
From: Davies, Matthew (Planning)
Sent: 27 November 2023 17:15
To: Cross, David
Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil [PROTECT]
Attachments: P230197_2.pdf

Classification: PROTECT

Classification: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Hi Dave

I have been looking at the amended Ecological Impact Assessment report today and I'm afraid it has thrown up a lot of further issues and quite a few questions – see attached.

Regards

Matt

From: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 November 2023 16:17
To: Davies, Matthew (Planning) <Matthew.Davies3@merthyr.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Classification: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Classification: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

That's totally fine, I wasn't expecting comments back today lol

David Cross

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From: Davies, Matthew (Planning) <Matthew.Davies3@merthyr.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 November 2023 16:09
To: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Classification: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
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Hi Dave

I can look through the report and revise my comments relatively quickly. Not today (I think I made quite a few comments and I am about to clock off), but I can sort this out for you by the end of play on Monday.

Would that work?

Cheers

Matt

From: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 November 2023 15:57
To: Davies, Matthew (Planning) <Matthew.Davies3@merthyr.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Classification: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
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Afternoon Matt,

In response to your initial comments I have now received the attached updated ecological report. I would be grateful for your comments on this.

I was looking to potentially present this application to the December committee, but I am also mindful that this new information has only just been submitted. Would you be able to give me an early heads up if this report is going some way to address your concerns or whether there are any conditions that may be appropriate.

Happy to have a quick catch up on this.

Kind regards

David Cross
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From: Robert Chichester <robert.chichester@c2jplanners.co.uk>
Sent: 24 November 2023 15:31
To: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>
Cc: Arran Dallimore <Arran.dallimore@c2jplanners.co.uk>; Ben Herrington <Ben.Herrington@c2jplanners.co.uk>
Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South

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Afternoon David,

Following on from your email, we have further discussed the points raised with the applicants.

Considering the concerns raised in regard to the height and overlooking issues of plot 22, we have now replaced the house type with a 2bed bungalow (Type E). This allows the dwelling to comfortably within the street scene, whilst removing any overlooking issues with the adjacent dwelling (conifers). I append the amended site plan AL (90) 02 Rev AH and site sections AL (90) 08 Rev A for your review.

In terms of the existing profile of the site and change in levels of the embankment to the south-east and to the north-east of the site, please see the plans ref AL (90) 09 and AL (90) 10 for your assistance.

I also append the updated EIA for the LPA's ecologist's further assessment, which seek to address the comments received from the LPA's ecologist. Our ecological team have conveyed they are happy to discuss any of the content of the documents directly if deemed beneficial.

Notwithstanding the above, are you able to confirm the cut of date for reporting the application to committee. The applicants are concerned with funding deadlines, as such, need to update WG,

Kind Regards

Robert Chichester MRTPI

Director | Town Planning Consultant

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From: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>

Sent: Friday, November 17, 2023 10:14 AM

To: Robert Chichester <robert.chichester@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Cc: Arran Dallimore <Arran.dallimore@c2jplanners.co.uk>; Ben Herrington <Ben.Herrington@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Classification: **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

Morning Rob,

Thank you for sending the updated plans across. The updated ecology and landscaping details in due course is noted.

House type

In regards to the changes to House Type B1, I note that the rear dormer has now been removed which improves its general design. I have been reviewing how this sits within the streetscene, with reference to Section C-C and given how it sits on its own with the dwellings either side having gables, it makes the dwelling look taller and perhaps out of place slightly. This is probably accentuated by the fact it is a slightly taller building as well. If it was located next to Plot 19 then perhaps it would sit more comfortably within the street.

Sections

In regards to the section details provided, these are more or less streetscene plans and do not seem to illustrate the existing profile so an appreciation of the change levels can be seen. Also it would be helpful for the sections to illustrate the change in levels of the embankment to the south-east and to the north-east of the site. Understanding the change in levels across the site is something that was highlighted by residents and may get raised by members. I recall this being discussed by members in relation to the previously approved scheme, of which we had various section details to assist at that time.

Layout

I have been looking at the layout and considering the concern raised by the residents of the 'Conifers' to the rear of plot 22. They have highlighted loss of privacy concerns and there is a need to consider any overbearing impacts. I have also taken another look at the scheme that was previously approved and drawn some comparison to the this proposal. I have noted in the previous scheme there was a separation distance between the rear elevations of approx. 21m (approx. 18m garden length for the plot). In the current scheme, it appears the separation distance is greatly reduced and we are now presented with a separation distance of approx. 13m. I tend to agree there is a potential impact where the adjoining occupants may feel considerably more overlooked.

