

Ecological Assessment



**Tyler
Grange**

Aldi, Merthyr Tydfil
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13892_R01g	14 th June 2022	G	Lindsay Taylor MSc BSc	Julian Arthur CEcol MCIEEM CEnv

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Summary

- S.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd on behalf of Aldi Stores Ltd. It sets out the findings of an Ecological Assessment of a parcel of land at current Aldi site, Merthyr Tydfil, at OS Grid Reference SO 05056 05648, hereinafter referred to as the 'site'.
- S.2. The site comprises the current Aldi store and associated parking/soft landscaping/retaining wall along with a car sales building and associated parking. Along the western boundary is an area of landscaped planting with several semi-mature trees. High Street runs along the northern boundary and the southern boundary comprises a river corridor with semi-mature trees and scrub. All habitats on site are considered to be negligible ecological importance; however the offsite river corridor forms part of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and is therefore of county local importance.
- S.3. The proposal includes an extension to the front of and renovation of the roof of the current Aldi Store and demolition of the car sales building.
- S.4. The site is not covered by any sites that are the subject of statutory or non-statutory protection, however the Afon Taf SINC lies directly adjacent. Stringent pollution control measures will be put in place to ensure no impacts to the designated site occur as a result of the development.
- S.5. There is one European designated site and one nationally designated site within the study area however, due to the scale and nature of the proposals, it is not considered that there would be a detrimental impact upon these designated sites.
- S.6. The proposals will result in the loss of the car sales building, nine trees and the retaining wall. The semi-mature trees and ornamental planting along the western boundary will be retained and protected.
- S.7. Habitats on site offer limited opportunities for protected species to be present. The buildings were assessed as being of negligible potential to support roosting bats.
- S.8. The following mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed;
- Should work commence during the breeding bird season, a check should be made by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist to assess if there is an active nest within the roof;
 - Native wildlife beneficial planting scheme;
 - Avoidance of lighting along the river corridor;
 - Provision of two bat boxes on retained trees; and
 - Provision of two bird boxes on retained trees.
- S.9. Mitigation and compensation measures have been provided within this report and in conclusion, no ecological issues that could affect the principle of development of the site have been identified. As such, the development should be in conformity with relevant planning policy and legislation.

Section 1: Introduction and Context

Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd on behalf of Aldi Stores Ltd. It sets out the findings of an Ecological Assessment of a parcel of land at the current Aldi site, Merthyr Tydfil, at OS Grid Reference SO 05056 05648, hereinafter referred to as the 'site'.
- 1.2. A full planning application to extend the current Aldi supermarket building and car park, including associated soft landscaping and demolition of the existing car sales office, is to be submitted to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (See **Appendix 2** for Site Layout). Included within these proposals is the re-roofing of the existing building.

Context

- 1.3. The site lies towards the south of the town of Merthyr Tydfil, surrounded by other retail sites and residential properties. The River Taff runs adjacent to the southern boundary.
- 1.4. The site comprises the current Aldi store with associated parking/landscaping along with a car sales building and associated parking. Along the western boundary is an area of landscaped planting with several semi-mature trees as shown in **Figure 1**. There are also several trees planted within the landscaped car park.



Figure 1: Site boundary (red) and extension footprint (blue)

Purpose

- 1.5. This report:
 - Uses available data and results of the Phase 1 habitat survey, to describe and evaluate the ecological features present within the likely 'zone of influence' (Zol) of the proposed development;
 - Assesses ecological issues and opportunities as a result of development; and
 - Where appropriate, makes recommendations for mitigation of adverse effects and ecological enhancement, to ensure conformity with policy and legislation listed in **Appendix 1**.
 - This assessment and the terminology used are consistent with the 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland'¹ (CIEEM, 2018).

¹ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*. <http://www.cieem.net/ecia-guidelines-terrestrial->. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.



Section 2: Methodology

Data Search

- 2.1 The data search has been undertaken for a 10km radius around the site for European statutory sites, a 2km radius for national statutory sites and non-statutory sites and a 1km radius for protected species was requested from the records centre².
- 2.2 The following organisations and individuals have been contacted and, where relevant, the information provided has been incorporated with acknowledgement within this report:
- The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside website³ was accessed for information on the location of statutory designated nature conservation sites;
 - Aderyn LERC Wales' Biodiversity Information & Reporting Database Records Centre, for protected and priority species⁴ and locations of non-statutory sites (LERC report reference: 0201-799);
 - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council website⁵ was consulted for details of non-statutory designated sites, relevant local planning policies and supplementary planning guidance; and
 - The Merthyr Tydfil Nature Recovery Action Plan⁶ and UK Priority Species list were consulted for priority habitats and species subject to conservation action, to assist with the evaluation of ecological features and to inform site enhancement strategies.

Extended Phase I Habitat Survey

- 2.3 An 'extended' Phase I habitat survey was undertaken on 10th March 2021 by Lindsay Taylor, an experienced field ecologist. The technique was based upon Phase I survey methodology⁷. This 'extended' Phase I technique provides an inventory of the habitat types present and dominant species.
- 2.4 Weather conditions were raining and windy with an air temperature of 9°C.
- 2.5 Using the above method, the site was classified into areas of similar botanical community types with a representative sample of those species present at the time of the survey being described.
- 2.6 Additionally, incidental records of fauna were also made during the survey and the habitats identified were evaluated for their potential to support legally protected and priority species.

² Aderyn LERC Wales' Biodiversity Information & Reporting Database Records Centre

³ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

⁴ Priority species and habitats in England are those subject to conservation action and referred to as Species of Principal Importance (SoPIs) or Habitats of Principal Importance (HoPIs). They are listed in the Environmental Wales Act Environment (Wales) Act (2016) Welsh Government) which states that local planning authorities must have regard for the conservation of both SoPIs and HoPIs.

⁵ <https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/>

⁶ Merthyr Tydfil Nature Recovery Action Plan 2019-2024

⁷ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit*. JNCC, Peterborough.



Building Inspection

- 2.7 The buildings were externally assessed during the Phase I survey for its potential for roosting bats. This was also undertaken by Lindsay Taylor who holds a Natural England bat licence (Ref: 2017-32853-CLS-CLS).
- 2.8 The buildings were inspected from ground level using a high-powered torch and binoculars. Signs of use by bats was searched for; such signs may include bat droppings, urine splashes, staining and features suitable for allowing bats access to roost (e.g., gaps behind soffits/hanging tiles/ridge tiles, lifted slates/flashing).
- 2.9 The potential of the buildings to support roosting bats was assessed using the criteria shown in **Table 2.1** below.

