



ALDER ECOLOGY UK LTD

Working for the Client - Working with Wildlife

Penydarren Social Club, Tramroad lane, Penydarren, Merthyr

Tydfil, CF47 9AD

AEUK 1757

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

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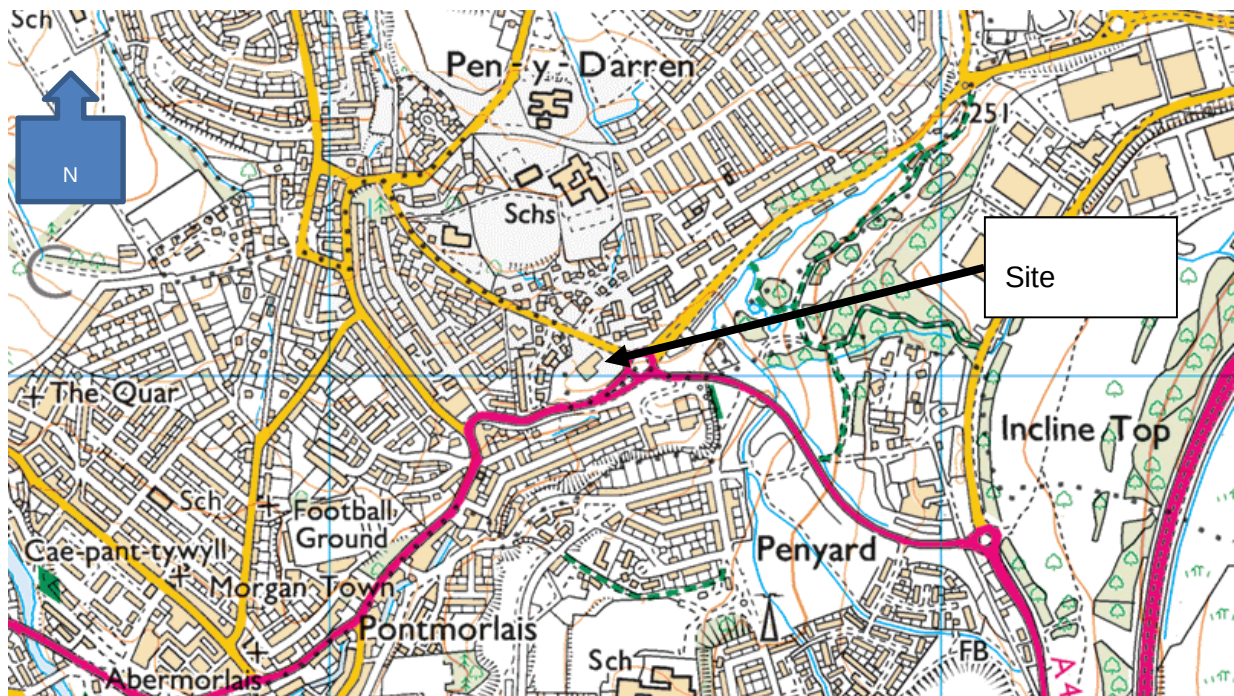
1. BACKGROUND

Commission

Alder Ecology UK Ltd was commissioned by MJD Commercial to undertake a Phase 1 habitat survey of The Penydarren Social Club, Tramroad Lane, Morgantown, Penydarren, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 9AD National Grid reference SO 05430 07034 and What3words (police.round.animal) location with respect to a potential development/alterations of the site and for the potential of the site to contain protected species or habitats. The site is hard standing with a mixture of native and non-native trees and buildings. The area surveyed shown in blue (0.474 hectares 1.171 acres) on aerial 1 but this is larger than the redline boundary.

Proposed scheme

The proposed scheme is to provide additional parking for the Social Club and a commercial business with parking.



Map 1 Site location, Penydarren, Merthyr Tydfil

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Aerial 1 showing area covered by the survey which is larger than the redline

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Plan 1 Proposed redline for the site

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2. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken on 23rd April 2026 and 8th July 2026. An assessment has been provided on the potential value of the site for wildlife based on the Phase 1 survey results obtained. Conclusions have been drawn about the site and an approach has been proposed to the way any proposed development may proceed with recommendations for the site.

Mr Roger Martindale BA (Hons) MSc, CEnv, MCIEEM, and Ecologist at Alder Ecology UK Ltd who is a full member of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv). The surveyor has over 25 years' experience of this type of work.

