

Site Assessment / Pre-Works Check Methodology

Plot 1a & 1b, Cwm Woods Grove, Colliers Row, Heolgerrig, Merthyr Tydfil

Site: Plot 1a & 1b, Cwm Woods Grove, off Upper Colliers Row, Heolgerrig, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1DP

Planning Reference: P/26/0049

Applicant / Client: Maxiom Development Ltd on behalf of Gabe Jones

Prepared in response to: PEA (Certhia Ecology, July 2026) Section 4.1.2 / 5.1.4; MTCBC Ecologist Memo 3 (13/07/2026)

Date: July 2026

STATUS: Reviewed

Reviewed By: Matt Dowling Certhia Ecology

Review Date: 19/08/2026

1. Purpose

1.1 The 1A-B Colliers Row Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Certhia Ecology, July 2026) concludes that, given the current cleared condition of the Site, pre-construction survey checks for protected species are not considered necessary. However, the PEA recommends that if, by the time works commence, cleared vegetation has recolonised the Site to an extent capable of supporting protected or notable species, a Site Assessment / Pre-Works Check by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required. This document sets out the methodology for that check, as requested by MTCBC's Ecologist in Memo 3 (13 July 2026).

2. Trigger for the Check

2.1 A Site Assessment / Pre-Works Check will be triggered if:

- More than approximately 2 years has elapsed since the PEA site visit (2 June 2026) before works commence, in line with CIEEM (2019) guidance on the lifespan of ecological survey data; and/or
- Visual inspection immediately prior to works shows that scrub, ruderal vegetation or other cover has regrown to a height/density capable of providing shelter for Hedgehog, nesting birds, reptiles or amphibians.

3. Methodology

3.1 The check will be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (CIEEM member or equivalent) no more than 48 hours before any site clearance or ground-breaking works commence, and will comprise:

- A walkover of the full Site and boundary habitats;
- A visual 'finger-tip' search of any regrown scrub/ruderal vegetation and the base of the retained hedgerow for Hedgehog, reptiles and amphibians, using hand tools only;
- A check for active or recently used bird nests within any vegetation to be cleared;
- A check of the retained hedgerow and any trees for new evidence of bat roost potential (droppings, staining, gaps) since the PEA;
- A check for regrowth or new occurrence of invasive non-native species (see INNS Method Statement).

4. Seasonal Constraints

Receptor	Constraint
Nesting birds	Vegetation clearance to avoid March–September inclusive where practicable; if unavoidable, works only to proceed following written confirmation from the checking ecologist that no active nests are present.
Reptiles / amphibians	Clearance of scrub/ruderal habitat, if required, to be undertaken March–October (active season) under ecological supervision, avoiding disturbance to hibernating individuals.
Hedgehog	Finger-tip search using hand tools required regardless of season; any animal found to be allowed to move away unaided or relocated to adjacent suitable habitat by the checking ecologist.
Bats	If any evidence of roosting is found, works to stop in that location and Natural Resources Wales to be contacted for advice before proceeding.

5. Sign-Off and Escalation Procedure

5.1 On completion of the check, the ecologist will issue a short written record (dated, signed, with photographs) confirming either that: (a) no evidence of protected/notable species was found and works may proceed as planned; or (b) evidence was found, in which case the specific mitigation set out in the EcMP for that species/group will be implemented, and works in the affected area will not commence until the ecologist confirms it is safe to do so.

5.2 Where a protected species requiring a Natural Resources Wales licence is identified (e.g. an active bat roost or nesting Schedule 1 bird species), works in that location will not proceed until any necessary licence has been obtained and its conditions can be met.

6. Reporting to the Local Planning Authority

6.1 A copy of the pre-works check record will be retained by the developer and made available to MTCBC on request, forming part of the Compliance evidence required under Memo 3.