Table 2.1: Building/Structure Assessment Criteria - adapted from Collins⁸

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e., unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).
Moderate	A 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 (with respect to roost type only).
High	A 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.

Evaluation

- 2.10 The evaluation of habitats and species is defined in accordance with published guidance (CIEEM, 2018). The level of importance of specific ecological features is assigned using a geographic frame of reference, with international being most important, then national, regional, county, district, local and lastly, within the site boundary only.
- 2.11 Evaluation is based on various characteristics that can be used to identify ecological features likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These include site designations (such as SSSIs), or for undesignated features, the size, conservation status (locally, nationally, or internationally), and the quality of the ecological feature. In terms of the latter, quality can refer to habitats (for instance if they are particularly diverse, or a good example of a specific habitat type), other features (such as wildlife corridors or mosaics of habitats) or species populations or assemblages.

⁸ Collins, J. (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*. 3rd edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London.



Limitations

- 2.12 Owing to the timing of the surveys, some plant species may not have been visible. Where this affects the assessment of importance of features, this is stated.
- 2.13 Access to the rear of the building and river corridor was not possible, however due to the condition and construction of the building, it is not considered that this would alter the assessment.



Section 3: Ecological Features and Evaluation

Protected Sites

- 3.1 There is one European statutory site and one national statutory designated site within the study area, the details of which are below;
- **Cwm Cadlan** Special Area of Conservation (SAC); c.8.9km north-west, it is designated for Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils and alkaline fens;
 - **Cwm glo a glyndyrys** Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI); c.0.5km south-west, it is designated for its extensive areas of marshy grassland, species-rich neutral grassland and acid grassland, and for the association of these habitats with others including woodland and heath.
- 3.2 There are twelve non-statutory designated sites within the study area, the nearest ones being;
- **Afon Taf** Wildlife Site/ Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC); directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the site;
 - **Cwm Glo** Wildlife Site/SINC; c.0.6km west of the site; and
 - **Rhydycar West** Wildlife Site/SINC; c.0.6km south-west of the site.
- 3.3 See **Appendix 3** for full details of all twelve non-statutory sites.
- 3.4 SACs are considered to be of **international importance** due to their European designations. SSSIs are considered to be of **national importance** and SINC's are of **County Importance**.

Habitats

- 3.5 There are no habitats of Principal Importance within the site however the Afon Taf SINC lies directly adjacent
- 3.6 The habitats present on site include:
- Buildings and hardstanding;
 - Ornamental planting;
 - Trees;
 - Wall; and
 - Offsite habitats (river corridor).

Buildings and hard standing

- 3.7 The site primarily comprises of a building (Aldi store), referred to as B1, and hardstanding (parking). Within the hardstanding was another smaller building (car sales office), referred to as B2 (see **Figure 2** for locations).



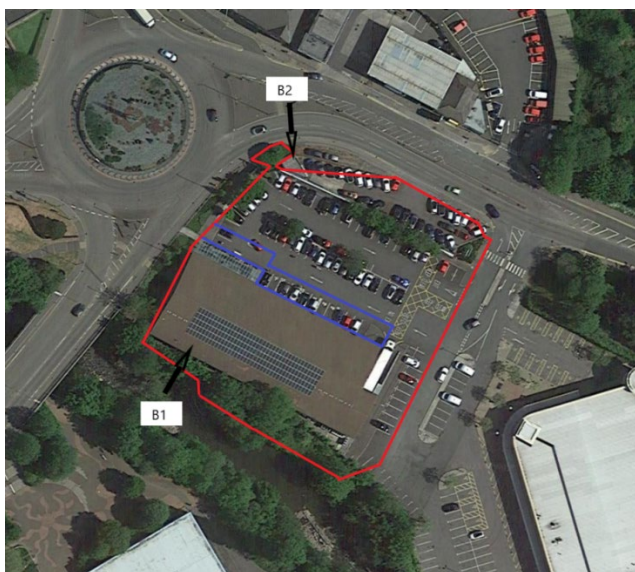


Figure 2: Aerial photo showing locations of B1 and B2

- 3.8 B1 is a single storey brick-built structure with concrete tiled roof. The building, including the roof, is in good condition (**Photographs 1 and 2**).
- 3.9 The roof is lined with modern roofing membranes and the edge tiles on the gable end are metal.



Photograph 1: Showing the eastern aspect of B1.





Photograph 2: Tiles on the roof of B1 are in good condition.

- 3.10 B2 is a single storey brick structure with a flat roof covered with bitumen felt (Photograph 3) with signage on the front. Whilst there is a gap behind the signage, it is open and exposed.
- 3.11 There are small gaps under the roofing felt at both ends of the southern aspect, however they are small and shallow (Photograph 4).



Photograph 3: Northern aspect of B2.





Photograph 4: Small gap under the apron at the south-eastern corner of B2.

- 3.12 The buildings in and of themselves are considered to be of **negligible ecological importance**. Their importance for protected species is discussed below.

Ornamental Planting

- 3.13 An area of majority ornamental planting lies along the western boundary, adjacent to the A4102, with species such as dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, shrubby veronica *Hebe* spp., Phormium sp., dwarf mountain pine *Pinus mugo*, Photinia 'Red Robin', box honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida*, Euonymous 'Emerald 'n' Gold' and Portuguese laurel *Prunus lusitanica* present (**Photograph 5**). A second smaller area of Ornamental planting is located at the entrance to the car park, underneath the Aldi signage (**Photograph 6**).

- 3.14 Due to the ornamental nature of species present they are considered to be of negligible ecological importance.



Photograph 5: Ornamental planting along the western boundary.

