

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Caroline Pulley
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278
Memo number: 1
Date of Memo #1: -
Date: 19/04/2021

SUBJECT: P/21/0094 (NORTHERN) AND P/21/0095 (SOUTHERN) | LAND AT HONEYSUCKLE CLOSE, GURNOS | PROPOSED ERECTION OF 2 NO. PASSIVHAUS DWELLING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS (FULL) | PROPOSED ERECTION OF 4 NO. PASSIVHAUS DWELLINGS, LAUNDRY ROOM, CYCLE STORE AND ASSOCIATED WORKS (FULL)

The site is found a housing estate in Gurnos, Merthyr Tydfil and comprises amenity grassland and scattered trees.

Designated sites within 500m of the application site:

- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) – x2, closest: Cyfarthfa Park, 231m);
- Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) – x1;
- Restored Ancient Woodland Site (RAWS) – x3;
- Within a Buglife B-Lines area.

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

- Birds (including Schedule 1¹ species);
- Invertebrates (including Section 7 species²);
- Bats (closest roost record for unidentified bat species, c.500m from site);
- Reptiles;
- Amphibians;
- Hedgehog;
- Vascular plants (including Section 7 species – Environment (Wales) Act 2016).

¹ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

² Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Documents submitted in support of the above application:

1. *Tree Survey, Categorisation & Constraints Report. Honeysuckle Close. 13th November 2020. Steve Ambler and Sons Tree Specialists Ltd.*
2. *Preliminary Ecological Assessment. Land at Honeysuckle Close, Merthyr Tydfil. Ecological Services Ltd. 05th March 2021. V2.0.*

Comments

1. *Tree Survey*

Trees covered by the report (plus features) below:

T1 – Oak (basal wound with internal decay 300 x 1400mm. X2 wounds @2.4m). Recommendation to 'consider felling due to short life expectancy).

T2 – Hornbeam (compression fork). Recommendation 'reduce sub dominant stem by 2m)

T3 – Sycamore (slight compression fork @1m. Large basal wound 400 x 1400mm – leading to x2 cavities @2.2m. Some deadwood. Internal decay present throughout main stem). Recommendation 'Further structural evaluation required).

T4 – Oak (basal wound 300 x 300mm. Wound site @3m non occluded missing limb. Some minor deadwood). Recommendation 'Remove deadwood. Remove rope'.

On the basis of the above, T1, T3 and T4 have moderate/high suitability for roosting bats. T2, depending on whether the compression fork has created a cavity, could have suitability. Any work to these trees that would impact on the features listed above must be informed by further bat survey work (initially a Preliminary Roost Feature Inspection survey).

Tree Protection Measures (E.G., Root Protection Areas) As Set Out In This Report Will Be Followed.

2. *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)*

Biological data: SEWBRc – unique reference number is required. This is a standard requirement for all reports with biological records.

Hedgehogs: mitigation for hedgehogs required (gaps in fences/boundaries to allow free passage).

Trees: report states there were 2x large Oak trees in southern site and a number of smaller, younger trees (that appear to be non-native). No trees reported in the northern parcel. This represents a discrepancy between the trees listed in the PEA and the Tree Report? Needs clarification.

Reptiles: grassland must be maintained in current short state prior to development to ensure the habitat remains unsuitable for reptile species.

Lighting: there will be dark routes across site to allow bats to move around the site and allow access to bat boxes. Any onsite lighting must conform to guidelines: <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>. Lighting plan required to demonstrate the dark routes across the site, dark routes to and from bat boxes and compliance of onsite lighting to the guidelines.

LEMP: a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan is required for the site. This must demonstrate the site has been enhanced in terms of biodiversity. All species introduced will be appropriate, native and of local provenance. The site is within a Buglife B-Lines area, so there needs to be planting of value for pollinators. The following seed mix (or similar) will be used for any lawned areas: EL1 – Flowering Lawn Mixture <https://wildseed.co.uk/mixtures/view/56>. This mixture responds well to regular short mowing. The LEMP will include a 5 year maintenance and management plan. *Has Tom been consulted on this Caroline?*

Bat and bird nest boxes (proposed for the buildings will be integrated and not surface mounted. Specifications of the boxes (with hyperlinks to demonstrate) will be provided.

All mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures will be marked on all relevant plans/drawings/elevations for the application.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report provides the results of initial ecological surveys associated with a proposed development. The report is used to identify further ecological surveys necessary to inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), to identify ecological constraints to a project and make recommendations for design changes, and to highlight opportunities for ecological enhancement. A PEA can be used as a scoping report (for non-EIA projects), but should not be submitted as part of a planning application unless it can be determined that the project would have no significant ecological effects, no mitigation is required and no further surveys are necessary; with the exception of such cases it should be superseded by an EclA. See <https://cieem.net/resource/guidelines-for-ecological-report-writing/>.