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23/12/2021

Annwyl Syr/Madam / Dear Sir/Madam,

PROPOSAL: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING FARM BUILDINGS, CONVERSION OF BARN TO ONE DWELLING, FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION EXISTING DWELLING AND ALTERATIONS TO ACCESS.

LOCATION: THE OLD FARMHOUSE, COED DERWEN, ERBISTOCK, WREXHAM.

Thank you for consulting Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru / Natural Resources Wales about the additional information regarding the above, which we received on 16/12/2021.

We continue to have concerns with the application as submitted because inadequate information has been provided in support of the proposal. To overcome these concerns, you should seek further information from the applicant regarding protected species and foul drainage. If this information is not provided, we would object to this planning application. Further details are provided below.

Protected Species

Bats

We note that the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey report submitted in support of the above application (Harmer, A. Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of The Old farmhouse, Coed Derwen, Erbistock, Wrexham. Andy Harmer Ecological Consultant, 2021) has identified that bats are present at the application site. From the information submitted, we consider that the proposed development is likely to represent a higher risk for bats, as defined in our guidance document '*Natural Resources Wales Approach to Bats and Planning (2015)*'. Bats and their breeding and resting places are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended.

Although the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey report has been submitted, we advise that there is insufficient information to assess potential effects on bats, and how any effects will be avoided or mitigated.

We advise that further information is required to assess the extent of adverse effects on bats and any avoidance or mitigation measures required. This must demonstrate that the proposed development would not be likely to be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

We agree with the following recommendation of the submitted Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey report that further bat activity survey is required:

“Three dusk emergence/dawn re-entry surveys must be undertaken on Building 2 and one dusk emergence survey must be undertaken on Building 4. These must take place between May and September, in suitable weather conditions and with an adequate number of surveyors to observe each building. A daytime bat survey will also be undertaken at Building 1 (the dwelling), with further dusk or dawn surveys here if bat evidence is found.”

In the meantime, we are unable to give you any assurance that the proposal would not be likely to be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

Protected Sites and Foul Drainage

We note the application site is within the catchment of the River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation (SAC). As you are aware, on the 21st January 2021, we published an evidence package outlining phosphorus levels for all river SACs across Wales. As part of this package, we issued a [Planning Position Statement](#), in which we advised that any proposed development that might increase the amount of phosphate (or phosphorus) within a river SAC catchment could lead to damaging effects to the SAC. Therefore, such proposals should be screened through a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), to determine whether they are likely to have a significant effect on the SAC. We have also issued [Planning Advice](#) (May 2021) which gives specific advice in respect of foul drainage arrangements for new developments.

We note from the information submitted that a new Package Treatment Plant is to be installed to provide foul drainage for the conversion of a barn to one dwelling. As such, we refer you to our [Planning Advice](#) and advise you to seek further information from the applicant as identified in the section titled 'What does this mean for development proposals involving private sewage treatment systems' of that advice.

We note that a new letter by Hughes Consulting Engineers has been submitted (Ref: CREF GMS312/GPH (11/12/2021)).

In the letter, reference is made to Building Research Establishment (BRE) 365. However, we advise that Building Research Establishment (BRE) 365 'soakaway design' guidance is not appropriate for the design of drainage fields to dispose of wastewater from septic tanks

and package treatment works. BRE 365 guidance is used to design soakaways to dispose of stormwater and to discharge water sufficiently quickly to provide capacity to receive run-off from subsequent storms.

We advise that the appropriate standard for the foul drainage proposals at the site is BS 6297:2007, and the Percolation Value (Vp) should be between 15 and 100 seconds per mm.

For more information/guidance on how to undertake the appropriate percolation test for foul sewage drainage, we would advise the applicant to refer to NRW's website and in particular section 7. Discharges into land (drainage field/infiltration system): [Guidance notes Part B6.5 \(cyfoethnaturiol.cymru\)](https://www.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/cyfoethnaturiol/cymru/guidance-notes-part-b6-5)

Provided this advice is followed and you are able to conclude that the development is not likely to have a significant effect on the SAC, we would have no objection to the proposal. However, should you conclude that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the SAC, please consult us on your Appropriate Assessment under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Other Matters

Our comments above only relate specifically to matters included on our checklist, *Development Planning Advisory Service: Consultation Topics* (September 2018), which is published on our [website](#). We have not considered potential effects on other matters and do not rule out the potential for the proposed development to affect other interests.

We advise the applicant that, in addition to planning permission, it is their responsibility to ensure they secure all other permits/consents/licences relevant to their development. Please refer to our [website](#) for further details.

If you have any queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully,

Rhys Jones

Cynghorydd - Cynllunio Datblygu / Advisor - Development Planning
Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru / Natural Resources Wales