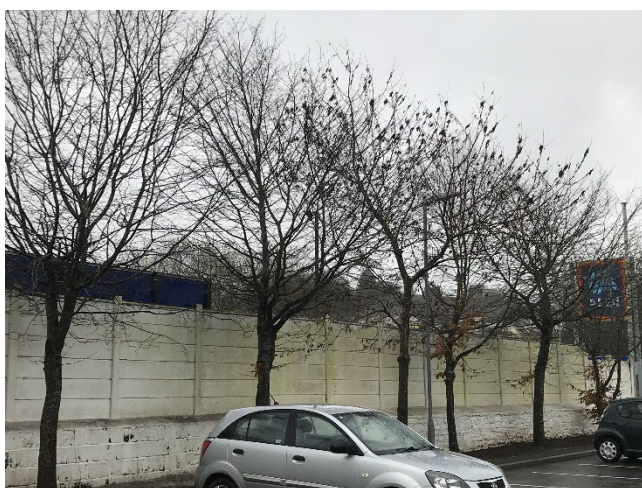




Photograph 6: Ornamental planting at the entrance to the car park.

Trees

- 3.15 There are several young alder *Alnus glutinosa*, cherry *Prunus* sp. and hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* trees within the site boundary, seven adjacent to the wall (**Photograph 7**), two in the centre of the car park (**Photograph 8**) and five within the Ornamental planting along the western boundary (**Photograph 9**). Several conifer trees lie within a cluster at the north-western corner of the site.



Photograph 7: Hornbeam and cherry trees adjacent to the wall.





Photograph 8: Alder tree in the centre of the car park.



Photograph 9: Trees within the ornamental planting along the western boundary.

- 3.16 Due to being young and relatively isolated, it is unlikely that these trees form an important part of the wider network present along the river and railway line. These trees are therefore considered to be of **negligible ecological importance**.

Wall

- 3.17 A wall bisects the site, separating the Aldi car park from the car sales forecourt (see **Photograph 7** above), which appears to be in good condition with no gaps or cracks present. It has no inherent importance and is therefore considered to be of **negligible ecological importance**.

Offsite Habitats (River Corridor)

- 3.18 Access to this area was restricted by a fence, therefore a full assessment was not possible.



- 3.19 The corridor adjacent to the site along the River Taff comprises an unmanaged strip of trees (semi-mature, young and saplings all present) and scrub with dense ivy cover on the ground (**Photograph 10**).
- 3.20 The river corridor is designated as a SINC (see Designated Sites section above). As such the habitats within are considered to be of **county ecological importance**.



Photograph 10: Habitats along the river corridor.

Fauna

- 3.21 The site has limited potential to support important fauna. Species such as great crested newt (GCN) and hedgehog are considered absent from the site and are therefore not included within this report.

Badger

- 3.22 Thirty-four records for badger *Meles meles* were returned from within 2km of the site, the nearest being 1.6km to the west.
- 3.23 No evidence of badger was observed on site and there are no suitable habitats within the site itself.
- 3.24 The offsite habitats along the river corridor do provide suitable habitats however, access was restricted therefore it was not possible to do a thorough search.
- 3.25 Due to the lack of suitable habitat within the site, it is considered that the site is of **negligible ecological importance** for badger.

Bats

- 3.26 Records were returned from the record centre for the following species, listed in order of distance from the site:



- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* – 0.03km W;
- Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* – 0.04km W;
- Brown long eared bat *Plecotus auritus* – 0.6km N;
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* – 0.9km N;
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros* – 0.9km N; and
- Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* – 2.0km NW.

- 3.27 Trees within the site boundary were considered to be of **negligible roosting potential**, with no features suitable for roosting noted.
- 3.28 Due to the condition of the building and lack of features present B1 is considered to be **negligible** for roosting bats.
- 3.29 Whilst there are small gaps under the apron on the southern aspect of B2, the gutter directly underneath (see **Photograph 4** above) limits access from below. In addition, the area is very well lit, with streetlights present in regular intervals along the A4102 to the west and High Street to the north. There is also a light within the car park directly adjacent to this aspect of the building. Whilst it is not uncommon for light tolerant species such as the pipistrelle bats to forage in areas with high levels of lighting, it is considered unlikely that they would roost in such places.
- 3.30 Given the location of the site within a well-lit urban area, habitats for commuting and foraging bats are limited. Light-tolerant species, such as pipistrelles, may occasionally use the site, though it is not likely to be important to them. It is likely that bats, including species less tolerant of light, would utilise the river corridor, for commuting and foraging.
- 3.31 Although South Wales is stronghold for rarer species of bats, such as horseshoes, as these species are light sensitive it is not considered that this site falls within an important forging or commuting route of these species. It is possible that they may utilise the darker areas along the river however there are more optimal habitats further afield, particularly to the west of Merthyr Tydfil, which are considered to provide a greater opportunity for foraging and commuting bats.
- 3.32 As such, the site itself is considered to be of **negligible ecological importance** for bats

Birds

- 3.33 The site offers limited potential for birds for both nesting and foraging, and these are restricted to the trees and ornamental planting. It would therefore be expected that the site supports a small number of common garden bird species only and these would not be reliant upon the site resources.
- 3.34 The river corridor will have increased opportunities for a wider variety of bird species.
- 3.35 The site is considered to be of **negligible ecological importance** for breeding birds.



Otter and Water Vole

- 3.36 Records for both otter and water vole were returned from the records centre; otter from 0.03km west of the site and water vole from 1.1km south-west of the site.
- 3.37 There are no habitats on site that are suitable for otter and/or water vole however the river corridor supports habitats that are suitable for both species and provides linkages to the wider network. Access to the river habitats was restricted by a fence to the rear of B1 therefore a thorough search was not possible; however as the works will be towards the front of the existing building is considered unlikely that these habitats would be directly impacted.
- 3.38 Due to the lack of habitats, the site itself is considered to be of **negligible ecological importance** for otter and water vole.



Section 4: Impacts, Mitigation and Enhancement

Proposed Development

- 4.1 The proposed development (**Appendix 2**) includes the:
- extension to the front of B1;
 - full replacement of the roofing tiles on B1;
 - demolition of the existing retaining wall;
 - demolition of B2;
 - associated soft landscaping (**Appendix 2 – Soft Landscaping Plan**).
- 4.2 It is anticipated that the habitats within the river corridor will be retained.
- 4.3 The potential consequences with respect to development of the site are set out below, with reference to relevant legislation and planning policy, which is summarised in **Appendix 1**.

