Ecological Impact Assessment at Land Adjacent to 8, Poplar Road, Penycae, Wrexham, LL13 7DG Grid Ref. SJ 2822 4538 On 24th March 2024

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1. Summary

The purpose of the report is to assess the potential ecological impacts of a proposed development at land adjacent to 8, Poplar Road, Pen-y-Cae and advise on any mitigation measures to comply with local planning policy and government legislation.

The proposed scheme involves the construction of a dwelling with associated parking and access.

The site and adjacent land were examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by protected species of animals. None was found, however the adjacent trees provided potential for nesting birds and possibly roosting bats. The site is suitable for foraging and commuting bats.

A lighting plan should be designed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines: https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/
Bat and bird boxes as well as an additional hedgerow and a tree are required to ensure Net Biodiversity Benefit in accordance with legislation. (pages 8 and 13)
Trees or hedges should not be pruned or trimmed between May and September to avoid disturbance to any nesting birds.

If the recommended mitigation measures are taken there should be no net loss of nesting sites, nor any danger of harm to any species.

2. Introduction

Susan Worsfold BSc (Hons) ACIEEM is an experienced wildlife surveyor, licensed bat worker and voluntary bat roost visitor. Registration number CLS0895 2015-12555-CLS-CLS (CL15 Bat Roost Visitor Level 1) and registration number CLS 0895 2015-12556-CLS-CLS (CL18 Bat Survey Level 2) (Natural England) and S086005/1 (Natural Resources Wales);
Licensed great crested newt worker, registration number 2016-19947-CLS-CLS (NE) and S086057/1 (NRW)
This report was commissioned by the owner, Karen Williams.
The site, at land adjacent to 8, Poplar Road, Pen-y-Cae comprises a small area scrub.
The proposed scheme involves construction of a dwelling with associated parking and access.
The purpose of the report is to identify and address any significant ecological effects which are likely to occur as a result of the proposed development. This is necessary to comply with local planning policy and government legislation and avoid any offence being committed. Also, to describe any compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures which should be taken.

3. Methodology

3.1. Scope of the Assessment

The report incorporates an extended phase 1 habitat survey, searching for use or potential use by any rare, threatened, endemic and non-native invasive species which might be associated with such a site in accordance with:
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and listed in:
Schedule 2. European protected species of animals
Schedule 5. European protected species of plants
The protection of Badgers Act 1992
Protected species which might be associated with such a site include bats, owls and other breeding birds. The area around the site might be used by badgers, dormice, amphibians and reptiles, and might contain protected plant species.
The visual assessment of the site was carried out in accordance with CIEEM guidelines (CIEEM 2017) on 24th March 2024 by Susan Worsfold BSc (Hons) ACIEEM.

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3.2. Desk Study

Wrexham Planning Portal was consulted for a review of previous ecological surveys carried out in the area. Magic Maps was consulted for the presence of designated sites and protected habitats. Maps of the site and surrounding environment were examined to identify any nearby waterbodies suitable for use by great crested newts within an influencing distance of the site.

3.3. Field Survey

The site was examined to establish the presence of any protected species or habitats, and for evidence of use by protected species of animals. Trees were assessed for suitability for use by bats and birds. The site and surrounding habitat was examined for signs of use by badgers and dormice. The variety of plant species was mapped according to the convention of Phase 1 habitat surveys as described by the JNCC (2010). Photographs were taken of all relevant areas. The visual assessment of the site was carried out in accordance with CIEEM guidelines (CIEEM 2017) on 24th March 2024 by Susan Worsfold BSc (Hons) ACIEEM.
Photographs were taken of all areas and those of relevance are shown in the appendices.

4. Baseline Ecological Conditions/Results

4.1 Designated Sites

The nearest designated site is Johnstown Newt Sites (SSSI and SAC) 1.5 km east.

4.2 Habitats

Site: The area of the site to be affected is approximately 0.02 ha. It is in a village location. The land is not currently in use. The north and east boundary were fenced, the west boundary was a wall and there was no physical boundary on the south side adjacent to the road. The area had become colonised with ruderal vegetation, with no mature trees.
Adjacent land: There are several small areas of woodland within 250 m. The River Eitha is 25 m south. It is separated from the site by a road. There is a good network of hedgerows surrounding the site. There are no ponds shown on maps within 250 m.

4.3 Species and Species Groups

Invertebrates
The site has some limited value for use by invertebrates but none were seen at the time of the survey.

Amphibians and Reptiles
None seen. There are no ponds within 250 m.

Birds
The vegetation on site provides limited food and shelter for birds but no nesting potential. No birds or nests were seen at the time of the survey.