The aim of the ecological Phase 1 Habitat Survey is to provide a description of the existing habitat types, to determine the existence and location of any ecologically valuable areas and to identify the presence of any protected species or habitats suitable for supporting such species. The study therefore identifies all ecological constraints at the time of the survey and outlines mitigation measures and further survey work where required.

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3. METHODOLOGY

Field study

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

A Phase 1 Habitat Survey details the habitats present, based on their plant species composition and classified according to Phase 1 methodology developed by the Nature Conservancy Council (now Joint Nature Conservancy Committee, JNCC 2003 revised reprint 2007) in the publication Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit.

This survey is 'extended' to include the assessment of habitats on the site for their potential to support protected species and to look for evidence of such species. The optimal survey season for Phase 1 Habitat Surveys is March to October. The assessment was therefore taken outside of the optimum time period.

'Extended' Phase 1 Habitat Surveys provide a broad assessment of habitat types and the potential for such habitats to support protected species, in order to inform the need for further surveys during the appropriate season.

Desk study

The purpose of the desk study was to review information available in the public domain. Information was searched for within 2km for protected sites and using 10km grid squares for protected species data.

The following web-based metadatabases were searched for information regarding protected habitats and species;

- MAGIC
- NBN gateway
- NRW search for protected area.

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4. LEGISLATIVE AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended 1985) affords protection to species of fauna and flora included in schedules 5 and 8 of the act. The Environment (Wales) Act (2016), Section 7 requires biodiversity lists to be produced. These lists include types of habitats and species which are of "Principle Importance" for the purpose of maintain and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales. This list supersedes the duty in Section 42 of the NERC Act 2006. Those pieces of legislation together with national, regional and local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) seek to safeguard areas containing protected or important species and habitats.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Section 7 list and the BAPs are used to guide decision-makers such as landowners in implementing their duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in Wales, when carrying out their normal functions. This legislation is further strengthened by the European Habitats directive 1992 which affords special protection to species and habitats of European importance. Protected species and habitats are a material consideration in the planning process and an assessment of their presence/absence from a site and the likely impact of a development on such species or habitats must be undertaken prior to any planning submission.

Further guidance on protection to wildlife and habitats is given in Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5 Nature Conservation and Planning 2009. This document provides guidance on how developments should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation when undertaking new schemes.

5. LIMITATIONS TO THE ASSESSMENT

The Phase 1 Habitat Survey was carried out at a sub optimal time of year for floristic species compositions and has missed peak times for spring flowering species. The timing of the survey may limit the ability of the assessment to recognise seasonal changes on site but this survey comprise two visits to negate this issue.. Although given the baseline conditions and habitats present it is considered to be accurate. Full access was available for the site survey and the walkover assessment and was not limited or restricted.

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6. PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES



Plate 1 Showing approx. general view of area of the proposed works looking south east



Plate 2 showing general area of improved species poor grassland verge which contains scrub

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Plate 3 showing location of mixed species trees on site



Plate 4 showing the utility building on site with negligible potential for birds or bats

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Plate 5 car park with encroaching vegetation from off site



Plate 6 utility building and shipping container with negligible potential for birds or bats

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Plate 7 species poor improved grassland which will be impacted by the scheme



Plate 8 immature scattered trees on the boundary which will be partially impacted by the proposed scheme.

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7. DATA REVIEW

The Environment (Wales) Act (2016), Section 7 requires biodiversity lists to be produced. These lists include types of habitats and species which are of "Principle Importance" for the purpose of maintain and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales

Table 1 Protected habitats 5km search CF47 9AD

Site Name	Protected status	Distance from site to closest record	Comment
Cwm Glo a Glyndry	SSSI	1.3km SW	Grassland woodland and heath mosaic
Mynyddoedd Llangynidr a Llangatwg, Cefn yr Ystrad a Chomin Merthyr	SSSI	4.2km NE	Upland habitat
Cwm Taf Fechan Woodlands	SSSI	2.2km W	Woodland
Nant Glais Caves	SSSI	3.1km NW	Geological and associated habitats and species
Penmoelallt	SSSI	3.5km NW	Woodland

B-Lines

The site is located on a Buglife B-line. The B-Lines are a series of 'insect pathways' running through our countryside and towns, along which Buglife are restoring and creating a series of wildflower-rich habitat stepping stones. They link existing wildlife areas creating a network across the UK landscape. This will provide large areas of brand new habitat benefiting bees and butterflies but also benefit other wildlife, see appendix 2.