Potential Impacts and Requirement for Mitigation

Designated Sites

- 4.4 Due to the nature of the proposals, it is not expected that there will be any direct or indirect impacts to the statutory designated sites described in Section 3.
- 4.5 With regards to non-statutory designated sites, there is potential for the Afon Taf SINC to be impacted during the construction phase. As such, stringent pollution control measures, adhering to current guidance and legislation⁹, will be put in place to ensure no impacts to the designated site occur as a result of run-off. This could be controlled through an appropriately worded planning condition.

Habitats

- 4.6 The proposals will result in the loss of nine trees (seven adjacent to the wall and two within the centre of the car park) considered to be of negligible ecological importance and the replacement of some hardstanding with the extension to B1.
- 4.7 The ornamental planting, including the trees, along the western boundary will be retained, with the exception of a small section where the new steps will be located. The ornamental planting at the entrance to the car park will be retained and extended towards Plymouth Street.
- 4.8 The proposed work must be carried out in accordance with the AIA report (Tyler Grange report ref: 13892_R02) that will be submitted as part of this application.

⁹ CIRIA (2015). Environmental good practice on site guide (fourth edition). London.



- 4.9 The habitats that will be lost to the development are of negligible ecological importance therefore no specific mitigation is required.
- 4.10 Two new common alder *Alnus glutinosa*, five common lime *Tilia cordata* trees and three rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* will be planted within the car park, replacing those on site and complementing the stock along the river corridor. Planting of native species with local or Welsh provenance is included to increase onsite native biodiversity, both as compensation for specimens lost due to the development and as enhancement. This is in line with the Section 6 duty regarding maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity.
- 4.11 The extension of the ornamental planting adjacent to the car park entrance with species such as compact guelder rose *Viburnum opulus 'Compactum'*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea 'midwinter fire'*, common honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, and thin-leaved whitebeam *Sorbus leptophylla* will provide further opportunities for invertebrates.
- 4.12 A general-purpose meadow mix (Emorsgate EM2) will be planted along the north western boundary with the road enhancing the site for invertebrates and benefitting wildlife such as birds.
- 4.13 With the above mitigation and compensation, the proposals would be in conformity with national and local planning policy.

Fauna

Bats

- 4.14 In England and Wales, bats and their roosts are predominantly protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the 'Habitat Regulations'), with other complimentary legislation comprised of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended); the Environment (Wales) Act (2016).
- 4.15 The buildings have negligible potential for roosting bats and hence no roosts are likely to be affected. However, a toolbox talk to operatives, setting out working methods in areas with bat potential and what to do in the event that a bat is found during works will be given. If a bat is discovered during works, all work will stop, a suitably qualified ecologist will be contacted for advice. A NRW EPS licence may be required for work to progress.
- 4.16 It is likely that bats would utilise the river corridor for commuting and foraging. As such, lighting in this area will be avoided during both the construction and operational phases.
- 4.17 Enhanced opportunities for bats will be provided in the form of two bat boxes on retained trees within the site (approximate locations shown on **Figure 3**). The bat and bird boxes must be made from robust materials that will persist, therefore no wood, and should be at least 1.5m high, preferably south or southwest facing.



Birds

- 4.18 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are afforded protection under the WCA 1981 (as amended) and hence this legislation could be triggered.
- 4.19 To avoid triggering the legislation protecting nesting birds, removal of woody vegetation should be timed outside the nesting bird season (generally taken as March to August, inclusive) or be preceded by a check for active nests by an ecologist. If a nest is found an appropriate buffer will need to be left undisturbed until the chicks have fledged, as confirmed by an ecologist.
- 4.20 Provision for nesting birds will be provided in time when new tree planting matures. Further enhancements will be provided in the form of two bird boxes on retained trees within the site.

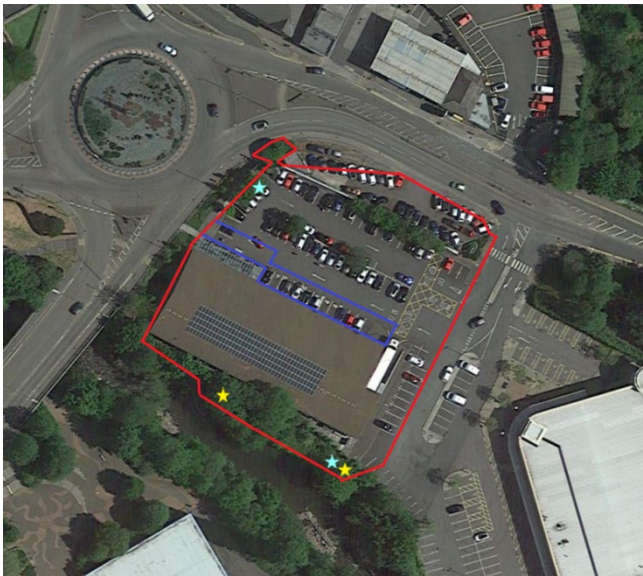


Figure 3: Approximate locations of bat (yellow) and bird (blue) boxes

Otter and Water Vole

- 4.21 In England and Wales, otters and their holts are predominantly protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010), with other complimentary legislation comprised of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and the Environment (Wales) Act (2016).
- 4.22 Water vole are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and the Environment (Wales) Act (2016).
- 4.23 None of the habitats to be impacted by the proposals are suitable for either otter or water vole. In addition, the works proposed are all occurring to the front of the building therefore it is not anticipated that the river corridor will be affected.
- 4.24 Measures taken to avoid pollution and run-off (see Designated Sites section above) during the construction phase will ensure water quality remains suitable for both otter and water vole. This could be controlled via a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) through an appropriately worded planning condition.



Section 5: Conclusion

- 5.1. No ecological issues that could affect the principle of development of the site have been identified.
- 5.2. The following mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed:
- Should work commence during the breeding bird season, a check should be made by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist to assess if there is an active nest within any of the trees to be removed;
 - Additional planting within the ornamental areas;
 - Planting of a general-purpose meadow mix along the north western boundary;
 - Avoidance of lighting along the river corridor;
 - Provision of two bat boxes on retained trees; and
 - Provision of two bird boxes on retained trees.
- 5.3. It is not considered that the proposals will have a significant detrimental impact upon biodiversity and, providing the advice stated within this report is adopted, then it is considered that the proposed works will not trigger current legislation and will be in conformity of both local and national planning policy.



Appendix 1: Legislation and Planning Policy

A1.1. This section summarises the legislation and national, regional, and local planning policies, as well as other reference documents, relevant to the baseline ecology results.

