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Greenhous Ford Car Dealership, Newtown Preliminary Ecological Assessment

16.09.2019



Report by: Kate Williamson CIEEM

Client: Aldi Stores Ltd, Chester High Road, Neston, CH64 3TS

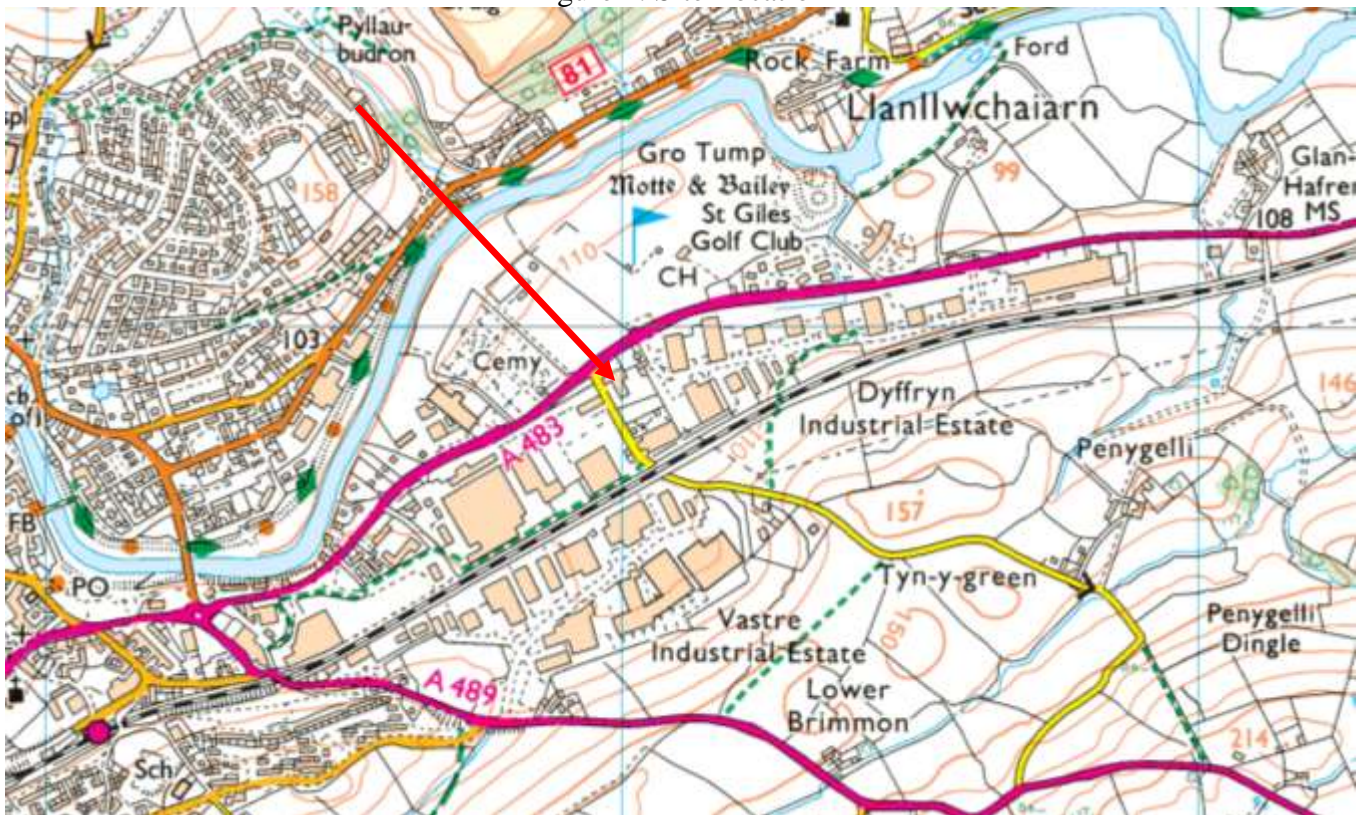
Planning Authority: Powys County Council

Grid Reference: SO 11988 91914

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Figure 1: Site Location



**Greenhous Ford
Pool Road
Newtown
SY16 3AH**

Preliminary Ecological Assessment

16th September 2019

1. Summary

Cambrian Ecology Ltd was commissioned by the clients Aldi Stores Ltd to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) of a current Ford car dealership: Greenhous Ford, in Newtown.

It is proposed to demolish the current buildings and redevelop the site with a new Aldi store and associated parking. The footprint of the new development will be same as the current site. A pre-app response from Powys County Council has identified the need for an ecological survey report to accompany the necessary planning application.

No sign of bats or bat occupation was recorded during the survey and all buildings were concluded to have either no or very low potential to support roosting bats at any time of year. There are few external crevices and no interior roof voids. The site itself is located within a well-illuminated, urban area with additional security lighting.

There are no natural or semi-natural habitats on the site.

A biological records search was carried out to assess any potential impact on protected species outside the proposed development boundary and establish the 'zone of influence' of the development. The search revealed no records for the site itself and no relevant records within the search area.

It was concluded that there is negligible potential within any of the buildings on the site for roosting bats at any time of the year. There will therefore be no impact on bats due to the proposed works and there is no reasonable justification for requesting any further survey work. This is considered to be an appropriate and proportionate course of action in this particular case.

There will be no negative impact on any protected species or habitats due to the proposed development.

2. Introduction

Cambrian Ecology Ltd was commissioned by the clients Aldi Stores Ltd to carry out a PEA of a current Ford car dealership: Greenhous Ford, in Newtown.