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Table 2 Protected and Notable Species Records 2km search CF47 9AD

Name	Records	Distance from site within 2km	Date of most recent record	Comment
Badger	2	2km	2023	
Bird assemblage	117	2km	2025	See table 3
Common pipistrelle bat	3	2km	2024	
Common Toad	26	2km	2025	
Daubentons bat	2	2km	2023	
Great crested newt	7	2km	2023	
Hedgehog	15	2km	2025	
Otter	6	2km	2024	
Red squirrel	1	2km	1959	
Slow worm	3	2km	2025	
Soprano pipistrelle	2	2km	2024	

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Bird assemblage

Of the 117 species of bird recorded within 2km of the site a total of 19 species are listed on The Environment (Wales) Act (2016), Section 7 as Species of Principle Importance for Nature Conservation and 8 species listed as schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 species so the area has value in that respect. The species are listed below.

Table 3 Priority bird species or schedule 1 bird species are listed below.

Species	Number of records	Priority species	Schedule 1 species
Brambling	5		Yes
Bullfinch	66	Yes	
Cuckoo	5	Yes	
Curlew	4	Yes	
Fieldfare	4		Yes
Grasshopper warbler	1	Yes	
Green sandpiper	1		Yes
Greenshank	1		Yes
Herring gull	115	Yes	
House sparrow	211	Yes	
Kingfisher	21		Yes
Lapwing	9	Yes	
Lesser redpoll	1	Yes	
Linnet	25	Yes	

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Marsh tit	1	Yes	
Redwing	16		Yes
Reed bunting	21	Yes	
Skylark	20	Yes	
Snow bunting	1		Yes
Song thrush	139	Yes	
Spotted flycatcher	2	Yes	
Starling	124	Yes	
Tree pipit	3	Yes	
Willow tit	2	Yes	
Wood lark	3	Yes	Yes
Yellowhammer	3	Yes	

The site does have potential to hold some more common species not listed above on site or close to the site for foraging.

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8. RESULTS

Habitats

Habitat Description

The site supports a range of low quality habitats.

Table 4 Habitats on site

Habitat	National importance	Regional importance	Local importance	Site importance
<i>Improved grassland</i>				Yes
<i>Scattered trees (mixed species)</i>				Yes
<i>Hard standing</i>				<i>Negligible</i>
<i>Buildings</i>				<i>Negligible</i>

Improved grassland (B.4)

There is a small patch of improved grassland on site entrance has fewer than 5 plant species per metre with such species as: rye grass, annual meadow grass and occasional species recorded including dandelion, white clover and ribwort plantain. The grassland is a roadside verge and has been poorly managed and left to accumulate plant litter which adds to the fertilizing effect and reduces species composition. The grassland will be impacted by the scheme but some will be retained on site. The grassland has been assessed to of site value.

Scattered trees (A.3.3.)

The area of impact of the proposed works is mainly the improved grassland but will impact some of the trees/shrubs eg, Hazel, sycamore, dogwood, ash, oak, goat willow, pine sp, on the boundary to aid access to the new car park at the rear of the social club. The trees are all immature specimens and contain no cracks or split or features useful for roosting bats but do have some limited value for nesting birds. Some of the trees will be impacted by the scheme but they would have required management thinning to maintain good quality specimens irrespective of the proposed scheme. So although impacted they will not be detrimental to the

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ecology value of the area as the management would have had the same impact. The mixed species trees are assessed to be of local site value.

Hard standing (J.4)

The site contains hard standing, tarmac car park and entrance road. In some locations these area can be useful for basking insects and reptiles but this site has poor connections to other high quality habitats that may contain such species and so it has no value at this location. The hard standing has been assessed to be of negligible value.

Buildings (J.3.6)

The main building the social club will not be impacted by the proposed works and it has been assessed to be of negligible value for nesting birds or bats. The building that will be lost as part of the scheme is the utility building and shipping container shown in plates 4 and 6. The buildings have negligible value for birds and bats and is located in a car park with security and municipal lighting further reducing the potential of the building. The buildings are assessed to be of negligible value.

Non-Native Invasive Species

The site does not contain any non-native invasive species which are listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Protected and Otherwise Notable Species

The site has the potential to hold common and protected animal species as a foraging resource but has negligible value for permanent occupation.