Legislation

A1.2. Specific habitats and species receive legal protection in the UK under various pieces of legislation, including:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended);
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006;
- The Environment (Wales) Act 2016;
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997; and
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

A1.3. The European Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna, 1992, often referred to as the 'Habitats Directive', provides for the protection of key habitats and species considered of European importance. Annexes II and IV of the Directive list all species considered of community interest. The legal framework to protect the species covered by the Habitats Directive has been enacted under UK law through The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended).

A1.4. In Britain, the WCA 1981 (as amended) is the primary legislation protecting habitats and species. SSSIs, representing the best examples of our natural heritage, are notified under the WCA 1981 (as amended) by reason of their flora, fauna, geology, or other features. All breeding birds, their nests, eggs, and young are protected under the Act, which makes it illegal to knowingly destroy or disturb the nest site during nesting season. Schedules 1, 5 and 8 afford protection to individual birds, other animals, and plants.

A1.5. The CROW Act 2000 strengthens the species enforcement provisions of the WCA 1981 (as amended) and makes it an offence to 'recklessly' disturb a protected animal whilst it is using a place of rest or shelter or breeding/nest site.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance and the UK Biodiversity Action Plan

A1.6. The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework succeeded the UK BAP partnership in 2011 and covers the period 2011 to 2020. However, the lists of Priority Species and Habitats agreed under the UKBAP still form the basis of much biodiversity work in the UK. The current strategy for England is 'Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' published under the



UK Post-2010 UK Biodiversity Framework. Although the UK BAP has been succeeded, Species Action Plans (SAPs) developed for the UK BAP remain valuable resources for background information on priority species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

- A1.7. Priority Species and Habitats identified under the UKBAP are also referred to as Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales within Section 42 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. The commitment to preserving, restoring, or enhancing biodiversity is further emphasised for England and Wales in Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006.

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11

- A1.8. Chapter 6 of the PPW (Distinctive and Natural Places) includes the following commitments and what they relate to where they are applicable to this site:
- **6.4:** Biodiversity and Ecological Networks – Promoting biodiversity by enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty (as set out in The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Nature Recovery Action Plan supports this legislative requirement to reverse the decline in biodiversity, address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and increase the resilience of ecosystems by taking specific action focused around the 6 objectives for habitats and species.
- A1.9. Development plan strategies, policies and development proposals must consider the need to:
- support the conservation of biodiversity, in particular the conservation of wildlife and habitats;
 - ensure action in Wales contributes to meeting international responsibilities and obligations for biodiversity and habitats;
 - ensure statutorily and non-statutorily designated sites are properly protected and managed;
 - safeguard protected and priority species and existing biodiversity assets from impacts which directly affect their nature conservation interests and compromise the resilience of ecological networks and the components which underpin them, such as water and soil, including peat; and
 - secure enhancement of and improvements to ecosystem resilience by improving diversity, condition, extent, and connectivity of ecological networks.
 - **6.4.5:** Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (Section 6 Duty) – Planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity. In doing so planning authorities must also take account of and promote the resilience of ecosystems.



- **6.4.11:** Designated sites - Planning authorities must have regard to the relative significance of international, national, and local designations in considering the weight to be attached to nature conservation interests.
- **6.4.15:** Protection and Management of Designated Sites - Statutorily designated sites must be protected from damage and deterioration, with their important features conserved and enhanced by appropriate management.
- **6.4.22:** Protected species - The presence of a species protected under European or UK legislation, or under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 is a material consideration when a 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 and to ensure that the range and population of the species is sustained. Planning authorities should advise anyone submitting a planning application that they must conform with any statutory species protection provisions affecting the site, and potentially the surrounding area, concerned. An ecological survey to confirm whether a protected species is present and an assessment of the likely impact of the development on a protected species may be required in order to inform the development management process. It is considered best practice that screening to determine the presence of protected species should be carried out by a competent ecologist on the basis of data provided by the relevant Local Environmental Record Centre.
- **6.4.23** Developments are always subject to the legislation covering European protected species regardless of whether or not they are within a designated site. Proposals for which development works would contravene the protection afforded to European protected species require derogations from the provisions of the Habitats Directive. A derogation may only be authorised if there is no satisfactory alternative and if the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.
- **6.4.25:** Trees, woodlands, and hedgerows - Planning authorities should protect trees, hedgerows, groups of trees/...woodland where they have ecological value, contribute to the character or amenity...or perform a beneficial...green infrastructure function.

Technical Advice Note 5 (TAN 5), Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)

A1.10. The purpose of Technical Advice Note (Wales) 5 (TAN5) is to supplement the information provided in PPW. This provides advice for local planning authorities on:

- The key principles of positive planning for nature conservation;
- Nature conservation and Local Development Plans;
- Nature conservation in development management procedures;
- Development affecting protected internationally and nationally designated Sites and habitats; and
- Development affecting protected and priority habitats and species.



The Environment (Wales) Act 2016

A1.11. This piece of legislation is to plan and manage Wales' natural resources. The key area that is relevant to the proposals relates to the sustainable management of the Welsh Natural Resources, the principles of which are outlined below:

- Building resilience - A resilient ecosystem is one that is healthy and functions in a way that is able to address pressures and demands placed on it and is able to deliver benefits over the long term to meet current social, economic, and environmental needs.
- Managing multiple benefits - Our ecosystems provide us with a wide range of services and benefits. We need to take all of these into account when we make decisions about how we use them, so that they provide multiple benefits for the long term. This includes taking into account their intrinsic value.
- Adaptive management - Ecosystem processes and functions are complex and variable, and our approach will be adaptive with a focus on active learning derived from monitoring and outcomes and taking into account the time lags and feedback times for ecosystems to respond to interventions. It is about 'learning by doing'.
- Long term - It is also important to take account of the short, medium, and long-term consequences of actions, and consider time lags and feedback times for ecosystems to respond to any interventions.
- Evidence - This means gathering information and considering all the social, economic, and environmental evidence (including evidence in respect of uncertainties) from a wide range of experts and stakeholders at the local, regional, and national level as appropriate, both to identify priorities and opportunities for their management and also in delivering the management actions.
- Collaboration and co-operation - It is about having a two-way communication across local, regional, national, and international levels and being interconnected between policy, process, and people to break down silo ways of working. This approach supports the development and implementation of the new, innovative solutions that are needed.
- Working at the right scale - An ecosystem is a functioning unit that can operate at any scale depending on the problem or issue being addressed.

