

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Kate Glover
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278
Memo number: 1
Date of previous memo: -
Date: 29/08/2024

SUBJECT: P/24/0193 | Sub-division of single dwelling into two dwellings | 17 Quarry Row Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8PS

SITE DESCRIPTION

Semi-detached dwelling and gardens, buffered from the adjacent River Taff by a small pocket of woodland. The wooded river corridor represents valuable habitat with good links the site to the wider environment.

DESIGNATED SITES WITHIN 500M OF THE APPLICATION SITE (ticked options apply)

- ✓ Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC): x2 (closest, Afon Taf – immediately adjacent to the south western site boundary)
- ✓ Within a Buglife B-Lines Area:

PRIORITY AND PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN 500M OF THE APPLICATION SITE (ticked options apply)

- ✓ Birds (including Schedule 1¹ and Section 7² species);
- ✓ Fish (including Section 7² species);
- ✓ Invertebrates (including Section 7² species)
 - ✓ Marsh fritillary butterfly (Section 7² species), closest record c.1330 from site;
- ✓ Mammals
 - ✓ Bats (European protected species³; some Section 7² species) – closest record for common pipistrelle, c.74m from site + closest roost record for unidentified bat species c.128m from site);
 - ✓ Otter (European protected species³; Section 7² species), closest record c.62m from site);
 - ✓ Hedgehog (Section 7² species);
- ✓ Amphibians
 - ✓ Great crested newt (European protected species³; Section 7 species) - closest record c.128m from site)

¹ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

² Environment (Wales) Act 2016

³ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

REQUIREMENTS (SEE BELOW)

Initially, confirmation is required of the following:

1. The trees/woodland found to the south west of the development site are definitely offsite and will not be impacted by the scheme (either through direct physical works or via lighting). **NB these trees lie within the Afon Taf, Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).**
2. None of the following will be undertaken:
 - Works/repairs to the roof covering
 - Works/repairs to any fascia boards, bargeboards, soffit boxes
 - Loft/attic conversion
 - Any works within the loft/attic space
 - External cladding

If the information in points 1 and 2 is confirmed, then the requirements will be as set out in the box below. Otherwise, the application will need to be reassessed in terms of ecology.

Planning Policy Wales 12 (PPW 12)

PPW 12, Chapter 6 must be considered.

The main changes to 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 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 (which will be further refined in the consolidated version of PPW12). The importance of strategic collaboration to identify and capture larger scale opportunities for securing a net benefit for biodiversity is recognised.*

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.*

NB it appears that, as part of the scheme, the rear garden habitat (small trees and scrub) will need to be removed in order to create space for parking. If this is the case, it must be demonstrated that PPW 12 has been followed. Commissioning of a suitably experienced ecologist may be required to put together this information.

Nesting birds

If works impacting nesting birds are to be undertaken, they will take place outside of the bird nesting season. If the works must be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a breeding bird survey will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified person. Any active nests identified should be protected until the young have fledged. Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3614>) is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, should be devised and implemented.

The advisory note for nesting birds will be added to the decision notice should planning permission be granted.

Enhancements

No ecological survey work required, however, there will need to be enhancement in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and Welsh Government Circular 'Securing Biodiversity Enhancements' sent to Heads of planning in October 2019.

The following will be required:

- A single integrated bat box installed as high as possible on the western gable end:

<https://www.greenwoodsecohabitats.co.uk/shop> (single crevice box) – or similar.

The bat box will not be illuminated.

There will be no extra onsite external lighting above existing levels.

The above enhancement measures will be a condition of the planning permission if granted.