



ALDER ECOLOGY UK LTD

Working for the Client - Working with Wildlife

Land adjacent to 8-9 Perrott Street, Treharris, Cardiff

AEUK 1451

Preliminary Ecological Assessment

Roger Martindale

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Registered Company address:

**Alder Ecology UK Ltd, 22, Millards Close, Hilperton Marsh, Trowbridge, Wiltshire
BA14 7UN**

Tel: 01225 765604 Mob: 07533 273939 e-mail: enquires@alderecolgy.co.uk

Company registration number 6852967

Project: Perrott street, Treharris PEA

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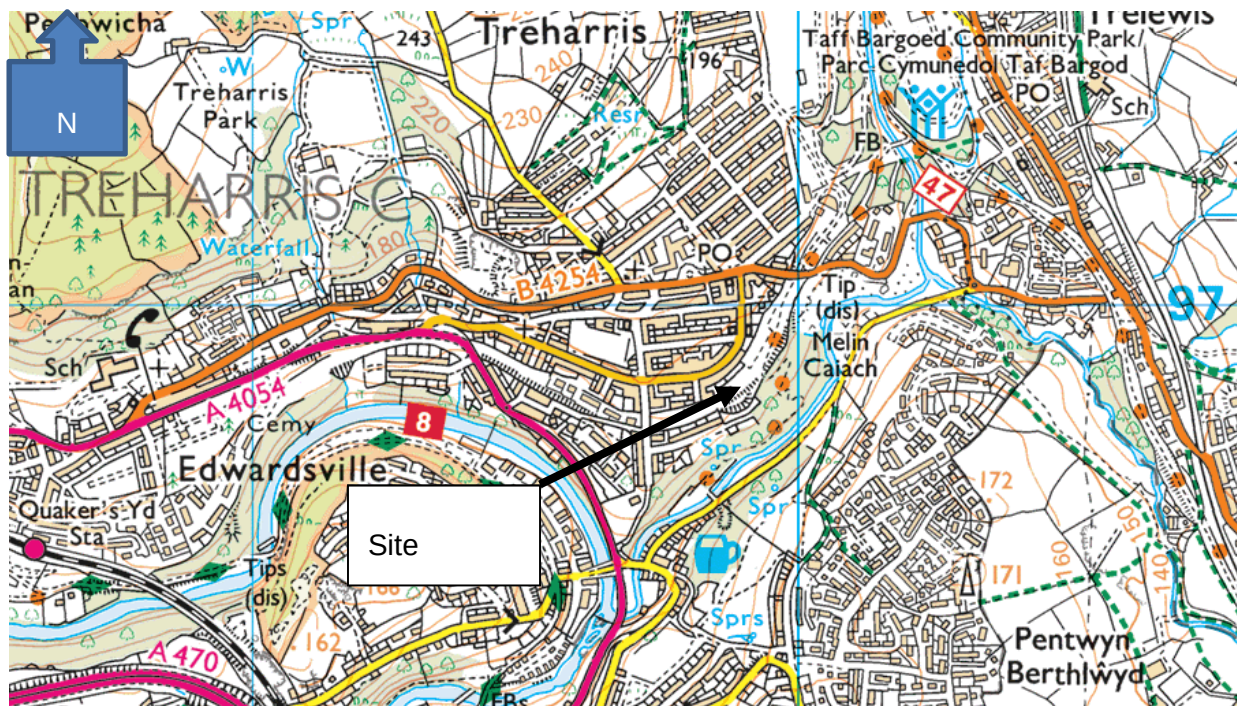
BACKGROUND

Commission

Alder Ecology UK Ltd was commissioned by Matthew Worton to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment of land adjacent to 8-9 Treharris, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough, Wales, CF46 5EY, National grid reference ST099969 what3words (highbrow.cake.unzips) with respect to a potential development of the site and for the potential of the site to contain protected species or habitats.