Local Planning Policy

Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016 – 2031 (adopted January 2020)

Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

A1.12 *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

A1.13 *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.*

A1.14 *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;*
3. *There is no suitable alternative to the proposed development;*
2. *The benefits of the development clearly outweigh the adverse impacts on the protected species; and*
3. *Appropriate, avoidance, minimisation, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are provided.*

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

A1.15 *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

- A1.16 *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.*
- A1.17 *Where impacts are identified the Council will require applicants to demonstrate that appropriate measures have been incorporated to reduce, or minimise the impact identified to the lowest possible acceptable level.*
- A1.18 *Planning conditions may be imposed, or legal obligation entered into, to secure any necessary mitigation and monitoring processes.*
- A1.19 *In respect of the water environment, development proposals will be required to incorporate measures to improve water quality where opportunities exist. With regard to flood risk, new developments will be expected to avoid unnecessary flood risk and meet the requirements of TAN15. No highly vulnerable development will be permitted within Development Advice Map (DAM) zone C2. Development will only be permitted in areas at risk of flooding where it can be demonstrated that the site can comply with the justification and assessment requirements set out in TAN15.*



Appendix 2: Site Layout and Soft Landscaping



PLANTING SCHEDULE

TREES				
Number	Species	Height	Girth	Specification
2 -	Alnus glutinosa	400-450cm	14-16cm	Extra Heavy Standard; Clear stem minimum 200cm; Double Staked
3 -	Sorbus aucuparia	150-175cm		Feathered; 5 breaks
5 -	Tilia cordata	400-450cm	14-16cm	Extra Heavy Standard; Clear stem minimum 200cm; Double Staked
Total :10 -				

SHRUBS					
Number	Species	Height	Pot Size	Specification	Density
49 -	Cornus sanguinea	40-60cm	2L	Branched; 3 breaks	4/m ²
32 -	Cornus sanguinea 'Midwinter Fire'	40-60cm	2L	Branched; 3 breaks	4/m ²
70 -	Ilex aquifolium	30-40cm	2L	Leader with laterals	4/m ²
22 -	Juniperus communis	20-30cm	2L	Branched; 3 breaks	3/m ²
32 -	Ligustrum vulgare	40-60cm	3L	Branched; 3 breaks	2/m ²
24 -	Pinus mugo	20-30cm	3L	Bushy	3/m ²
15 -	Rhamnus cathartica	40-60cm	3L	Leader with laterals; 3 breaks	3/m ²
44 -	Rosa canina	40-60cm	2L	Branched; 5 breaks	4/m ²
52 -	Salix purpurea	20-30cm	2L	Branched; 3 breaks	3/m ²
37 -	Sorbus leptophylla	20-30cm	2L	Branched; 3 breaks	3/m ²
40 -	Taxus baccata	20-30cm	3L	Bushy; 5 breaks	3/m ²
37 -	Ulex europaeus	20-30cm	2L	Bushy; 3 breaks	3/m ²
51 -	Viburnum opulus	20-30cm	2L	Bushy; 3 breaks	4/m ²
Total :505 -					

CLIMBERS				
Number	Species	Pot Size	Specification	Density
28 -	Lonicera periclymenum	2L	Several shoots; 5 breaks	5/m ²
Total :28 -				

RAIN GARDEN MIX					
Number	Species	Pot Size	Specification	Density	Percentage Contribution
9 -	Astilbe 'Granat'	2L	C; Full pot	5/m ²	50%
9 -	Carex elata 'Aurea'	2L	C; Full pot	5/m ²	50%
Total :18 -					

SPECIFICATION NOTES

GENERAL

- Proposals to be read in conjunction with Architects and Engineers Drawings;
- All landscape operations to be in accordance with all relevant and current British Standard Codes;
- All stock (other than container grown) shall be planted between November 30th and 28th February. Planting operations shall be carried out in suitable open weather and all plants re-irrigated if lifted by frost during the contract. No planting shall take place in dry, hot and sunny weather or indeed of frost and snow are present, or in cold east winds, regardless of the stock specified
- Any plant material planted outside the recognised planting season (Nov-Feb), to be containerised stock and supplied at the sizes specified;

SOIL AND MULCH

- Where the landscape subcontractor is obliged to handle topsoil or scrape and remove topsoil (e.g. for any hard works constructed) store such topsoil on site, in an area agreed with the Employer, storing in heaps no greater than 2 metres high. Cover with sacking, or geotextile sheeting until used, to prevent excessive weed growth and drying. Any weed growth shall be removed before utilising the topsoil for fill through the application of suitable herbicides;
- Beds found to have inadequately broken up sub-grades, are prone to water-logging in wet periods, causing plants to die. Such beds should be reported immediately to the Site Manager, Surveyor, Design Manager and the Landscape Subcontractor's should allow for breaking up excavated bottoms, or piercing with an auger at 500mm centres, to ensure they are free draining; wherever there is any evidence of residual compaction or poor drainage;
- On site topsoil shall be as close as possible to BS3882:2015, but free from subsoil, clay and debris. Where a landscape subcontractor has concerns about the quality of on-site topsoil supplied by others, a representative sample should be sent to the consultant Landscape Architect for comment;
- Topsoil shall be evenly and thoroughly cultivated to depths as follows incorporating any specified ameliorates to full depths of cultivation;
- Extra Heavy Standard trees - Pits generally 12 x 1.2 metres square and 1 metres deep;
- Shrubs & Hedge Planting - 400mm deep;
- Backfill for trees with suitable topsoil mixed with 50 Litres of suitable non-peat based compost and slow release fertiliser as per manufacturers instruction. Fill to within 85mm of surface (soil level of grass adjacent);
- All planting areas to be covered with a 75mm depth of medium grade bark mulch.