It appears that the Conifers has a rear patio area and grassed garden area on the north-east side of the property.

Particularly in relation to plot 22, I am struggle to form a reasonable justification to satisfy members that the resident's concern have been addressed. I think the main issue is that Plot 22 sits directly behind the property and the length of the garden serving the Conifers is quite short. This could be addressed by setting the dwelling on plot 22 further forward to increase the separation, but then this might have an impact on the street scene if the plots either side are not adjusted as well. A section detail between plot 22 and the Conifers would provide a better perspective on this matter. But as it stands, I think we need to address this issue.

Plot 21 I think should be ok as the garden length is approx. 11m and the rear elevation of the property would be off set from the Conifers and positioned at an angle away from the adjacent property.

The rear elevation of Plot 23 is off set from the Conifers with a separation distance of approx. 15.5m between the windows. Plot 23 would largely overlook an area to the side of the bungalow, which appears to be a driveway that is already visible from the adjoining lane as well. There may be some views across to the property at an angle and some overlooking of the rear patio. But given the angle and the fact that there are no first floor windows on the Conifers, I am a little more comfortable about saying this property is ok.

As a side note, the layout plan illustrates an orange and red dashed line along the top of the embankment, what do these indicate?

I should be free around 3pm this afternoon if you want to have a chat about the above points.

Kind regards

David Cross

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From: Robert Chichester <robert.chichester@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Sent: 16 November 2023 21:24

To: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>

Cc: Arran Dallimore <Arran.dallimore@c2jplanners.co.uk>; Ben Herrington <Ben.Herrington@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

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Evening David,

Following on from our productive meeting, I've been waiting for approval from the HA in regards to the proposed amendments.

Please see the attached amended plans as discussed, which include the removal of the rear dormers to units B1, amendment to bin store doors, FFL and sections as required.

In terms of the Ecological information, we should have an updated EIA and landscaping plan in place next week for the LA's ecologists review.

I'm in the office tomorrow should you wish to discuss any of the above,

Kind regards

Robert Chichester MRTPI

Director | Town Planning Consultant

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Robert

From: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>

Sent: Friday, October 27, 2023 4:46 PM

To: Robert Chichester <robert.chichester@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Cc: Arran Dallimore <Arran.dallimore@c2jplanners.co.uk>; Ben Herrington <Ben.Herrington@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Classification: **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

Afternoon Rob,

Below is a update on the current situation with the application which we can discuss further in our meeting next week:

In regards to the public responses, to date we have received 14 letters of objection. A summary of the main concerns are as follows:

- Condition and stability of the land being an former tip and no clear details of the height of the land following remediation
- There is Japanese Knotweed across the site
- Impact on utilities, pipes, gas mains etc
- Impact on the value of properties
- Privacy concerns, particular from plots 21, 22 and 23 overlooking the adjacent property.
- Impact on wildlife
- Loss of open space used by dog walkers and children
- Increase in traffic and pollution
- Concerns with the creation of another junction on to Swansea Road
- The development would attract anti-social activity, noise and disturbance
- More houses are being proposed than before
- The provision of flats is not in keeping with the area
- Concern with the bungalows using the access of waunbant Court, close to the junction and the parking issues
- It's not clear how the site would be enclosed along the lane
- Concerns with how the site will be accessed during construction and where all the machinery and vehicles are parked.
- Impacts on surface water

Consultation responses:

GGAT – No objection subject to a condition relating to a programme of archaeological works

Engineers – Over all happy with the proposal. There is a slight concern relating to 2 no. bin storage areas (adj plot 6 and plot 30) where the gates/door would open out into the highway intended for adoption. This could be address by simply repositioning them. Conditions are suggested in respect of the engineering design of the proposed highways, a construction management plan, the retention of parking and surface water no discharging into the public highway drainage system.

Welsh water – No objection has been raised. It is noted that a pubic sewer crosses the site, which appears to follow the alignment of the existing lands and roads. It is recommended that a condition be imposed to ensure these sewers are identified on site and marked out. No operational development would be permitted within the specified easement zones which varies from 3 metres to 4.45 metres. Additionally, no surface water can connect to the public sewerage network.

Housing – The strategic housing team have indicated full support for the development.

Coal Authority – no objection has been raised. It has been highlighted that the site may be effected by past ironstone workings within the site, which is outside the scope of their responsibility.

Fire & Rescue – No objection raised.

