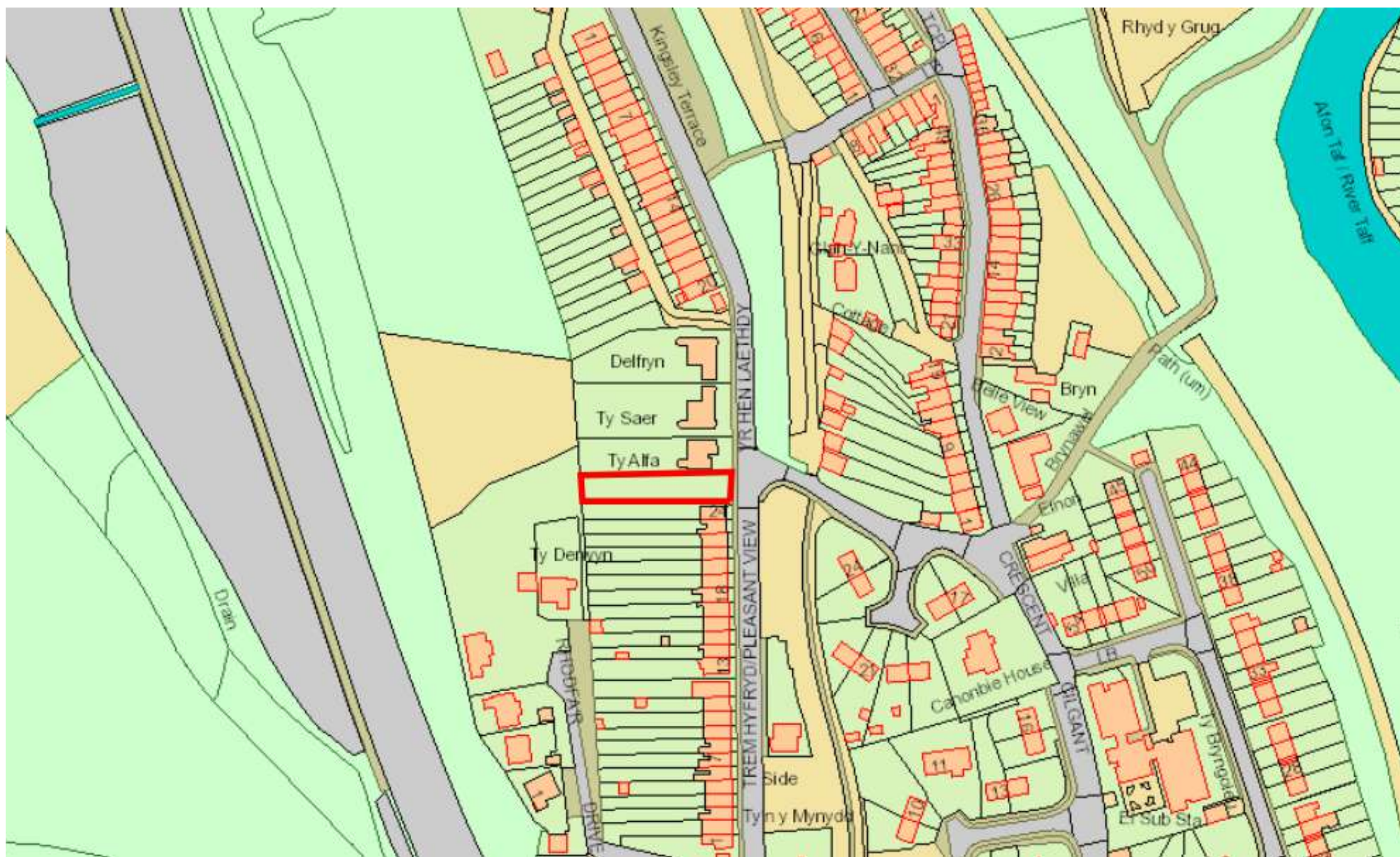
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