Proposed scheme

The proposed scheme is to establish commercial business premises and residential housing on the site to meet local supply demands. The work is due to take place in 2024 if all planning consents and associated conditions are approved.



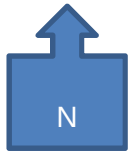
Map 1 Site location Perrott Street, Treharris

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Aerial 1 showing approximate position of the proposed site

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Plan 1 showing the proposed red line boundary (see submission for full details)

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) undertaken on 14th July 2023. An assessment has been provided on the potential value of the site for wildlife based on the PEA 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 PEA is to identify existing habitat types, to determine the existence and location of any ecologically valuable areas and to identify the potential presence of any protected species or habitats suitable for supporting such species that may be impacted by the scheme.

The objectives of the PEA were to:

- Identify habitat types on site;
- Assess the importance of habitat types;
- Identify the potential presence of any protected species and recommend further survey
- Assess the likely impact areas within any potential development

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FIELD STUDY

Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA)

This survey consists of a walkover survey of the site observing habitats and if they are considered important or have potential to hold protected species. This is not a Phase 1 Habitat Survey and therefore does not detail species compositions within identified habitat areas or assign them an alpha numeric code. The survey included a search for the presence or evidence of UK protected species and alien plant species. A formal data request has been made to accompany this PEA from South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre Limited (SEWBRc).

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.

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LIMITATIONS TO THE ASSESSMENT

The PEA habitat survey was carried out at an optimal time of year for floristic species compositions and peak times for spring/summer flowering species. The timing of the survey may limit the ability of the assessment to recognise seasonal changes on site. 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 but limited access into the site which was restricted by the heavy presence of bramble and densely packed scrub species from the boundary areas. A drone was subsequently used to assess the whole site where access was limited.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES



Plate 1 Showing the site looking north west



Plate 2 Showing the site looking south east

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Plate 3 showing interior of the site with scrub approximate site boundary shown in blue



Plate 4 showing site interior with scrub dominating the site

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Plate 5 showing the site retaining walls



Plate 6 View of the site from Perrott street ground level

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Plate 7 Buddleia scrub on site



Plate 8 Sycamore and rosebay willow herb adjoining the car park

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RESULTS DATA SEARCH

Table 1. Total species recorded from the Package B: Priority Species 1km search (LERC Reference: 0234-244)

Species Records total	1265
Priority Species	589
Conservation Concern	365
Locally Important	208
Species Status	103
Invasive Non-Native	103
Sites	4
Habitats	19

Table 2. Total protected sites recorded from the data search

Site Type	Number of sites	Category
Wildlife Site / SINC (Adopted)	10	Local - Non-statutory
Ancient Semi Natural Woodland	35	Priority Area
Restored Ancient Woodland Site	2	Priority Area
Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category	4	Priority Area

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Wildlife Site / SINC (Adopted) distance from the site

- Trelewis Woods (930m)
- Lower Taf & Edwardsville (365m)
- Craig Berthlwyd (623m)
- Berthlwyd (88m)
- Afon Bargoed Taf (36m)
- Nant Caiach (282m)
- Treharris Park & Cardiff Road Woodlands (392m)
- Coed Cefn-fforest & Cwm Cothi (484m)
- Lower Cwm Bargoed (842m)
- St Tydfil Forest (East) (915m)

Of the sites listed above and ancient woodland sites none will be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed scheme.

Priority species

Bird species (36)

Insect species -Butterfly and moth (34)

Mammal species (13)

Amphibian and reptile species (8)

Plant species (1)

Of the priority species recorded within 1km of the site, the site does not have the ability to support any of the species for long term occupation of the site and therefore they will not be impacted by the proposed works.

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RESULTS

Habitats

Habitat Description

The site supports a limited range of generally low quality habitats and is primarily patches of scrub, grassland, scattered trees, hard standing and retaining walls.