Policy Officer – No objection

Police – No objection

Ecology – Various comments have been made (attached for reference), of particular note is the sub optimal timing of the reptile survey work. In this regard, it is noted that the survey previously undertaken was some 5 years go. There is also commentary in respect of the need for further information regarding foraging bats. Some of the details, for example the need for a lighting scheme, details of bird/bat boxes and environment management plan could be addressed by condition.

Application proposal:

Overall, I am generally happy with the layout of the development, which appears to be similar to residential development previously approved on the site. The provision of a mixture of house types across the site is appropriate. In regards to the general design, I would like to make the following points:

- On a few plots house type A2 is utilised side by side, which creates a saw-tooth roof line, which appears a little out of character for the area and doesn't follow the general rhythm with the development. Replacing them with the A1 house type instead would overcome this concern.
- I have no objection to house type B1 in principle, but I am not convinced that the introduction of a large box dormer on the rear elevation is appropriate and would appear bulky and out of place. On plots 3 and 4 it would likely be visible along Swansea Road and would appear out of context. Additionally, on plot 22 it would give rise to a greater degree of overlooking towards the existing property to the south. Concerns have already been raised that plots 21-23 impede on their privacy. Can we remove the dormers?
- There are various existing sections through the site provided, but there is no plan to show where these sections cross the site. I don't appear to have any proposed sections to confirm any changes in levels. However, the SAB sections suggest significant re-profiling of the embankments around the site.
- I haven't been able to find any reference to the FFL for the dwellings, which may give an indication of the levels across the proposed development. A number of concerns have been raised by residents about the levels. Can we indicate the FFL on the site plan for the dwellings and provide a number of proposed sections across site together with a key to show where they are taken from.

In terms of the timescales, I would be looking to present the application to the planning committee on the 13th December 2023 if possible. This would require the above matters to be addressed by the end of November so that the report can be finalise.

In regards to your query regarding the use of air source heat pumps, potentially it could be included in the application, but I would have to consider whether we need to consult residents again on the change. I would need details of the ASHP units and where they would be located on each property. I would probably need to consult with environmental health and determine whether the pumps could be a source of nuisance for neighbouring residents.

Kind regards

David Cross

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From: Robert Chichester

Sent: Monday, October 9, 2023 2:46 PM

To: Cross, David <David.Cross@merthyr.gov.uk>

Cc: Arran Dallimore <Arran.dallimore@c2iplanners.co.uk>; Ben Herrington <Ben.Herrington@c2iplanners.co.uk>

Subject: RE: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil

Afternoon David,

Hope your well.

We're minded the application has been with the LPA for 8 weeks, as such, we would welcome a meeting to discuss the progress of the determination.

We have noted that no objection has been raised by any statutory consultantee.

Notwithstanding the above, as part of the strategy for achieving the energy and decarbonisation requirements of WDQR2021, the applicants intend to utilise air source pumps. We are minded however that some of the locations will be within 3m of a boundary, as such, do you consider the attached plan should be included as part of the overall planning application?

This would prevent further NMA's and would allow the applicants to finalise their strategy with WG.

I look forward to hearing and potential meeting dates,

Kind Regards

Robert Chichester MRTPI

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From: Ben Herrington <Ben.Herrington@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Sent: Friday, September 8, 2023 10:50 AM

To: david.cross@merthyr.gov.uk

Cc: Robert Chichester <robert.chichester@c2jplanners.co.uk>; Arran Dallimore
<Arran.dallimore@c2jplanners.co.uk>

Subject: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tdfil

Good Morning David,

We've just noticed there are public comments (and objections) on the planning portal in reference to the above application- but they aren't showing/visible despite refreshing the page etc.

Could we please have a copy of them forwarded for review?

Best wishes,
Ben

Ben Herrington
Graduate Town Planner

Office: 02922 4405 537



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Darllenwch ein [hysbysiadau preifatrwydd](#) i ddarganfod mwy am sut rydym yn defnyddio eich gwybodaeth bersonol.