Table 5 Potential protected species associated with the site

	<i>European importance</i>	<i>National importance</i>	<i>Environment (Wales) Act (2016 section 7 species)</i>	<i>BAP species</i>
Bats	yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bird assemblage		Yes	Yes	Yes

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Reptiles		Yes	Yes	Yes
Hedgehog			Yes	Yes
Amphibians	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Bats

The site offers no opportunities for roosting bats as there are no trees or buildings on site with features suitable for bats. There is potential for foraging bats to use trees on site as part of use of the wider area although any development of the site is unlikely to significantly change the baseline conditions and the site habitats (trees) would not be considered a critical resource for local bats. The area is well served by municipal and security lighting further reducing the opportunities for bat species. The value of the site for roosting bats is assessed as negligible. The value of the site for foraging bats is assessed as low/negligible.

Birds

Of the 117 species of bird recorded within 2km of the site a total of 19 species are listed on The Environment (Wales) Act (2016), Section 7 as Species of Principle Importance for Nature Conservation and 8 species listed as schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 species so the area has value in that respect. The wider landscape has potential to hold low numbers of common bird, section 7 and schedule 1 species as a limited foraging resource but the site is poorly located and poorly connected to the landscape. The site is assessed to be of low value to common, section 7 and schedule 1 bird species as a limited foraging resource.

Reptiles

Given the location of the site in urban Merthyr Tydfil and the improved grassland of the impact zone it is unlikely that the site is used by common reptile species. The site is isolated by urban habitats and roads and is poorly connected to the landscape and source populations of reptiles. Therefore the site generally is assessed as of low/negligible value for common reptile species.

Hedgehog

There are local records of hedgehog within 2km of the site and the site habitats, trees and the grassland does present some limited opportunities for hedgehog foraging on site in the impact

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area. The site has low value for hedgehog and the improved grassland in the main impact zone has low potential for foraging hedgehog due to the site location.

Amphibians

The site contains no waterbodies suitable for breeding amphibians but foraging amphibians could use the site on the north boundary. There are no obvious waterbodies within 250m of the site that may be impacted by the proposed scheme. The site is assessed to be of negligible value to breeding amphibians and low/negligible value for foraging amphibians.

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9. CONCLUSIONS

The local area within 5km of the site does contain protected habitats but they will not be either directly or indirectly impacted by the works, if works are undertaken with ecological guidance. The local area within 2km of the site does contain records of protected species but given the nature and scale of the proposed works and the habitats on site protected or priority species are unlikely to be either directly or indirectly impacted by the works in the long term. The site sits within a Bug life B-line which helps to connect the landscape for insects to move around and move from habitat to habitat. Any design of the site needs to provide insect friendly plants, shrubs and trees to help promote this connectivity see appendix 2.

The site does not contain habitats that are nationally and locally significant and does not contain examples of priority habitats as listed in The Environment (Wales) Act (2016), Section 7. The habitats on site (improved grassland and scattered trees) are of limited conservation value and easily re-created and will be partially retained and enhanced as part of the site. The site does not sit adjacent to habitats or sites that are locally or nationally significant and any proposed development/re-use of the site will not on its own or in combination affect the integrity or designatory features of such sites and will not lead to permanent habitat loss of significant high value habitats.

The Phase 1 habitat survey concludes that the site impact zone contains generally low quality habitats (improved grassland, mixed species scattered trees) and the area of the proposed impact is improved grassland/scattered trees is habitat which has a low ecological value. Opportunities for wildlife does exist locally in the wider landscape but protected species will not be impacted directly by the proposed works and therefore further surveys will not be required.

Overall the site has been assessed as being of overall low/negligible ecological value due to the improved grassland/scattered trees habitat of the impact zone and therefore further surveys will not be required for this planning submission.

