

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: David Cross
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278
Memo number: 1
Date of previous memo: -
Date: 25/08/2022

SUBJECT: P/21/0032 | Construction of two detached dwellings and a detached garage | Plots 46/48 Sweetwater Park Trefechan Merthyr Tydfil

Area of grassland and scattered scrub to the north of Trefechan in the north of Merthyr Tydfil. The onsite habitat is well linked to the wider environment and to the nearby vegetated river corridor of the Taf Fechan.

Ecological document submitted in support of the above application:

- o Sweetwater Park, Trefechan, Merthyr Tydfil. Ecological Assessment. Be Ecological Ltd. Issue 1VA. Dated 12.08.22

Comments:

Reptiles

Page 22, 5.3.1 Summary – ‘There is also ***abundant habitat to the north*** that reptiles can be pushed towards.’

Page 3, 1.3 SITE DESCRIPTION – ‘The site is surrounded by ***broad leaved woodland to the north***, there is good connectivity to the wider landscape.’

The habitat to the north appears to be uniformly scrub/woodland (confirmed by the statement above), so not suitable for reptiles. A strategy encouraging reptiles towards this habitat is therefore not viable. If all onsite habitat is proposed to be cleared, a trapping and translocation exercise will be required. A suitable receptor area will need to be found.

Breeding birds

Habitat clearance: Page 28, 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS – ‘***Breeding birds should be assumed to be present on the site. Mitigation for these groups is therefore required. All site clearance should be undertaken under ecological supervision.***’

In the first instance, site clearance will take place outside of the bird breeding season. If this is not possible, a breeding bird check will be undertaken (by a suitably qualified ecologist) prior to any clearance works to identify any active nests or nesting behaviour. Identified nests will be protected with a suitable buffer zone until such time as young birds have fledged.

Boxes (integrated): Page 28, 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS – ‘***The following sparrow terrace or similar will be attached to the western elevation of the properties ...***’

The western elevations are the fronts of the proposed dwellings, so there is likely to be more disturbance here. Also, bird boxes should be positioned facing the north or the east. Therefore, a more suitable position for the boxes would be on the northern elevations. Please could this be amended?

Bats

Boxes (integrated): Page 28, 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS – ‘*The following bat block ... or similar will be integrated in to **the eastern elevation of the properties.***’

The eastern elevations of both of the proposed dwellings have numerous windows. The southern gable ends would be more suitable (there are no windows shown on these elevations). Please could this be amended?

Lighting: The eastern and northern boundaries will be kept dark and there will be dark routes to allow bats to access the integrated boxes as referred to above. In addition, the boxes themselves will not be directly illuminated.

It must be established whether onsite external lighting is proposed. If there is external lighting, there will need to be a lighting plan demonstrating compliance to the following guidelines:

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

Compensation landscaping

A wildflower meadow along with a wildflower seeding for lawns has been proposed in compensation for the loss of the onsite semi-improved grassland habitat. In addition, onsite soils are proposed to be stored and reused as a base for the grassed and lawned areas on site post development.

A brief establishment, maintenance and management plan for these grassed areas will be added to the ecological report.

There must also be compensation for the loss of the scattered scrub/young tree habitat on site. This can be achieved by adding a hedgerow along the eastern and northern boundaries of the site. NB Only native woody species of local provenance will be used.

Full specifications plus a brief establishment, maintenance and management plan will be added to the ecological report.

Compensation and enhancement measures

All compensation and enhancement measures (bat boxes, bird boxes, gaps for hedgehogs, wildflower area, seeded lawned area, hedgerow) will be clearly shown on relevant architects’ plans, drawings and elevations. This is required prior to planning determination.