

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Kate Glover
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278
Memo number: 1
Date of previous memo: -
Date: 02/04/2024

SUBJECT: P/24/0063 | Change of use of former day nursery to offices and storage, raising of the roof alterations to the front elevation and rear first storey extension | Former Day Nursery Brewery Road Penydarren Merthyr Tydfil CF48 3BU

Site description:

Vacant building – former public house, day nursery and then more recently used as a builder's storage building. Close to woodland pockets, scattered trees, scrub, grassland, parkland.

Scheme description:

Raising of the roof, alterations to the front elevation and rear first storey extension.

Impacts of scheme on protected species (if present):

Bats and nesting birds.

Designated sites within 500m of the application site:

- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW)
- Restored Ancient Woodland Site (RAWS)
- Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS)
- Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category (AWSUC)
- Buglife B-Lines Area

Priority and protected species within 500m of the application site:

- Birds (including Schedule 1¹ and Section 7² species);
- Invertebrates (including Section 7² species);
- Bats (closest record for unidentified bat, c.275m from site and closest roost record for lesser horseshoe bat, c.1347m from site);
- Hedgehog;
- Amphibians (great crested newt, closest record c.969m from site);
- Vascular plants (including Section 7² species)

¹ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

² Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Requirements

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats and nesting birds of the building (undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist) is required. This must provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to assess any potential adverse impacts of the proposed development on priority and protected species and/or habitats, or to identify what further information is required before a full assessment is possible.

The results of the PRA will be used to inform whether further surveys are required, or to establish the need for and extent of any mitigation and compensation measures required as part of the proposed development.

A BARB+ data search required from SEWBReC.

NB there will need to be enhancement of the site in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The commissioned ecologist must take new Planning Policy Wales (PPW 12), Chapter 6 into account where relevant to this application.

The main changes to policy (that are or may be relevant to this application) are as follows:

Green Infrastructure: stronger emphasis on taking a proactive approach to green infrastructure, the submission of a proportionate green infrastructure statement with planning applications and signposting Building with Nature standards.

Net Benefit for Biodiversity and the Step-wise Approach: further clarity is provided on securing net benefit for biodiversity through the application of the step-wise approach, including the acknowledgement of off-site compensation measures as a last resort, and, the need to consider enhancement and long-term management at each step. The use of the green infrastructure statement as a means of demonstrating the stepwise approach is made explicit. A simplified diagram of the policy approach has been developed (which will be further refined in the consolidated version of PPW12). The importance of strategic collaboration to identify and capture larger scale opportunities for securing a net benefit for biodiversity is recognised.

Protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest: strengthened approach to the protection of SSSIs, with increased clarity on the position for site management and exemptions for minor development necessary to maintain a 'living landscape'. Other development is considered unacceptable as a matter of principle. Exceptionally, a planned approach may be appropriate where necessary safeguards can be secured through a development plan

Trees and Woodlands: closer alignment with the stepwise approach, along with promoting new planting as part of development based on securing the right tree in the right place.