

# INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Gareth Davies  
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)  
Ext: 5278  
Memo number: 1  
Date of previous memo: -  
Date: 03/03/2026

**SUBJECT: P/26/0040 | Conversion of the 1st and 2nd floors to 8 x 1-bed flats (4 units on each floor), above the ground floor property known as Barcode. | 92-94 Ethan Arcade High Street Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8UP.**

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## SITE DESCRIPTION

Property on High Street in Pontmorlais, Merthyr Tydfil. Relatively close to parkland, garden habitat, grassland, scattered trees, small woodland pockets, vegetated stream corridor and vegetated river corridor providing good ecological links to the wider environment.

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## DESIGNATED SITES WITHIN 500M OF THE APPLICATION SITE

- ✓ Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) - x1 (Afon Taf, c.298m from site);
- ✓ Within a Buglife B-Lines Area

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## PRIORITY AND PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN 500M OF THE APPLICATION SITE

- ✓ Birds (including Schedule 1<sup>1</sup> and Section 7<sup>2</sup> species);
- ✓ Fish (including Section 7<sup>2</sup> species);
- ✓ Invertebrates (including Section 7<sup>2</sup> species)
  - ✓ Marsh fritillary butterfly (Section 7<sup>2</sup> species), closest record c.1311m from site;
- ✓ Mammals
  - ✓ Bats (European protected species<sup>3</sup>; some Section 7<sup>2</sup> species) - closest roost record for brown long-eared bat and common pipistrelle, both c.103m from site). **During surveys in relation to a previous planning application in 2021, the upper floor of Barcode was identified as historic bat roost for *Pipistrelleus* – droppings characteristic of this species were present. NB this information does not feature in the records.**
  - ✓ Otter (European protected species<sup>3</sup>; Section 7<sup>2</sup> species);
  - ✓ Hedgehog (Section 7<sup>2</sup> species);
- ✓ Amphibians
  - ✓ Great crested newt (European protected species<sup>3</sup>; Section 7 species) - closest record c.460m from site)

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## REQUIREMENTS

NB the bat survey reports from 2021 (as submitted in support of this application) are out-of-date.

An up-to-date Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats and nesting birds of the site (undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist) is therefore required. This must provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to assess any potential adverse impacts of the proposed

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<sup>1</sup> Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

<sup>2</sup> Environment (Wales) Act 2016

<sup>3</sup> Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

development on priority and protected species and/or habitats, or to identify what further information is required before a full assessment is possible.

The results of the PRA will be used to inform whether further surveys are required, or to establish the need for and extent of any mitigation and compensation measures required as part of the proposed development.

A BARB+ data search is required from SEWBRcC.

There will need to be enhancement of the site in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW 12), Chapter 6 must be considered where relevant to this application.

The main elements of the policy (that are or may be relevant to this application) are as follows:

- *GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: stronger emphasis on taking a proactive approach to green infrastructure, the submission of a proportionate **green infrastructure statement** [GIS] with planning applications and signposting Building with Nature standards.*
- *NET BENEFIT FOR BIODIVERSITY AND THE STEP-WISE APPROACH: further clarity is provided on securing net benefit for biodiversity through the application of the step-wise approach, including the acknowledgement of off-site compensation measures as a last resort, and, the need to consider **enhancement and long-term management** at each step. The use of the green infrastructure statement as a means of demonstrating the stepwise approach is made explicit. A simplified diagram of the policy approach has been developed (included within PPW12). The importance of strategic collaboration to identify and capture larger scale opportunities for securing a net benefit for biodiversity is recognised.*
- *PROTECTION FOR SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST: strengthened approach to the protection of SSSIs, with increased clarity on the position for site management and exemptions for minor development necessary to maintain a 'living landscape'. Other development is considered unacceptable as a matter of principle. Exceptionally, a planned approach may be appropriate where necessary safeguards can be secured through a development plan*
- *TREES AND WOODLANDS: closer alignment with the stepwise approach, along with promoting new planting as part of development based on securing the right tree in the right place.*

For further information, see here - [Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/planning-policy-wales-edition-12)