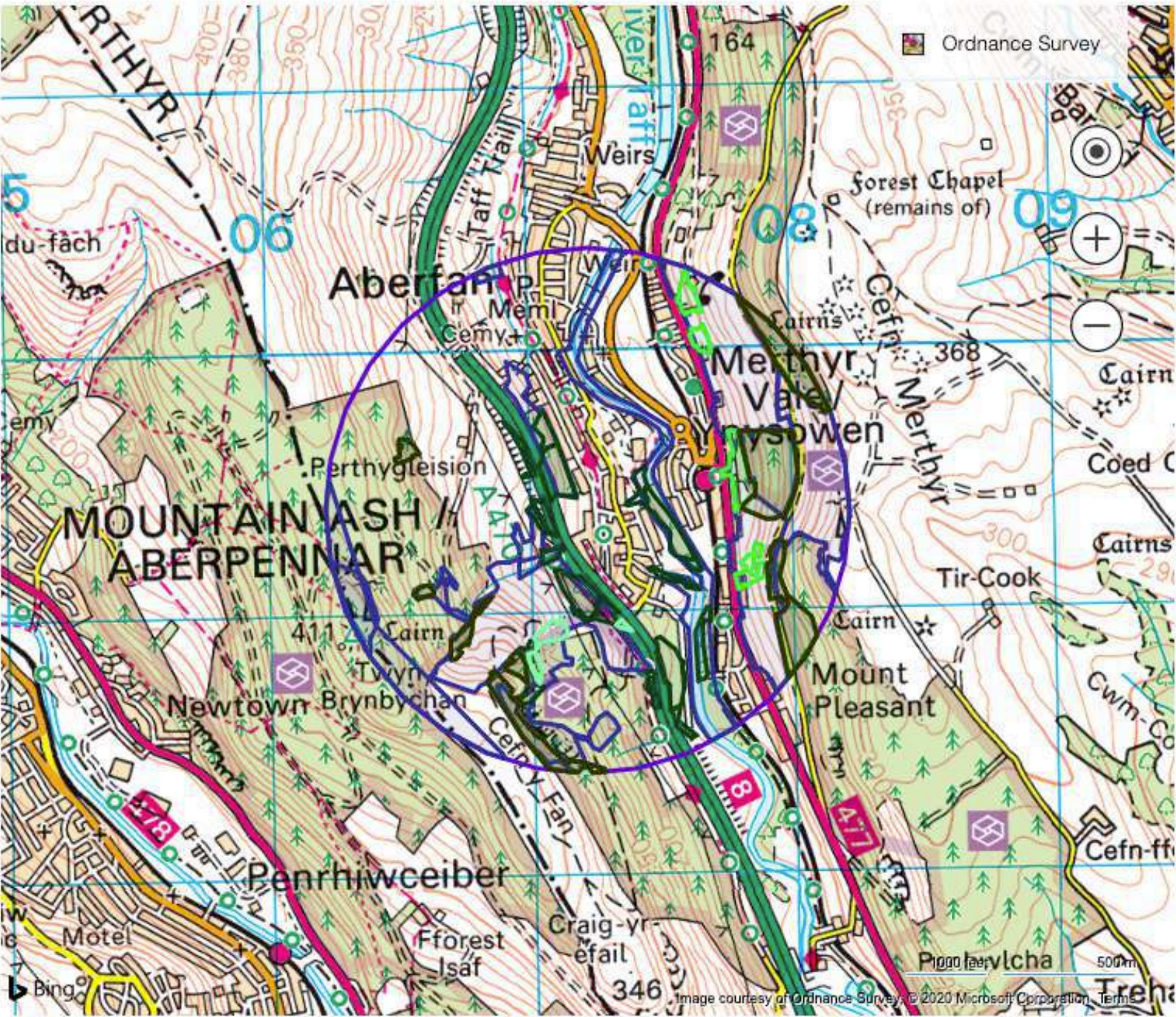
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