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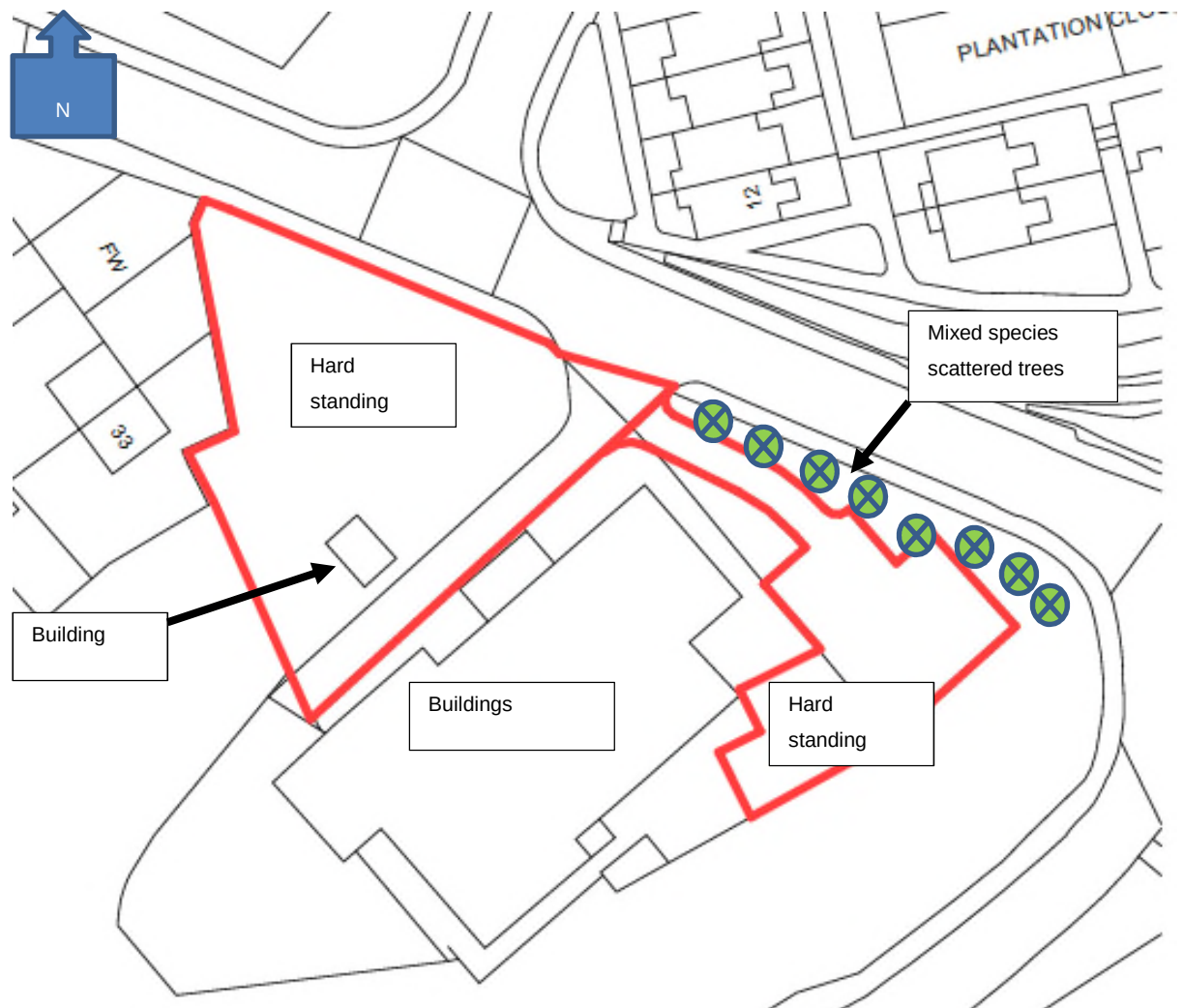
10.RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Provide a wildlife protection and enhancement plan for the site providing net benefits for biodiversity within retained habitat.
2. Ensure site habitats provide species required for B-line insects to continue to use the area. This would include nectar rich plants of mainly native species with some beneficial and not detrimental ornamental species.

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11. Appendix 1 site habitat map