Table 3 Habitats on site

Habitat	National importance	Regional importance	Local importance	Site importance
<i>Hard standing</i>				<i>Negligible</i>
<i>Walls</i>				Yes
<i>Scrub</i>				Yes
<i>Scattered trees</i>				Yes
<i>Grassland</i>				Yes

Hard standing

Hard standing can, sometimes with the right mix of habitats add value to a site for basking insects and reptile species. However, the hard standing in such an urban setting makes it isolated from other complimentary habitats and therefore is assessed to be of negligible value.

Walls

The site is split over two levels due to the sloping ground and therefore the site contains a high proportion of retaining walls as can be seen in plates 4 and 5. These walls are well maintained and offer no opportunities for occupation by breeding birds or bats. The walls can be used by basking insect species as part of generally moving through the landscape and associated with feeding on the buddleia which is dominant on site. The walls are assessed to be of site value.

Scrub

There is a substantial amount of buddleia scrub on site which provides a good sources of food for several species of butterfly and moth but limited nesting for common bird species due to

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its immature life stage. If the site also contains bramble scrub, which again provides opportunities for insects on site. The scrub is assessed to be of site value.

Scattered trees

There are a number of immature trees on site which is limited to goat willow and sycamore. The trees on site, due to the age and stage of growth are currently offering no value for roosting bats and no evidence of use by breeding bird species. The majority of immature trees on site would be directly impacted by the proposed works but they are of limited value and offer low conservation value for associated species. The trees are assessed to be of site value only.

Grassland

There is a very small area of grassland adjoining the carpark on the south side of the site which is species poor and becoming shaded out by scrub vegetation. The grassland contains such species as rosebay willowherb, ragwort, hedgerow cranesbill, hawkweed, dandelions, mugwort and perforate St John's wort. The grassland is assessed to be of site value

Non-Native Invasive Species

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

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Protected and Otherwise Notable Species

The site has the potential to hold low numbers of common animal species primarily as a foraging resource but opportunities for permanent occupation are limited on site.

Table 4 Potential protected species associated with the site

	<i>European importance</i>	<i>National importance</i>	<i>Priority species</i>	<i>Local BAP species</i>
Bird assemblage			Yes	Yes
Reptiles		Yes	Yes	Yes

Birds

The site has potential to hold low numbers of common bird species as a foraging resource but has low potential to support breeding birds within the immature scrub. The nature of the site means the site will be used by foraging birds and any development of the site will change the baseline conditions and reduce foraging for some species. The site is assessed to be of low value to common bird species.

Reptiles

The site would have low potential for use of common reptiles such as common lizard within the wall habitat. However, the isolated nature of the site makes it less likely that reptiles will use the site as does the urban isolation of the site. Therefore the site is assessed as of low/negligible value for common reptile species.

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CONCLUSIONS

The PEA concludes that the site contains poor quality habitats due in part to the recent nature of the habitats on site, the urban location and the isolated nature of the site. The site has clearly been vacant for the past 10 years or more and the habitats are opportunistic species that often inundate such sites and are only ever short term temporary habitats. . The habitats are young and have not had chance to develop beneficial features for wildlife which limits opportunities for protected species such as bats for roosting. Opportunities for nesting bird species is also limited due to the immature nature of the habitats and the well maintained retaining walls.

The site would have the potential to hold low numbers of common reptile species but the isolated nature of the site makes it unlikely that the site will be used by common reptile species in this location.

The site as surveyed does not contain any plant listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 listed as an alien invasive species.

Overall the site has been assessed as being of low ecological value due to the lack of suitable mature habitats and the limited ability of the site to hold protected species. Any development of the site as is currently proposed will not impact upon protected or priority species or habitats either directly or indirectly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Any development of the site provides biodiversity net gain by providing locally x2 bird boxes for common bird species such as robin or wren.
2. Any development of the site provides biodiversity net gain by providing locally x2 bat boxes suitable for pipistrelle species located on the new built structure and positioned to avoid light spill from residential area.
3. Provide x2 insect hotels/bug boxes to provide opportunities for local insect population.

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Appendix 1 SINC sites Map



Showing SINC sites close to the site