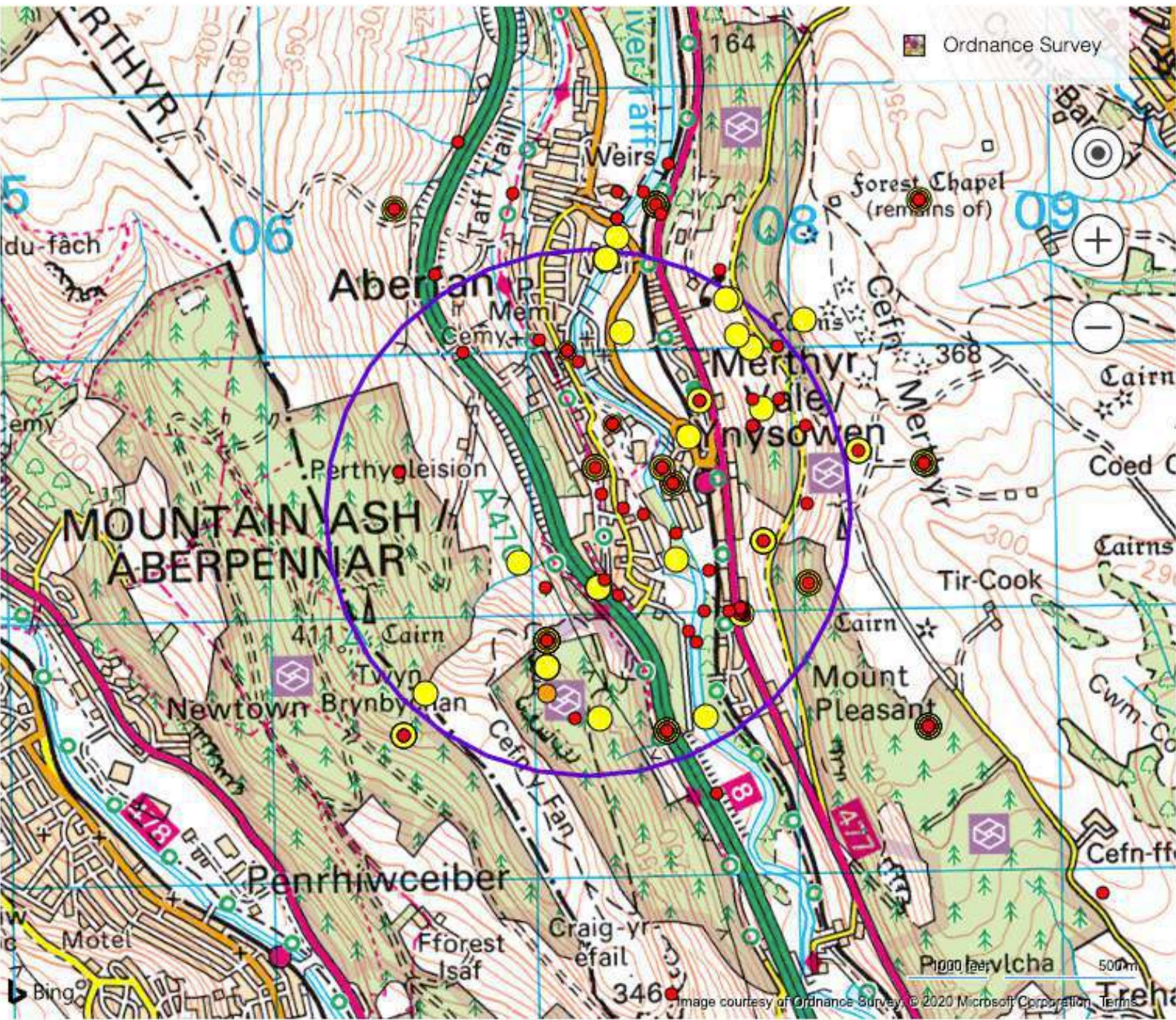
Designated Sites Map



