

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Gareth Davies
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278
Memo number: 1
Date of previous memo: -
Date: 12/02/2026

SUBJECT: P/26/0023 | CONVERSION TO 8 STUDIOS AND ALTERATIONS TO SHOPS WITH NEW SHOP FRONTS AND REAR DORMER. | 10 - 13 PONTMORLAIS WEST MERTHYR TYDFIL CF47 8UT

SITE DESCRIPTION

Shop premises set within grounds that run southeast to an open section of the Nant Morlais (see red line application boundary). There are large trees close to the stream along with other nearby suitable habitat for protected species (woodland pockets, parkland, grassland, wooded river habitat)

DESIGNATED SITES WITHIN 500M OF THE APPLICATION SITE

- ✓ Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) - x1, Afon Taf, c.401m;
- ✓ Within a Buglife B-Lines Area

PRIORITY AND PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN 500M OF THE APPLICATION SITE

- ✓ Birds (including Schedule 1¹ and Section 7² species);
- ✓ Invertebrates (including Section 7² species)
 - ✓ Marsh fritillary butterfly (Section 7² species), closest record c.1462m from site;
- ✓ Mammals
 - ✓ Bats (European protected species³; some Section 7² species) - closest roost record for soprano pipistrelle, c.17m from site);
 - ✓ Otter (European protected species³; Section 7² species);
 - ✓ Hedgehog (Section 7² species);
- ✓ Amphibians
 - ✓ Great crested newt (European protected species³; Section 7 species) - closest record c.492m from site)

REQUIREMENTS

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

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

¹ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

² Environment (Wales) Act 2016

³ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

An Aderyn data search is required from SEWBRcC (Package B 1km).

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

Planning Policy Wales (PPW 12), Chapter 6 must be considered where relevant to this application.

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

- *GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: stronger emphasis on taking a proactive approach to green infrastructure, the submission of a proportionate **green infrastructure statement [GIS]** with planning applications and signposting Building with Nature standards.*
- *NET BENEFIT FOR BIODIVERSITY AND THE STEP-WISE APPROACH: further clarity is provided on securing net benefit for biodiversity through the application of the step-wise approach, including the acknowledgement of off-site compensation measures as a last resort, and, the need to consider **enhancement and long-term management** at each step. The use of the green infrastructure statement as a means of demonstrating the stepwise approach is made explicit. A simplified diagram of the policy approach has been developed (included within PPW12). The importance of strategic collaboration to identify and capture larger scale opportunities for securing a net benefit for biodiversity is recognised.*
- *PROTECTION FOR SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST: strengthened approach to the protection of SSSIs, with increased clarity on the position for site management and exemptions for minor development necessary to maintain a 'living landscape'. Other development is considered unacceptable as a matter of principle. Exceptionally, a planned approach may be appropriate where necessary safeguards can be secured through a development plan*
- *TREES AND WOODLANDS: closer alignment with the stepwise approach, along with promoting new planting as part of development based on securing the right tree in the right place.*

For further information, see here - [Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/planning-policy-wales-edition-12)

It is noted that a GIS has been submitted – this will be reviewed following receipt of the results of the PEA and PRA.