

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: David Cross
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278
Memo number: 2
Date of previous memo: 21/01/2022
Date: 27/01/2022

SUBJECT: P/21/0416 | Proposed residential development comprising 23 affordable dwellings with associated drainage and access works | Land At Springfield Rise Treharris Merthyr Tydfil

Documents provided in support of the above application (including some updated versions (1, 2 + 5) and a newly submitted plan (6)):

1. Preliminary Ecological Assessment. Land at Springfield Rise, Treharris. Ecological Services Ltd. Version **V3.0, 25th January 2022**.
2. Reptile Survey Report. Land at Springfield Rise, Treharris. Ecological Services Ltd. **Version V3, 24th January 2022**.
3. Drawing Title: Proposed Site Layout. Springfield Rise, Treharris. Pentan Architects (3845-PEN-XX-XX-DR-A-1103-S4-P11). July 2021.
4. Landscape Design Statement, Specification & Management Plan. Proposed Residential Development, Springfield Rise, Treharris. TDA. September 2021.
5. Detailed Soft Landscape Proposals. Springfield Rise, Treharris. TDA. Drawing number **TDA.2640.01(B). 26th January 2022**.
6. **Drawing Title: Site Location Plan [reptile receptor site], Springfield Rise, Treharris. Pentan Architects (3845-PEN-XX-XX-DR-A-0001-S4-P3). Dated March 21, but supplied in an e-mail dated 26th January 2022.**

Comments:

DOCUMENT 1

Habitat of Principal Importance

Page 14 – Open Mosaic Habitat (on Previously Developed Land) – a Section 7 habitat of principal importance under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The report suggests that onsite compensation would not be possible and that offsite compensation would be required. It will be the responsibility of the applicant (with the advice of their commissioned ecologist) to provide the offsite compensation. Full details must be provided to the LPA ecologist prior to determination.

Although, a site has been found for use as a reptile receptor site (see Document 6), there is no mention within the updated reports of off-site compensation for the loss of the Open Mosaic Habitat. If this information cannot be provided at this stage, then a robust planning condition requiring details of the site and an appropriate management plan to

be provided prior to commencement of works must be added to the decision notice. Written approval of the LPA ecologist will be required in order to discharge the condition.

Protection of the tree line along the north west boundary

Comments previously made at Pre-Application Enquiry stage (01st October 2020) regarding the treeline/hedgerow along the north west boundary of the site:

‘Historic imagery shows that in 2004 the site was dominated by grassland habitat, possibly with some bracken stands. There was also a strong tree line/hedgerow running along the north western boundary. NB a tree line can be seen on the 1945 imagery and even on OS 1st Edition Mapping, so this tree line/hedge may be classed as an important hedgerow and therefore would be protected.’

The tree line is also likely to be important for commuting/foraging bats.

More details are required regarding the protection of this hedgerow. For instance Document 3 shows a 2m ecological buffer zone along this boundary. Does this buffer include the hedgerow or does the buffer start from the hedgerow/tree line? If so, is it measured from the trunks of the trees or the extent of the canopies?

Or is the hedgerow itself the buffer? In which case the hedgerow has no protective buffer.

Still no information provided regarding this.

Lighting

The hedgerow/treeline and ecological buffer zone must not be illuminated.

A lighting plan will be required for the site. Any and all lighting must be shown to comply with the following guidance:

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

There will be a planning condition requiring a lighting plan (as set out above). This will include a drawing/plan setting out those areas to be kept dark (this must include access routes to any integrated bat boxes installed as enhancements – see ‘Enhancements’ below). This will be supplied prior to commencement of works and will require written approval of the LPA ecologist in order to discharge the condition.

Enhancements

Enhancements are referred to in the report, but no details are included.

Further details are now included within the updated Document 1. These are for bat and bird boxes (integrated within buildings and at the site boundary). NB gaps for hedgehogs (13cm x 13cm) in any onsite fencing/boundaries must also be included.

There will be a planning condition requiring a plan/drawing of all enhancement measures with final specification of boxes. This will be supplied prior to commencement of works and will require written approval of the LPA ecologist in order to discharge the condition.

There will be a further condition. Evidence of the installation of the above enhancements (bird and bat boxes and gaps in boundaries) will be supplied for approval by the LPA ecologist.

NB, you say the following in your e-mail – *“If you are ok with what has been provided I would look to recommend a condition be imposed that requires those boxes to be installed prior to the occupation of the dwellings.”* Obviously, the integrated boxes will be installed during construction and no this will naturally be prior to occupation.

DOCUMENT 2

A reptile receptor site must be specified by the applicant. The receptor site must be within the ownership/control of the applicant and must be currently unsuitable for reptiles. A management plan must be submitted demonstrating how the site will be enhanced and managed for reptiles for the next 10 years.

Details of the receptor site have been supplied and are acceptable.

DOCUMENTS 4 + 5

Document 5 has been amended to now include native species only. These must be of local (if not Welsh provenance). **This document is acceptable. The will be a planning condition referring to this document.**

Have similar amendments been made to document 4?