

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: David Cross
From: Ecologist
Ask for: Matt Davies
Ext: 5278
Memo #: 3

Date: 26th November 2019

SUBJECT: P/19/0235 LAND TO REAR OF 9-15 NEWTON STREET, ABERCANAID, MERTHYR TYDFIL

[Proposed detached dwelling, double garage and barn]

An updated ecological report has been submitted. Most, but not all, of the comments from the previous memo (#2) have been addressed.

For clarity, the requirements for the site (in terms of ecology) will be as follows:

Mitigation

1. An onsite buffer strip (7m minimum) will be created along the Nant Canaid (measured from the top of the site-side bank of the stream). This will be fenced off (1.8m close-boarded fence).
2. Habitats outside of the construction footprint will be retained.
3. The development will be fenced-off (1.8m close-boarded fence) to prevent human access and impacts to the rest of the SINC site (including the buffer strip) following development completion. However, access for reptiles and hedgehog will be provided (gaps measuring 13cmx13cm every 20m). The fencing will be erected prior to the commencement of construction in order to protect the habitats outside of the site red-line boundary.
4. There will be no lighting of the buffer strip and no lighting of any of the boundary habitats *both during- and post-construction*. Any post-construction lighting associated with the new buildings will conform to the guidance indicated below.
 - a. (2018) Guidance Note 08/18. Bats and artificial lighting in the UK: Bats and the Built Environment series. Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals.

<https://cdn.bats.org.uk/pdf/Resources/ilp-guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting-compressed.pdf?mtime=20181113114229>

A lighting plan to be approved by the local authority ecologist will be submitted.

5. The Afon Taf SINC mitigation measures (3.3.1.4 in the *Ecological Appraisal report, Issue 1VB*) will be followed. NB where the measures call for 5m working distance, this will in fact be 7m. There will be the following addition to the list of measures:
 - a. Any trenches, holes, exposed pipes will be covered over at night or a means of escaping provided (e.g., a plank set at 30°).
6. The reptile method statement as featured within the Ecological Appraisal report (Issue 1VB) will be followed. NB the vegetation management will be designed to

encourage reptiles present into the retained onsite habitat outside of the construction footprint (see Point 2). Once the construction footprint has been made unsuitable for reptiles it will be maintained in this state until construction is completed.

7. Any vegetation removal will be undertaken outside of the bird-breeding season. In the event that clearance work is required during the nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a breeding bird survey will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE).
8. As a precautionary measure, vegetation removal will be undertaken with consideration for dormice using one of the two methods set out below:
 - a. Two-stage removal (best practice) – above-ground vegetation will be removed in winter (ideally Jan and Feb). Then left undisturbed until May – roots can then be removed. Supervision from SQE.
 - b. One-stage removal (suitable for small areas) – above-ground vegetation will be removed in winter (ideally Jan and Feb). Fingertip search by SQE for hibernation nests in winter (Jan/Feb) with supervision of root removal.

If at any time dormice or dormice nests are identified, vegetation removal works will cease and a European Protected Species Licence will be required to enable works to proceed legally.

9. If onsite trees, or limbs of trees are to be removed/pruned and Potential Roost Features (PRFs) for bats are present, further investigation by SQE will be required. If bats or their signs are identified in PRFs to be impacted, works on the trees will cease and a European Protected Species Licence will be required to enable works to proceed legally. Any trees removed will be replaced like-for-like in terms of species and size (where possible).
10. There will be a pre-commencement check for otter, undertaken by a SQE. If a resting place for otter is identified and would be impacted by the development, works will cease and advice sought from a SQE and Natural Resources Wales.
11. There will be a pre-commencement check for badger, undertaken by a SQE. If a badger sett is identified and would be impacted by the development, works will cease and advice sought from a SQE.
12. A specialist Invasive Non Native Species specialist will be commissioned to produce a scheme for the treatment of the onsite Japanese knotweed to be approved by the local authority ecologist and then followed.
13. The patio area will be reduced in size by 10% and constructed from permeable slabs.

Compensation

1. The loss of habitat onsite will require compensation. Meadow-style green roofs or alternatively green walls will be added to the workshop and garage structures.
2. The driveway will be constructed from ground reinforcement grass grid material.

Enhancement

1. An *integral* bat box will be added to the eastern elevation of the main dwelling (as high as possible and as far as possible away from the windows – near the southern corner of the building). Drawing NEWTON 02D will be amended to show this.
2. An *integral* sparrow terrace will be added to the eastern elevation of the garage building. Drawing NEWTON 02D will be amended to show this.
3. A reptile hibernaculum will be created in the northern corner of the site as shown in drawing NEWTON 02D.
4. Any new landscaping elements will use native species of local provenance.

Plan/drawing

The following will be highlighted within a plan/drawing to be approved by the local authority ecologist and landscape architect:

- Buffer strip
- Retained habitats outside of construction footprint
- Fencing (including gaps for hedgehogs)
- Green roofs or walls
- Ground reinforcement grass grid material
- Landscaping elements, to include:
 - Native species specifications (species/sizes/planting densities)
 - Timetable for implementation and future management to ensure proper establishment – landscaping to be implemented in the 1st planting season following completion of the development and maintained thereafter. Any plants that fail will be replaced on a like-for-like basis.
 - Appropriate management of grassland habitats for nature conservation interests.