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INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: David Cross
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278
Memo number: 2
Date of previous memo: 25/08/2023
Date: 27/11/2023

SUBJECT: P/23/0197 | Proposed residential development (42 dwellings) with new access | Land Adjoining (South Of) Swansea Road To The East Of Waunbant Court And North West Of Old Winchfawr Road Swansea Road Merthyr Tydfil

The following documents have been submitted in relation to the above named site and planning application:

1. Swansea Road, Merthyr Tydfil. Ecological Impact Assessment, V1. Ethos Environmental Planning. **June 2023.**
2. Swansea Road, Merthyr Tydfil. Ecological Impact Assessment, V1. Ethos Environmental Planning. **November 2023.**
3. Swansea Road Development. Landscape Strategy LA.1. 3 August 2023. TC23125_Landscape Plans v9.dwg. Tir Collective Landscape Architects.
4. Swansea Road Development. Planting Plan LA.2. 3 August 2023. TC23125_Landscape Plans v9.dwg. Tir Collective Landscape Architects.
5. Swansea Road Development. Planting Plan LA.3. 3 August 2023. TC23125_Landscape Plans v9.dwg. Tir Collective Landscape Architects.
6. Swansea Road, Gellideg. Tree Survey, Categorisation & Constraints Report. Dated 23/05/2023. Steve Ambler and Sons Tree Specialists Ltd.

COMMENTS

HABITATS

Page 3 Document 2 – SUMMARY:

"In addition to this, an offsite compensation strategy for habitats and invertebrates will be required in agreement with the LPA and measures secured through appropriate planning obligations."

Later in the document it is recommended that compensation will all be undertaken onsite. Is an element of offsite compensation proposed? This must be clear.

In addition, there must be a level of quantification for:

- Habitats present onsite pre-development;
- Habitats lost/removed post-development;
- Habitats retained post-development; and;

-
- Habitats restored post-development.

A table detailing the area measurements involved for each habitat type would be useful along with clear plans/drawings.

This is important for all areas of habitat lost, but particularly those habitats that have been identified as habitats of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity (e.g., acid grassland and heathland).

Questions to be answered include:

- For those areas proposed to be restored, how will this be achieved?
- Will there be an element of translocation of plants or turves or soils for instance?

Restoration needs to be achieved as soon as possible and translocation would seem to be the most effective mechanism. Ideally, therefore, a detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) is required prior to determination in order to evaluate the mechanism and its potential effectiveness.

Another consideration will be protection of the restored habitats – will these be demarcated, for example, as Wildlife Protection Zones that will be inaccessible to the public and completely fenced off on all sides to allow unhindered development of the habitat. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be required prior to determination, to include measures to protect retained onsite and offsite habitats during construction.

Woodland

of Documents 1 and 2 regarding woodland - 6.4 Woodland (Other Woodland; Broadleaved and Mixed)

Document 1	Document 2
6.4.1 The development proposals include the retention of some of the woodland and scrub along the eastern boundaries. The woodland and scrub areas along the western boundary will be entirely lost for the proposed development and its access road. The western parcels of the woodland will incur permanent, negative impacts as all of these areas are to be removed. The eastern parcel of woodland will lose a small amount of woodland in the southern section of the site, this will also cause significant, permanent, negative impacts. 6.4.2 In the absence of mitigation, the retained areas of woodland may incur negative, short-term impacts. Sensitive construction practices and tree protection fencing will be required during construction. These mitigation measures will be detailed within the CEMP.	6.4.1 The development proposals include the removal of all of the woodland and scrub on site to facilitate the proposed development and its access road. In the absence of mitigation, the loss of the woodland may incur negative, short-term impacts. 6.4.2 The woodland areas to be lost on site are small and have large stands of Japanese knotweed within them; given this, and the local abundance of woodland in better condition, it has been determined that the loss of woodland on site will not have a significant, negative ecological impact at a local area, and therefore will not require compensation. 6.4.3 Two areas of Japanese knotweed were identified at the site within the wooded areas. Knotweed is an invasive weed, which is listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act for which it is an offence to allow the spread of this plant. Recommendations for the management and eradication of the Japanese knotweed at the site is made in section 9.

There seems to have been a change in the evaluation of the importance of the woodland and the impact of its loss. Clearly if all the onsite woodland is to be lost without compensation, there will, at the very least, be a site level impact.

There will need to be compensation for the woodland and scrub habitat lost. This should be relatively easy to achieve, as there are many opportunities along the northern and eastern boundaries.