Col.	Name
	Wildlife Site / SINC (Adopted) (870,986m ²)
	RCT Wildlife Sites / SINC - INFO NOT HELD BY ADERYN - Contact RCT Ecologists (105,308m ²)
	Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (126,138m ²)
	Restored Ancient Woodland Site (39,417m ²)
	Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (174,668m ²)
	Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category (12,285m ²)
	NRW Priority Area (Woodland - PAWS) (174,668m ²)

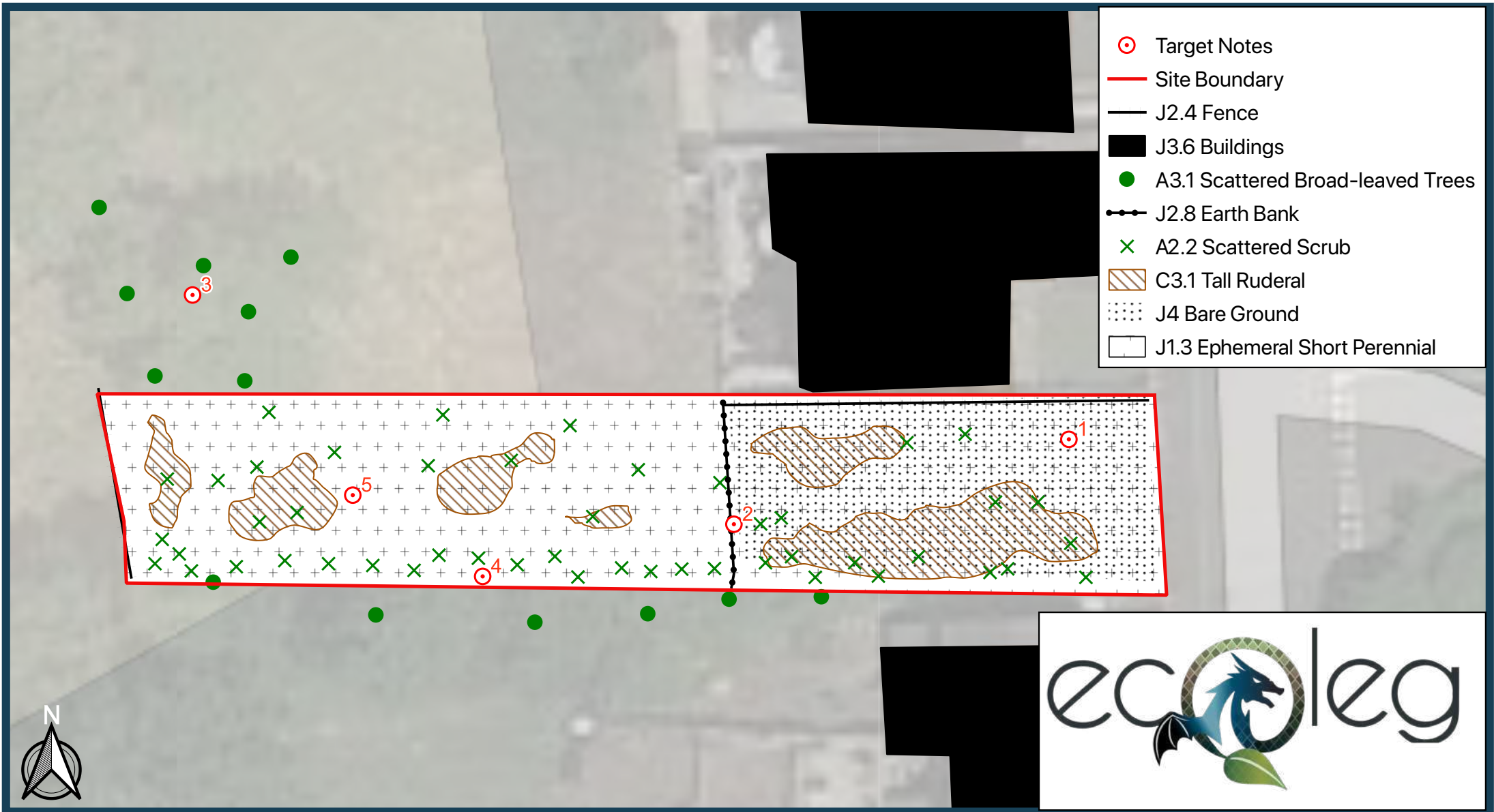
Species Map

Species records are mapped below. Records are mapped as centred points (centre of grid reference polygon).



Icon	Name
●	Pri. Species
●	Cons. Concern
●	Loc. Important

APPENDIX III EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY PLAN & TARGET NOTES (2020)



Land at Yr Hen Llaethdy
Phase I Habitat Map
Ron Carpenter

29 July 2020

Drawn by: BF

Approved by: ESH

Drawing Reference: PRC2001/D1

Target Note	Description/Comment
Birds seen/heard: House Sparrow, Starling, Grey Wagtail, Meadow Pipit, Wood Pigeon, Blackbird, Magpie, Carrion Crow	
-1 - Temporary Structures	 Two storage structures, a mobile home and building materials/miscellaneous items are currently stored on the lower section of the site. They are to be removed and cleared and none have any suitability or potential to provide opportunities to species of consideration from an ecological standpoint
-2- Split level	 The site is split on 2 levels with a steep bank up to the intended garden of any future development.

-3-
Tree group



A small group of semi-mature scattered broad-leaved trees are situated adjacent to the site in the neighbouring plot to the north. They consist of Alder and silver birch. Client has relations to landowner control and as such these may be a consideration for any enhancement opportunities (i.e. bird box) as part of the development.

-4-
Boundary
scrub and
trees



Within the context of the site, this feature holds limited ecological value but nonetheless can provide a link to off-site habitats. It comprises immature and semi mature trees and scrub. Species include Hazel, Rowen, Ash, Willow

-5-
Succession



Generally, the site is undergoing natural succession and encroachment from different communities throughout. From client information the site was at one stage bare ground and as such the main habitat type is a mix of ephemeral/short perennial vegetation with ruderal, grass and scrub habitats interspersed. The site will tend toward scrubbing up if left unmanaged and as such is currently considered to be in a state of succession between habitat types. Currently there are many low growing bramble shoots across the majority of the upper section and have been mapped as scattered scrub atop short perennial vegetation. Frequency of fern species and other damp tolerant vegetation such as buttercup and mosses etc. suggest damp soils which is consistent with some of the surrounding habitats within the search buffer e.g. wet woodland within the West Aberfan SINC.