Bats
The site has limited value for use by foraging and commuting bats.

Badgers
There were no badger setts, tracks or latrines found on the site [redacted]

Plants

Common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), grasses, daisy (*Bellis perennis*), dock (*Rumex* sp.), common hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), lesser celandine, lords and ladies, ground elder, bramble, bracken, cleavers (*Galium aparine*), conifer, oak (*Quercus sp.*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (S*ambucus nigra*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus syvestris*),

No species of conservation value or Schedule 9 species were seen on site. No rare or threatened species of plants were found on site or near the site.

5. Description of the Development

The proposed scheme involves the construction of a new dwellings with associated access and parking. This will involve the removal of some ruderal vegetation and saplings.

6. Assessment of Effects and Mitigation Measures

Designated Sites:
It is not considered that the proposal will have any significant impact on any designated sites due to the low impact of the project and distance from the sites.

Habitats:
No priority habitat is affected by the proposal. A small amount of vegetation will be removed.

Species:
Birds
Trees should not be pruned or trimmed between March and September, to avoid harm to any nesting birds.

Bats
There is not considered to be any threat to the conservation status of bats or danger of harm to individuals. The site is suitable for foraging and commuting bats.
A lighting plan should be designed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines: https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/

Reptiles and Amphibians
There should not be any significant impact on reptiles or amphibians

Residual Effects
No significant residual effects anticipated.

7. Compensation

A hedge will be planted along the north boundary for a length of approximately 10 m. This will comprise a mix of at least four native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, elder, field maple, oak and holly. This will be done prior to the first occupation of the dwelling and it will be maintained by the owners.

8. Net Biodiversity Benefit

An integrated bat box and bird box will be fixed to the new dwelling, on the south and north side respectively. These should be at least 2 m from the ground. Further information is given in the bat box information pack available at https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes.
Bat and bird boxes are available from NHBS https://www.nhbs.com/ and Wildcare https://www.wildcare.co.uk/ as well as other suppliers.

A native tree will be planted in the garden, such as rowan, wild cherry or crab apple. This will provide foraging potential for birds and insects.

9. Ecological Constraints

The survey was undertaken at a sub-optimum time of year, however it is unlikely that any significant features or flora would have been missed due to this.

10. Monitoring

Not considered necessary.

11. Conclusions

If the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures are taken there will be a net gain in biodiversity and no net loss of roosting or nesting sites, nor any danger of harm to any species.

12. Bibliography

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Shields S., (2003) *Arboricultural Impact Assessment Ref: AIA/HCM/09/23*

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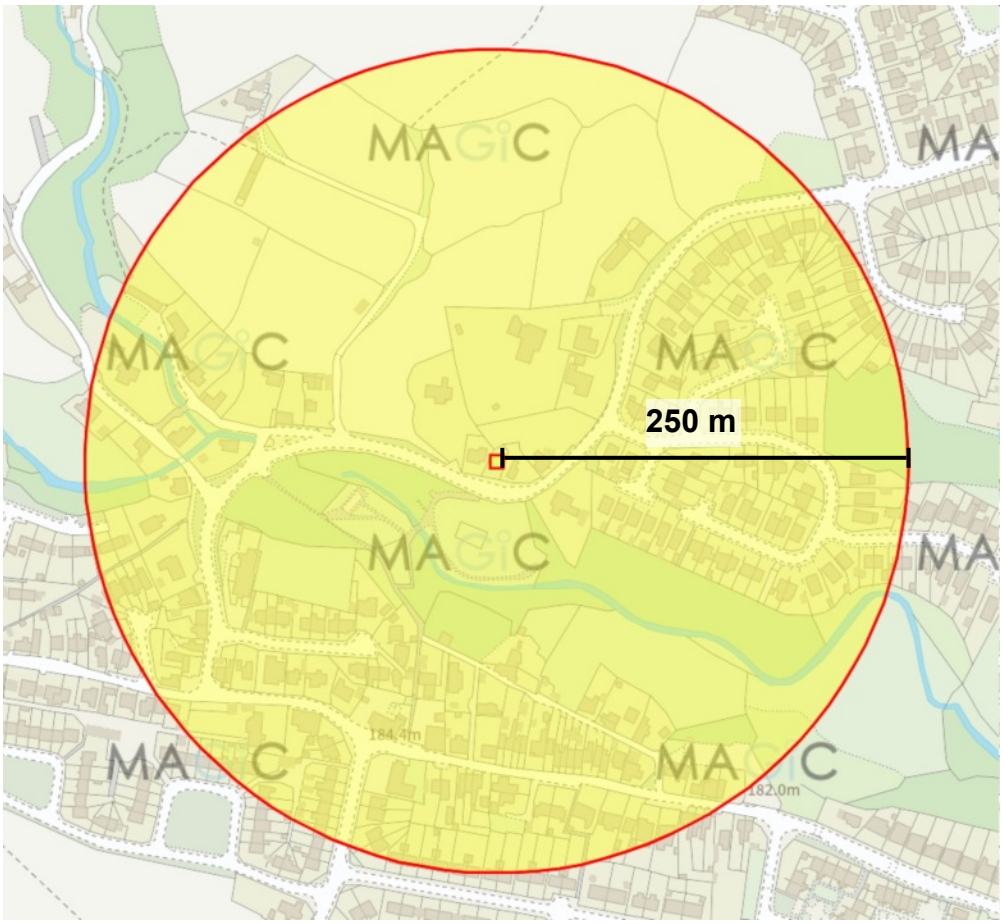
Wildlife and Habitat Conservation available at: https://www.gov.uk/topic/environmental-management/wildlife-habitat-conservation

