

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Adam Foote
From: Matt Davies (Ecologist)
Ext: 5278

Memo number: 1

Date of previous memo: -

Date: 30/04/2024

SUBJECT: P/24/0093 | Outline Planning Permission with all matters reserved for construction of four new dwellings and associated works | Land Adjacent To 36 Hylton Terrace Bedlinog Treharris CF46 6RG

Young woodland habitat and scrub, well linked to wider habitat/environment. Tree cover onsite between c.16 and c.20 years of age.

Designated sites within 500m of the application site:

- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) – x3 (closest, Cwm Bargoed, c.24m from site centre);
- Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) – x8 (closest, c.24m from site centre)

Priority and protected species within 500m of the application site:

- Birds (including Schedule 1¹ and Section 7² species);
- Invertebrates (including Section 7² species);
- Lichens (including Section 7² species);
- Bats (closest roost record for common pipistrelle, c.163m from site);
- Otter;
- Badger;
- Hedgehog;
- Reptiles;
- Amphibians;
- Vascular plants

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site (undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist) is required. This must provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to assess any potential adverse impacts of the proposed 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 PEA 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.

NB the Design and Access statement refers to preliminary ecological surveys already having been undertaken – is there a report to review?

¹ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

² Environment (Wales) Act 2016

An Aderyn data search is required from SEWBReC (Package B 1km).

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

The commissioned ecologist must take new Planning Policy Wales (PPW 12), Chapter 6 into account where relevant to this application.

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.*

Further relevant policy detail regarding trees:

“Permanent removal of trees, woodland and hedgerows will only be permitted where it would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits. Where individual or groups of trees and hedgerows are removed as part of a proposed scheme, planning authorities must first follow the step-wise approach. **Where loss is unavoidable developers will be required to provide compensatory planting** (which is proportionate to the proposed loss as identified through an assessment of green infrastructure value including biodiversity, landscape value and carbon capture). Replacement planting shall be at a ratio equivalent to the quality, environmental and ecological importance of the tree(s) lost and this must be preferably onsite, or immediately adjacent to the site, and **at a minimum ratio of at least 3 trees of a similar type and compensatory size planted for every 1 lost**. Where a woodland or a shelterbelt area is lost as part of a proposed scheme, the compensation planting must be at a scale, design and species mix reflective of that area lost. In such circumstances, the planting rate must be at **a minimum of 1600 trees per hectare for broadleaves**, and 2500 trees per hectare for conifers. The planting position for each replacement tree shall be fit to support its establishment and health, and ensure its unconstrained long-term growth to optimise the environmental and ecological benefits it affords.”