PLANT MATERIAL TREATMENT

- All trees and shrubs are to be supplied from nurseries in the UK and to be of local provenance and to conform to BS3936 and the HTA 'National Plant Specification'. The consultant Landscape Architect is to approve the nursery selected by the Landscape Subcontractor for the supply of plants. The landscape subcontractor is responsible for the protection of plant material being hardened off or grown at their nursery and shall make good defects;
- Tree Stakes and Ties - Stakes to be pressure treated larch poles with RCO by 'PermaWood' or other similar and approved. The stakes shall be 700mm apart (each side of the root ball, taking care to avoid the root ball), with a half rounded cross brace positioned at the top of the posts (level and horizontal), nailed to the stakes with 2 No. galvanised nails at each end. Secure the stem to the tree using a rubber tie with spacing device or sackcloth (and several turns to form a good spacing knot) positioned 25mm maximum from the top of the post.

EXISTING TREES AND SHRUBS

- Existing trees to be retained shall be protected in accordance with the requirements and specifications set out in BS5857:2012 paragraph 6.2.2 figure 3 and BS7722 : Part 4 and shall be positioned in accordance with TG's Ribicicultural Method Statement (15892_P02)

PROPOSED TREES

- Contractor to ascertain the location of all sewers and services prior to tree planting;
- No trees to be planted within 3 metres of sewers or services or other easement recommended by the relevant statutory undertaker without the use of tree root barriers. All tree pits with root barriers are subject to engineer's approval;
- Extra Heavy Standard Trees in soft landscape to be double staked and fixed in accordance with the tree pit detail.
- Where necessary increase tree pit dimensions to ensure that tree pits are at least 75mm deeper and 150mm wider than the rootball. Break up bottom of pits to a depth of 150mm. Compacted glazed sides of pits should be roughened;
- Cut back any broken or damaged roots to sound growth;
- Plant trees upright, in the centre of the pit and at original soil depth;

SHRUBS

- Plant shrubs exactly in accordance with the landscape drawings. All non-perishable containers shall be removed and any damaged roots carefully pruned. Excavate planting holes 75mm wider than the root spread. Each plant shall be planted at it's correct depth, to the original soil or nursery mark, to BS4428:1989. Compost and sand additives shall be worked well into backfill whilst backfilling is in progress, taking care not to raise general levels of the soil so that bed edges are less than 65-80mm below the adjacent pavement edges;
- Gaps around the root ball shall be filled to half its depth and firmed by hand, but avoiding damage to the roots. Further soil can then be used to fill the voids to the surface and firmed by treading, taking care not to over firm and damage roots;
- Water in all plants within 2 hours of planting with 25 litres minimum per metre squared;
- Prune back leggy growth immediately after planting;
- Approved bark mulch to a depth of 75mm.

WATERING & MAINTENANCE

- All planting is to be watered and maintained up to Practical Completion and for a period of 12 months from that date. Any plant which dies, or is not thriving during this period is to be replaced.
- Remove all weed growth by hand as necessary to ensure weed free and tidy planting beds. Take great care not to disturb sheet or bark mulch. All weeds shall be removed from the site. Two visits are required per growing season where sheet mulch is specified, and 6 visits per growing season are required where no sheet mulch is specified. Visits should occur approximately monthly, subject to weather conditions.
- Remove all litter and debris at each visit, leaving the site clean and tidy. Firm in and straighten out plants loosened and prune out dead, leggy and broken branches, without damage to natural habit of the plant. In the case of trees, a suitably skilled and qualified arboriculturalist shall carry out such pruning. Tree stakes and ties shall be checked, adjusted and replaced as necessary. Prune hedges back to an even hedge line to encourage thickening, twice within the first growing season after planting.

Site Boundary

Existing Tree to be retained with associated RPA

Existing Ornamental Shrub Planting Area to be retained

Proposed Tree

Proposed Ornamental Shrub Planting Area

Proposed Planting Area (to tie into existing vegetation on bank using similar species)

Proposed General Purpose Meadow Mix (Emorsgate EM2) Sowing Rate - 4g/m2

K	Adjustment to tree locations	13.06.2022
J	Adjustment to tree locations	09.06.2022
I	Amendment to planters	21.01.2022
H	Addition of rain garden planters	20.01.2022
G	Native shrub amendments	16.09.2021
F	Native shrub amendments	01.09.2021
E	Revised tree locations	20.08.2021
D	Additional trees and grass area along Plymouth Street	19.08.2021
C	Planting amendment (native stock)	27.07.2021
B	Additional planting on steps	17.06.2021
A	Site boundary change	14.06.2021
Rev	Description	Date



Head Office: Marsden Estate, Rendcomb,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 7EX
E: info@tylergrange.co.uk
W: www.tylergrange.co.uk

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Drawing title
Soft Landscape Proposals

PLAN TO BE PRINTED IN COLOUR

Scale
Date

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13.06.2022

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AW
AW

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Revision
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Appendix 3: Non-Statutory Sites

Designation	Name	Sites within Study Area	Ecological Importance
Wildlife Site/ Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) (Adopted)	Glynmil	1.3 km East of the site. Mosaic of semi-upland 'ffridd' (valley side) habitats at the western edge of Merthyr Common, partly on old colliery spoil tips. Comprises mainly acid grasslands, with smaller areas of marshy grassland, acid flush, dry heath, bracken slopes and scrub. Also includes an area of ancient semi-natural oak woodland, and numerous smaller areas of wet woodland dominated by alder. Several ponds are present on the site. Plant species of interest include devil's-bit scabious, bog asphodel, bog pimpernel, musk thistle, carline thistle, lemon-scented fern and bluebell. The site is likely to support a diverse range of breeding bird species, and the ancient woodland areas afford roosting opportunities for bats. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
	Cwm Taf Fechan	1.5km North-West of the site. A long linear site based on the valley of the Afon Taf Fechan and containing the Cwm Taf Fechan Woodlands SSSI. The cSINC covers a more extensive area of adjacent habitats supplementary to those of the SSSI. The valley of the Afon Taf Fechan passes through limestone geology, giving rise to habitats on the steep valley slopes which are either not or only poorly represented elsewhere in the county borough. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
	Cyfarthfa Park	1.6km North of the site. Area of ornamental parkland within Merthyr Tydfil. The cSINC includes an area of semi-natural woodland and several enclosures of neutral grassland in the eastern half of the park. Also includes small areas of secondary broadleaved plantation woodland and several small woodland ponds. The woodlands are of mixed composition, mainly oak, ash, beech and alder, with a ground flora including bluebell, giant fescue and yellow archangel. The majority of the grassland enclosures support species-rich flowery grassland with common knapweed, yellow rattle, eyebright and common spotted orchid. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	