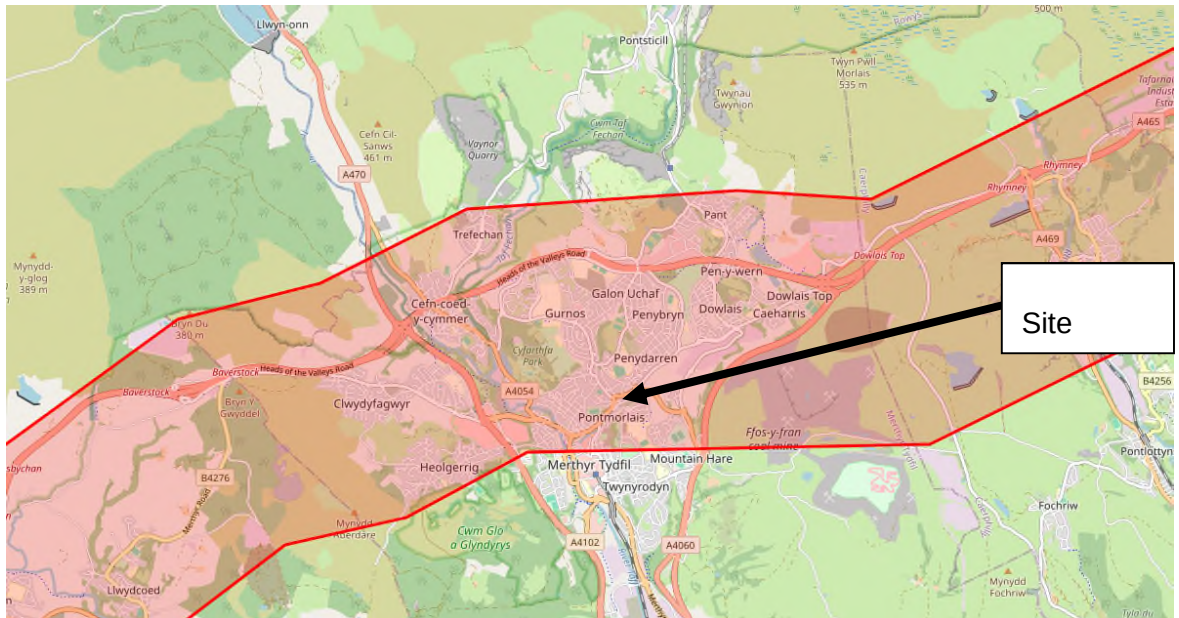


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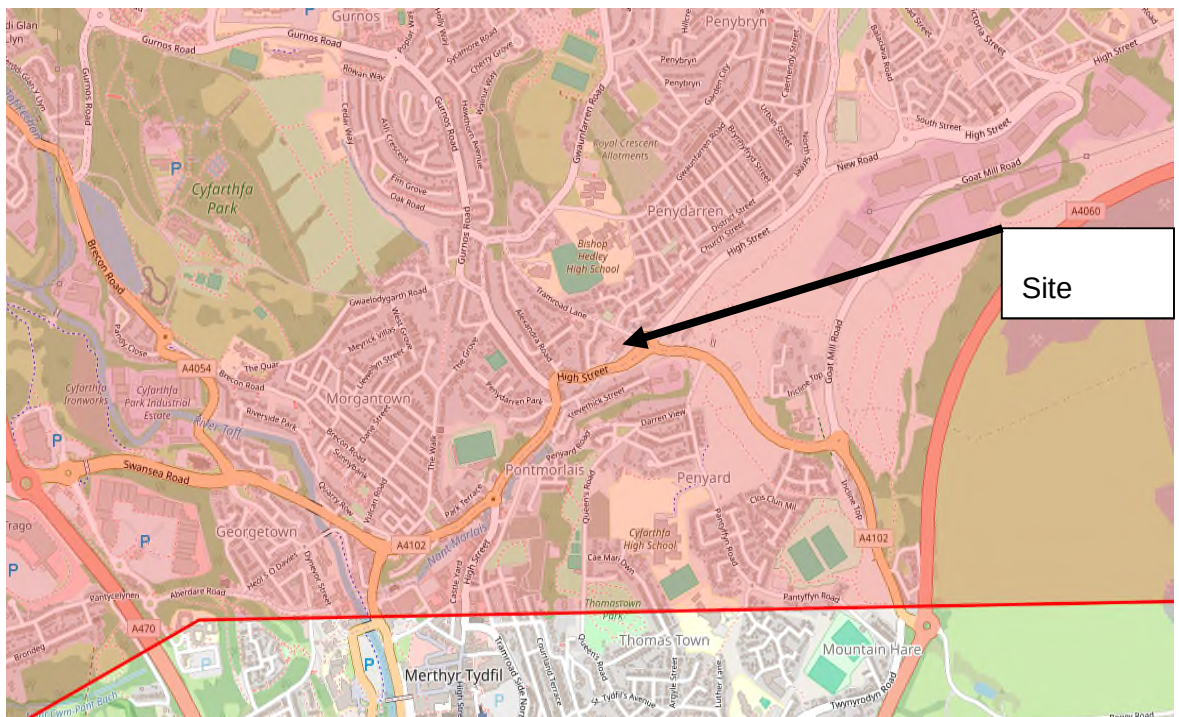
Target note	
Scattered trees mixed species	

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12.Appendix 2 BUGLIFE- B-line



Buglife B-Line through the area



Showing site location within the Buglife B-Line