Documents 3, 4 and 5

All species must be native and of local, if not Welsh or UK, provenance. Amendments are therefore required. This must include any lawned garden areas. The following are examples of seed mix that can be used:

- [EL1 Flowering Lawn Mixture - Emorsgate Seeds \(wildseed.co.uk\)](https://www.wildseed.co.uk/EL1-Flowering-Lawn-Mixture)
- <https://www.johnchamberswildflowers.co.uk/wildflower-seeds-mixes/80-grass-seed-mixes/heritage-flowering-lawn-80-grass-seed-wildflower-mix>
- <https://wildflowerlawnsandmeadows.com/product/wild-flower-lawn-seed-mix/>

(or equivalent)

INVERTEBRATES

How will the restored habitats onsite compensate for the onsite habitats that currently support the assemblage of invertebrate species recorded onsite? Including:

- the range of Section 7 invertebrates currently present of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity;
- the 21 species of nature conservation importance; including
 - three nationally scarce species.

This is linked with the restoration of onsite habitats as explored in the previous section (HABITATS).

REPTILES

Document 1 (June 2023 iteration of Version 1 of the EcIA report - submitted 14/08/23) only included references to a 2018 reptile survey. It did not include any reference to, or results from, a 2023 reptile survey.

Document 2 (November 2023 iteration of Version 1 of the EcIA report) now contains the results of a reptile survey undertaken between 19th April and 29th August 2023.

LPA comments following the submission of the June iteration of version 1 of the EcIA report (Document 1):

"The reptile presence or likely absence survey was undertaken at a sub-optimal time of year (June and July 2018). In addition, the first two survey visits were undertaken at temperatures >20°C. The level of survey effort (seven visits) given the sub-optimal conditions is not sufficient to be confident of the nil result. In addition, this survey work is now out-of-date (5 years old).

*The reptile presence or likely absence survey will need to be repeated in at an optimal time of year (**earliest opportunity would be September 2023**) in order to confirm or refute the results of the sub-optimal out-of-date survey. The results of this survey are required prior to determination."*

Question:

1. Why was 2023 reptile survey work and data not mentioned or included within Document 1?
-

Page 36, Document 2

4.9.4 – “Overall a max of three slow worms were recorded on site.” Is this meant to refer to the peak count for one visit, rather than the maximum number recorded onsite? Please clarify and then make any necessary amendments.

Page 36 and 37, Document 2

Table 4 – are the reptile encounter references in the table all for slow worm?

Translocation

Page 46, 6.9.1, Document 2 - “a 15-day reptile translocation”. Can a reptile translocation necessarily be limited to a 15 day period? Checks should be undertaken until there has been a nil result for 5 consecutive days. A population estimate study was not undertaken onsite, therefore it is possible there may be a substantial number of reptiles present and that this won’t fully be understood until the translocation process begins.

A robust Reptile Mitigation Plan including full details of the translocation and of the proposed receptor site is therefore required. The receptor site would ideally be currently unsuitable for reptiles. Enhancement of the receptor site would need to be undertaken prior to commencement of the translocation process. Although a low population is predicted onsite, this is only a rough estimate based on a presence or likely absence survey (largely undertaken in sub-optimal months). The receptor site must have enough carrying capacity for the numbers of animals translocated, so there must be a contingency plan, should the numbers of animals present be higher than the rough estimate predicts.

BATS

In Document 1 (June 2023 iteration of Version 1 of the EcIA report - submitted 14/08/23), the following was outlined:

Page 30, 4.7.3 and 4.7.4

“Whilst the site is surrounded on three sides by urban development, and road on the other, it is also located close to several SINC’s. These SINC’s form a network of ecologically valuable habitats, as shown in Figure 5, which are likely to provide commuting corridors for bats. In particular, there is woodland directly to the north-east of the site, which provides connectivity with Nant Ffrwd stream. This is likely to be a valuable commuting corridor for bats.

*Overall, considering the urban context, habitats present and links to wider habitats, it was assessed that the site provided ‘**moderate** potential’ for bats in line with BCT survey guidelines: “continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.”*

LPA ecologist comments in response to Document 1 in memo #1 (25/08/2023):

“Collins 2016¹ Guidelines on the number of bat activity surveys to achieve reasonable survey effort in relation to habitat suitability for foraging and commuting bats:

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Table 8.3 Guidelines on the number of bat activity surveys recommended to achieve a reasonable survey effort in relation to habitat suitability.			
Survey type	Low suitability habitat for bats ^a	Moderate suitability habitat for bats	High suitability habitat for bats
Transect/spot count/timed search surveys	One survey visit ^b per season (spring – April/May, summer – June/July/August, autumn – September/October) ^c in appropriate weather conditions for bats. Further surveys may be required if these survey visits reveal higher levels of bat activity than predicted by habitat alone.	One survey visit ^b per month (April to October) ^c in appropriate weather conditions for bats. At least one of the surveys should comprise dusk and pre-dawn (or dusk to dawn) within one 24-hour period.	Up to two survey visits ^b per month (April to October) ^c in appropriate weather conditions for bats. At least one of the surveys should comprise dusk and pre-dawn (or dusk to dawn) within one 24-hour period.
AND			
Automated/static bat detector surveys ^d	One location per transect, data to be collected on five consecutive nights per season (spring – April/May, summer – June/July/August, autumn – September/October) ^c in appropriate weather conditions for bats.	Two locations per transect, data to be collected on five consecutive nights per month (April to October) ^c in appropriate weather conditions for bats.	Three locations per transect, data to be collected on five consecutive nights per month (April to October) ^c in appropriate weather conditions for bats.

This survey work is required prior to determination.”

NB no survey work (either transect or static detector) was reported to have been undertaken in Document 1.

In Document 2 (updated iteration of Version 1, November 2023), there has been a downgrading of the assessment of the suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat from ‘moderate’ to ‘low’, without any explanation. See below:

Page 33, 4.7.3 and 4.7.4

“Whilst the site is surrounded on three sides by urban development, and road on the other, it is also located close to several SINC’s. These SINC’s form a network of ecologically valuable habitats, as shown in Figure 5, which could provide commuting corridors for bats. In particular, there is woodland directly to the north-east of the site which provides connectivity with Nant Ffrwd stream.

Overall, considering the urban context, habitats present and links to wider habitats, it was assessed that the site provided ‘low potential’ for bats in line with BCT survey guidelines.”

Bat activity transect data and static detector data has now been added to Document 2 that was not included in Document 1. The report shows the transect surveys to have been undertaken in May, June and July 2023. This does not follow the guidelines even for low suitability - “One survey visit per season (spring – April/May, summer – June/July/August, autumn – September/October)”. There is no autumn transect survey. The report shows static data surveys April - October 2021 and in May and July 2023. The 2021 data is out-of-date and the 2023 data does not include an autumn deployment.

There is no plan showing the transect routes taken, direction walked, positions and orientation of the static detectors, general bat activity observed etc etc. This is required.

Questions:

1. What is the reason/justification for the suitability of the habitat now been downgraded from moderate to low? What has changed between the production of Document 1 and Document 2?
2. Why was the transect and static detector survey work and data not mentioned or included within Document 1?
3. What is the reason/justification for the autumn period being omitted from the suite of surveys?

LIGHTING

A detailed lighting plan for all proposed new lighting (internal and external) will be required. This will be informed by the bat transect and automated/static detector surveys. Dark routes for commuting and foraging bats will be maintained as well as dark routes to and from bat boxes. Horizontal illuminance plans illustrating the light spill of proposed lighting will be required. In general, lighting must only be used where and when necessary. All lighting will conform to the following guidelines:

<https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Areas designed to support invertebrates post-development will also be required to be dark.

MITIGATION, COMPENSATION AND ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

It must be made clear which measures in the report are for the purposes of mitigation, which are for compensation and which are for enhancement.

Full details of all enhancement measures (for example, bat boxes, bird boxes, bee bricks, insect hotels, gaps for hedgehogs) must be supplied and must be clearly marked on all relevant architects' drawings, plans and elevations prior to determination.

Integrated bird and bat boxes will be included in the property designs: (8x integrated sparrow terraces / 9x further integrated bird boxes (3 for each of 3 species – house martin, swift and starling / 8x integrated bat boxes).

Other enhancements will include, but not be limited to, bee bricks integrated into buildings, insect hotels within development footprint.

OTHER ISSUES

- The date for the updated EclA has been changed from June 23 (Document 1) to Nov 23 (Document 2), however, the version number has not been changed and should be amended to avoid confusion.
 - Page 8, Document 2, 2.2.2
Minor point – date of the MTNRAP is still incorrect – should be 2019-2024. This still requires amendment.
 - Page 10, Document 2, 3.2 Desk Study
Please can the unique reference number for the SEWBRc data search be added into the report? This still needs to be added.
 - Page 30, Document 2, 4.6.2
The new waterway recently installed only the eastern boundary (referenced within Document 5 is not mentioned). This seems to be shown on the plan below, but is not mentioned in the report.
 - Japanese knotweed (JKW) onsite will be disposed of following 'The Knotweed Code of Practice; managing Japanese knotweed on development sites'. Professional INNS removal specialists will be used to eradicate the JKW. A method statement will be supplied for written approval by the LPA.
 - Is the layout plan the most up-to-date version – see below?
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