	Cwm Glo	0.6km West of the site. Extensive mosaic of 'ffridd' (valleyside) habitats supporting a complex mosaic of semi-upland and lowland vegetation, in large part developed on old spoil heaps and colliery tips. Mainly unimproved acid grasslands but with extensive areas of wet and dry heathland. Other habitats of note include marshy grasslands with acid flushes, bracken slopes, small ponds and streams, the latter typically lined by semi-natural broadleaved woodlands mostly of oak and alder. The SINC contains the Cwm-glo SSSI. Great crested newt occurs in small ponds together with a range of other common amphibians and reptiles. Otter is thought to occur along the watercourses, and water vole has been recorded in the past. The site contains at least one known bat roost, and there is a good nesting bird fauna which includes redstart, wood warbler, reed bunting and linnet. Marsh fritillary butterfly has been recorded from the SSSI, and other local species such as grayling and dingy skipper are also present. Up to 11 species of Nationally Scarce invertebrates have been recorded, mainly associated with wetlands. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
	Cwm Taf Fields & Cefn Coed Tip	1.7km North-East of the site. Linear series of fields between the Afon Taf Fawr and the A470, also containing areas of semi-natural woodland and a revegetated limestone tip. The fields are a mosaic of damp and dry neutral grasslands with species-rich patches which support many plant species of interest including devil's-bit scabious, bitter vetch, quaking grass, southern marsh orchid, common restharrow and pignut. The woodlands are variable in character, including areas of wet willow woodland, acid oak woodland and some ash woodland near the calcareous tip. The latter type supports brittle bladder-fern, a regionally scarce plant, and many ancient woodland indicator species. The tip itself consists of limestone slag from the nearby ironworks and overhangs the adjacent river in places. The thin soils on the tip plateau support an unusual type of calcareous grassland, the vegetation being dominated by heath-grass and supporting many localised plant species including moonwort, blue fleabane, small cudweed, hairy rock-cress and wild thyme. Dark green fritillary occurs on the site. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
	Abercanaid Fields	1.8km South of the site. Series of fields lying either side of the A470 containing mainly species-rich semi-improved grasslands and marshy grasslands. Also some small areas of semi-natural oak/birch woodland, scattered scrub and trees. Site also includes Webber's pond, a private nature reserve with well-developed marginal emergent vegetation, a section of the Glamorganshire Canal and an adjacent disused railway	



		embankment which supports unimproved and semi-improved acid grassland, bracken slopes and trees. Species of interest include devil's-bit scabious, saw-wort, great burnet, heath spotted-orchid and whorled caraway. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
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	Pentrebach Fields	1.8km North-East of the site. Linear series of species-rich semi-improved neutral grassland fields alongside disused railway embankment. The short-grazed grasslands are dominated by fine-leaved grasses and support abundant mesotrophic herbs, particularly common bird's-foot trefoil. Also contains scattered and dense scrub, bracken slopes and large mature oak trees. An area of dry heathland, dominated by ling heather, is developing in the north of the site, occurring in a mosaic with acid grassland. Species of interest include viper's-bugloss, small cudweed, heath-grass and musk thistle. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
	Merthyr Common South	1.8km East of the site. Very extensive upland / semi-upland common along the hill ridge between two major rivers. A mosaic of habitats occurs across the site, comprising mainly marshy grassland, acid grassland and wet heath to the north, and dry heath and bracken slopes to the south. There are also areas of acid flush, broad-leaved woodland (mainly of silver birch) and dense and scattered gorse scrub. Small pockets of silver birch woodland and scattered trees occur on 'ffridd' slopes in the south-west. Valuable because of its large size, especially the extent of the heathland habitats. Includes numerous ponds and streams (including a section of the Nant Bargoed), extensive outcrops of rock and some disused quarries. Parts of the site are situated on old colliery spoil; these have largely revegetated with acid grasslands and heathlands, but calcareous influences also occur locally. Plant species of interest include the regionally scarce floating bur-reed and knotted pearlwort. The ponds support a rich dragonfly and damselfly fauna, including scarce blue-tailed damselfly and black darter. The site is important for a range of ground-nesting birds, along with peregrine falcon on the high cliffs in the south. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
	Blaencanaid	1.4km South-West of the site. Series of species-rich semi-improved neutral grassland enclosures within large conifer plantation. Also contains small areas of acid and marshy grassland and some scattered scrub and hedges. Species of interest include wood horse-tail, meadow thistle, saw-wort, great burnet, eyebright and marsh violet. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	



	Rhydycar West	0.6km South-West of the site. Very extensive mosaic of 'ffridd' habitats and former mine spoil supporting a complex mosaic of semi-upland and low-land habitats. Main components are ancient semi-natural woodland fragments, other semi-natural woodlands (mainly upland oak) together with wet woodlands of alder, wet heathland, dry heathland, marshy grassland and semi-improved acid and neutral grasslands. Plant species of interest include regionally scarce species such as fen bedstraw, moonwort, bladder sedge, soft-leaved sedge and intermediate lady's-mantle, as well as local species such as petty whin, meadow thistle and whorled caraway. The site also contains a known 'waxcap grassland' which is of regional significance in itself. The larger Rhydycar West/Cwm Glo area is of international significance for these species and is collectively the joint 13th most significant waxcap grassland site in the British Isles. Great crested newt occurs in small pools within the site. Marsh fritillary is likely to occur in marshy grassland areas in the site, since it occurs in similar habitats nearby. Twelve Nationally Scarce invertebrates have been recorded from the area and are thought to occur on the site, mainly associated with the wetlands. Local butterflies include dark green fritillary, small pearl-bordered fritillary and grayling. There is a good nesting bird fauna which includes reed bunting, linnet, marsh tit, redstart, wood warbler and pied flycatcher. The designation reason for the site is undefined.	
	Cwm Woods	1.7km South-West of the site. Large area of ancient semi-natural woodland within a much larger conifer plantation. Dominated by sessile oak with smaller amounts of birch, in a semi-upland situation. The grassy field layer has locally abundant bluebell. Also includes some associated areas of bracken, dry heathland, scrub and acid grassland, the latter habitat supporting pig-nut and heath milkwort. The woodland supports wood warbler and probably other uncommon bird species. The designation for the site is undefined.	





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