

Ein cyf/Our ref: CAS-281177-M4X1
Eich cyf/Your ref: P/25/0144

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Unit 5 Triangle Business Park
Pentrebach
CF48 4TQ

Dyddiad/Date: 23 June 2025

Annwyl Syr/Madam/Dear Sir/Madam,

BWRIAD/PROPOSAL: Demolish Rechabite Hall and construct a new purpose-built bat tower

LLEOLIAD/LOCATION: Crescent Street, Merthyr Vale, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4RW

Thank you for consulting Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru (CNC)/Natural Resources Wales (NRW) about the above, which we received on 21 May 2025.

We have concerns with the application as submitted. However, we are satisfied that these concerns can be overcome by attaching the following condition to any planning permission granted:

Condition – Pollution Prevention

In addition, we advise the documents identified below are included in the approved plans and documents condition on the decision notice.

Please note, without the inclusion of these conditions / documents we would object to this planning application. Further details are provided below.

European Protected Species (EPS) (Bats)

We have reviewed the following information submitted in support of the application:

- *Ecological Impact Assessment Report, Rechabite Hall, Tadd and Crescent Streets, Merthyr Vale, Doc: WWE19105 Rev A, dated 22/10/2024.*
- *Proposed Masonry Tower Option – Sheet 1, Merthyr Vale Bat Tower, Dwg ED_000376-01 BAT-ESA-XX-XX-RD-A-06000 P03*
- *Proposed Masonry Tower Option – Sheet 2, Merthyr Vale Bat Tower, Dwg ED_000376-01 BAT-ESA-XX-XX-RD-A-06001 P00*

We note that the ecological impact assessment (EclA) report has identified that Rechabite Hall supports bat roost sites. The Hall was secured as the bat mitigation for the loss of bat roosts under a previous EPS licence (S087946) when the terrace housing on Taff and Crescent Street was demolished.

Bats and their breeding and resting places are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Where bats are present and a development proposal is likely to contravene the legal protection they are afforded, the development may only proceed under licence issued by Natural Resources Wales, having satisfied the three tests set out in the Regulations (Please also refer to Paragraph 6.3.7 of Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning). Please note, for the purposes of providing advice at the planning application stage, our comments are limited to the test relating to “demonstration of no detriment to the maintenance of the favourable conservation status of European protected species”.

We consider that the above report provides an adequate basis upon which to consider the potential impacts of the scheme on these species and inform the decision-making process.

We consider that the development is not likely to be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range provided the measures set out in the submitted report are implemented.

Therefore, we advise that the following documents are included in the approved list of plans / documents condition within the decision notice:

- Ecological Impact Assessment Report, Rechabite Hall, Tadd and Crescent Streets, Merthyr Vale, Doc: WWE19105 Rev A, dated 22/10/2024.
- Proposed Masonry Tower Option – Sheet 1, Merthyr Vale Bat Tower, Dwg ED_000376-01 BAT-ESA-XX-XX-RD-A-06000 P03
- Proposed Masonry Tower Option – Sheet 2, Merthyr Vale Bat Tower, Dwg ED_000376-01 BAT-ESA-XX-XX-RD-A-06001 P00

With regards to the bat mitigation proposals, there are some aspects of this proposal that we would wish to progress with the applicant at the EPS licensing stage. For their information, these include:

- i. Details of design to avoid and minimise vandalism of the bat tower; and
- ii. Provision of a long-term management and maintenance plan for the bat tower.

We also advise that the works are carried out under licence. We refer you to the Chief Planning Officer's letter dated 1 March 2018 which advises Local Planning Authorities to attach an informative regarding licence requirements to all consents and notices where European Protected Species are likely to be present on site.

Please note, any changes to plans between planning consent and the licence application may affect the outcome of a licence application.

Pollution prevention

Both the new and existing building are located in close proximity to the River Taff. As the

proposed development is located in a sensitive location and has the potential to affect water quality, appropriate pollution prevention measures should be employed during demolition and construction. Therefore, the following condition should be included on any planning permission your authority is minded to grant.

Condition

No development, including site clearance, shall commence until a site wide Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The DCEMP should include:

- General Site Management: details of the construction programme including timetable, details of site clearance; details of site construction drainage, containments areas, appropriately sized buffer zones between storage areas (of spoil, oils, fuels, concrete mixing and washing areas) and any watercourse or surface drain.
- Soil Management: details of topsoil strip, storage and amelioration for re-use.
- Resource Management: details of fuel and chemical storage and containment; details of waste generation and its management.
- Biodiversity Management: details of tree and hedgerow protection; invasive species management; species and habitats protection, avoidance and mitigation measures.
- Traffic Management: details of site deliveries, plant on site, wheel wash facilities.
- Pollution Prevention: demonstrate how relevant Guidelines for Pollution Prevention and best practice will be implemented, including details of emergency spill procedures and incident response plan.
- Details of the persons and bodies responsible for activities associated with the CEMP and emergency contact details.

The CEMP shall be implemented as approved during the site preparation and construction phases of the development.

Justification: A DCEMP should be submitted to ensure necessary management measures are agreed prior to commencement of development and implemented for the protection of the environment during construction.

Flood Risk

The planning application proposes less vulnerable development Demolish Rechabite Hall and construct a new purpose-built bat tower. The Flood Map for Planning identifies the application site to be at risk of flooding and within Flood Zone 2 and 3 (Rivers) TAN15 and Recorded Flood Extents (December 1979).

Given the nature of the proposed development (and in the absence of a flood consequences assessment) we consider the proposals could be acceptable, subject to the developer being made aware of the potential flood risks and consequences. We would also expect the developer to take the opportunity to incorporate flood resilient design where feasible.

Guidance on resilient design can be found in Chapter 13 of Technical Advice Note 15: Development, flooding and coastal erosion, dated 2025, which references advice from Construction Industry Research and Information Association, including a Code of Practice and Guidance for Property Flood Resilience.

We provide advice on our website [Natural Resources Wales / Preparing for a flood](#) which may be useful for the developer or occupant of the proposal

Advice for the developer

Under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016) a Flood Risk Activity Permit is required for any works or structures located in, under, over or within 8 metres of the bank top of the River Taff, a designated “main river”. Further advice and guidance is available on our website at: <http://www.naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/flood-risk-activities/flood-risk-activity-permits-information/?lang=en>

A flood risk activity permit (FRAP) would only be required for the construction of the new bat tower as it would fall within 8m of a main river.

Other Matters

The advice in this letter relates to matters which are included on our [consultation topics list](#). We do not rule out the potential for the proposed development to affect other environmental interests that are not included on this list.

We advise the applicant that, in addition to planning permission, it is their responsibility to ensure they secure all other permits/consents/licences relevant to their development. Please refer to our [website](#) for further details.
If you have any queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully

Claire McCorkindale

Cynghorydd - Cynllunio Datblygu/Advisor - Development Planning
Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru/Natural Resources Wales

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymateb yn Gymraeg, heb i hynny arwain at oedi./Correspondence in Welsh is welcomed, and we will respond in Welsh without it leading to a delay.