Wrexham Council Planning Portal available at: http://planning.wrexham.gov.uk/Planning/lg/GFPlanningSearch.page

Appendix 13.1: Aerial Photograph



Appendix 13.2: Designated Sites and Zones of Influence



Appendix 13.3: Photographs



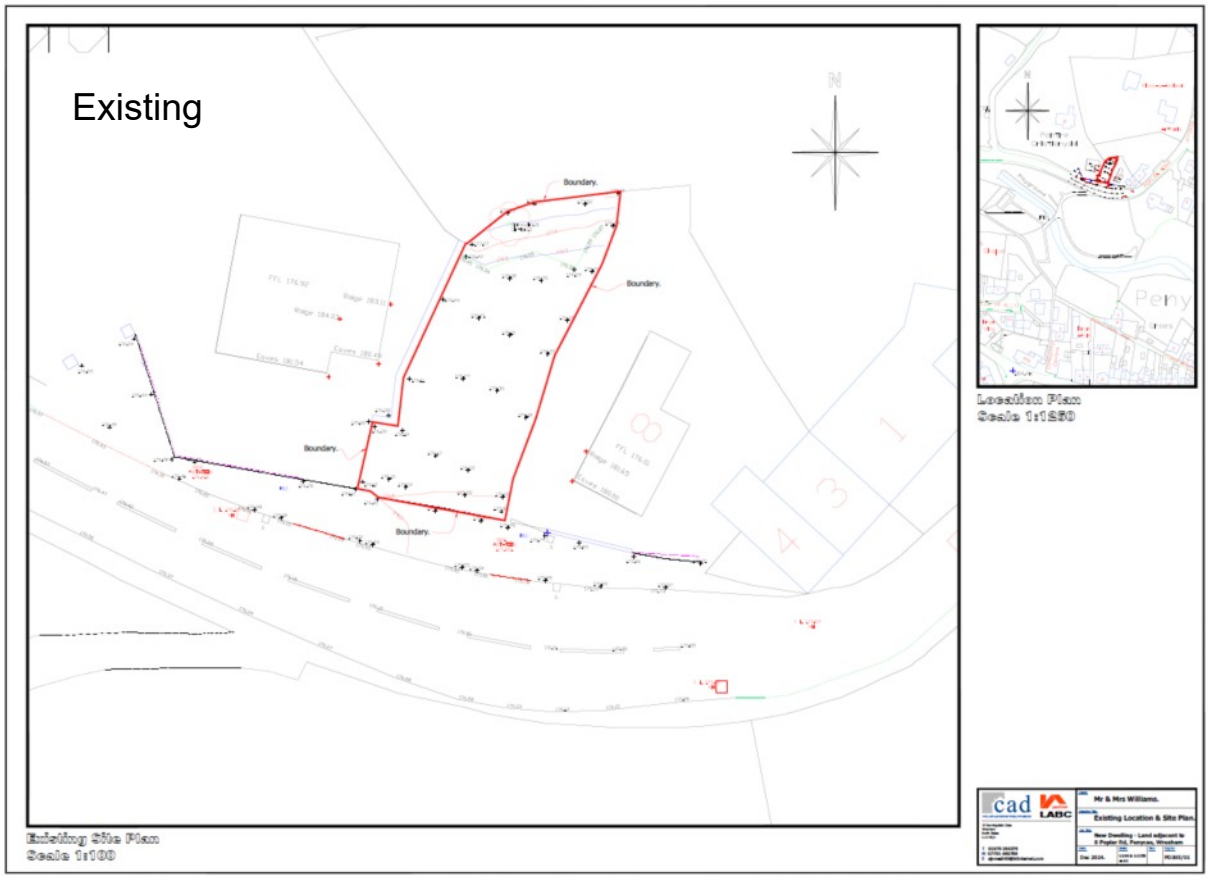


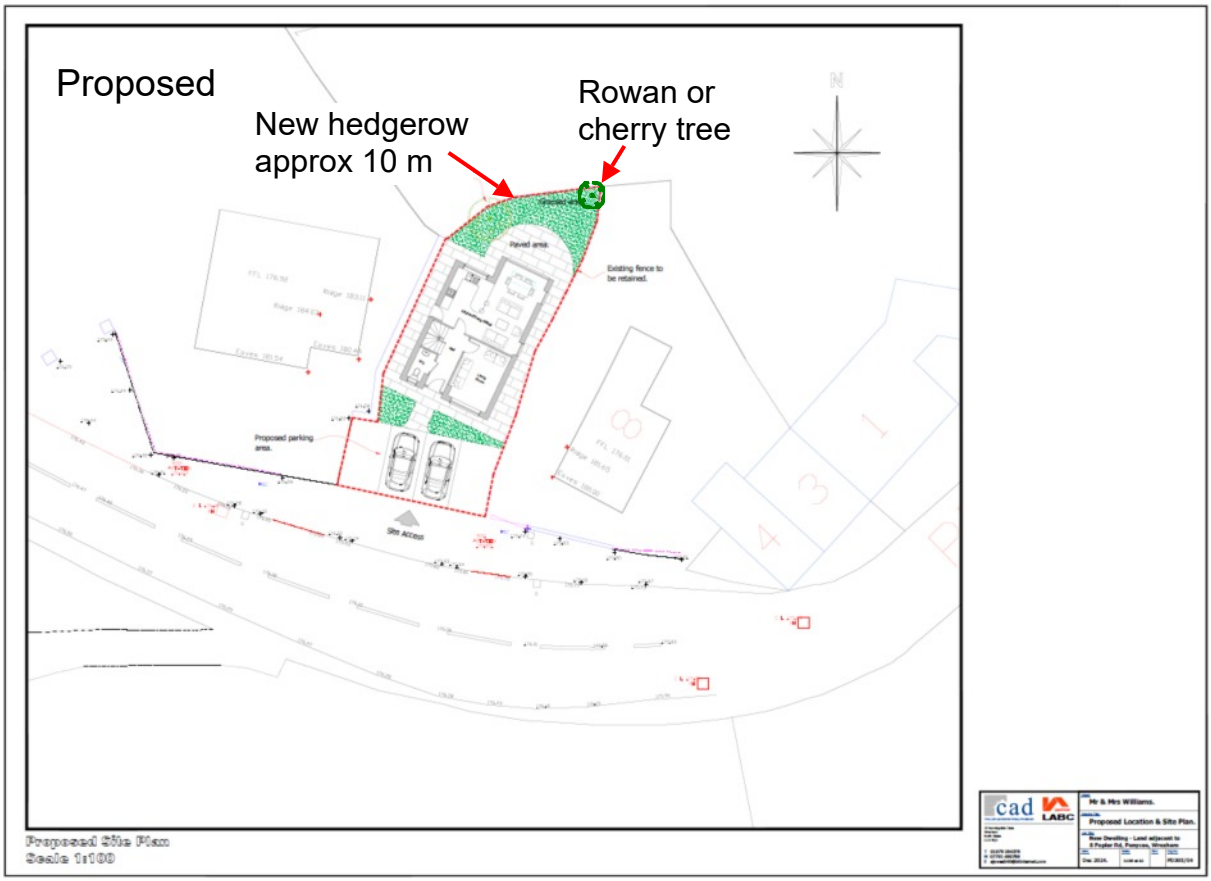


Appendix 13.4: Survey Diagram



Appendix 13.5: Plans





Appendix 13.6: Legislation Relating to Birds

All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected. It is an offence to intentionally:

- kill, injure or take any wild bird,
- take, damage or destroy the nest of a Golden Eagle, White-tailed Eagle or Osprey (even if disused),
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built,
- take, damage or destroy an egg or any wild bird,
- possess any live or dead wild bird or the egg of any wild bird, or any derivative

Many rare birds are listed on Schedule 1, which makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb a Schedule 1 bird while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or
- disturb dependent young of such a bird

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) issues licences for specific purposes, so that you can undertake legitimate work without breaking the law. See ‘Bird licensing’ for more information.