It is proposed to demolish the current buildings and redevelop the site with a new Aldi store and associated parking. The footprint of the new development will be same as the current site. A pre-

app response from Powys County Council has identified the need for an ecological survey report to accompany the necessary planning application.

The site is located at Grid Reference SO 11988 91914.

3. Methodologies

3.1 Habitats

The Habitat survey was carried out on 13th September 2019 by ecologist Kate Williamson. The survey took the form of an extended Phase I survey and identified baseline ecological conditions, as well as any important or notable habitats. All habitats within the proposed development site were classified and species lists were drawn up for each habitat type identified and the habitat condition was assessed. In the context of this report, *important or notable habitats* are considered to be those which are of a sustainable size and which meet any of the following criteria:

- Habitats which have a high intrinsic ecological value, i.e. they support a diverse range of vascular plant and/or faunal species;
- Mature or semi-natural habitats in built-up areas;
- Any Section 7 Wales priority habitats;
- Local BAP habitats considered having a significant extent and/or ecological interest.
- Invasive Non-Native Species, (INNS)

All habitats considered to have the potential to support rare, protected or otherwise notable species of flora and fauna were noted, as were any direct signs of these species. Where possible, habitats were cross-referenced to any relevant UK priority habitats or Powys County Council's Biodiversity Action Plan.

3.2 Protected Species

A protected species survey of the site was carried out by Kate Williamson on 13th September 2019. The site was also assessed on its potential to support any protected or important species. During this survey, a search was made for field signs of protected or notable species and assessments made of the potential of habitats to support these species. In the context of this report important or notable species are considered to be those that meet any of the following criteria:

- Species protected by British or international law
- UK Section 7 Wales priority species or local BAP species
- Nationally rare or scarce species
- Species of Conservation Concern (e.g. JNCC Red List, RSPB/BTO Red or Amber lists)

3.3 Desk Study

The desktop study aims to collate existing information about relevant priority species within 1km of the survey area. This information has relevance to the likelihood of these priority species being present within the survey area, as well as giving context to any species records from the actual site.

A data search was conducted with Aderyn; Local Environmental Records Centres Wales' Biodiversity information and Reporting Database.

4 Survey Limitations

Field signs for protected and important species are often difficult to find or absent from a site. For this reason, the site and its habitats are assessed on their potential to support these species.

Bats are highly mobile animals and some species move roosts on a regular basis. It is often possible to find signs of bat occupation outside of the time that they are resident, in the form of droppings and feeding remains, however, these dissipate over a period ranging from a few days to several months. Many species are crevice-dwelling and signs may be impossible to find. An accurate assessment of the potential of a building to support bats is therefore important to establish the need for further survey work. In this case, it has been confirmed that there is negligible roosting potential for bats at any time of the year.

5 Results

5.1 Habitat

The habitat on the Greenhous Ford car dealership site proposed for redevelopment on Pool Road, Newtown is entirely composed of buildings and hard standing. No INNS were recorded on the site.

5.2 Buildings



Fig.2: Plan of buildings on the current Greenhous Ford car dealership site

Building 1 – the old body workshop, parts store and car show room. Parts of this building have brick elevations, with no crevices and the rest is corrugated metal. There is a two-storey section, which has corrugated asbestos roof, with transparent panels. There are some wooden fascias on the single-storey section, but these are tight-fitting to the walls. The corrugated asbestos roof has no separate void, with storage space utilised up into the roof. The workshop area is open to the roof. There are a few gaps where the corrugated asbestos panels are overlapped by asbestos fascias on the front, but they have a low potential for roosting bats due to security lighting and lack of shelter/connectivity.

Building 2 – is a corrugated metal building with a flat roof. All panels are well sealed and there is no roosting potential.

Building 3 – a corrugated metal shed, open to the roof and currently used as garage workshops. There is no potential for roosting bats.

The site is located within the town of Newtown. Immediately around the buildings and across the site are very high levels of illumination, both from street lighting and extensive security lighting. There are busy roads on all sides of the site, effectively forming an ecological ‘island’ for many species, as well as high levels of noise and disturbance. Although the River Severn is less than half a kilometre away, there is no connectivity with the site.

5.3 Other Protected Species Issues

The protected species survey was negative.

5.4 Desk Study

A data search conducted with Aderyn did not reveal any relevant records and none for the site itself.

There are no designated sites that cover the proposed development area.

6 Habitat Evaluation and Impact Assessment

6.1 Habitat

There are no natural or semi-natural habitats present on the site and there will be no impact on Biodiversity due to the proposed development.

There are no INNS present.

7 Species Evaluation and Impact Assessment

7.1 Bats

No sign of current or past use by bats was recorded during the site visit and the buildings are all assessed as having no or minimal roosting potential at any time of the year. While it is impossible to say that bats will never be present, it is considered highly unlikely due to the following factors:

- high levels of lighting all around the site and buildings
- lack of connectivity with any habitats in the wider area
- most of the construction materials of the buildings are such that extreme fluctuations in temperature would make roosting in these areas impossible during periods of very hot or cold weather and highly unlikely at other times
- the lack of available crevices
- lack of potential bat access to the building interiors

It is considered highly unlikely, therefore, that there will be any impact on bat species at any level due to the proposed demolition works and no further survey work or mitigation measures are required.

7.2 Other Protected Species

There are no other protected species issues associated with the site and therefore no impact due to the proposed development.

8 **Mitigation Measures**

8.1 Habitats

No mitigation measures are required for the potential loss of the building and hard standing habitats.

8.2 Protected Species

No protected species are present on the site and therefore no mitigation is required.

8.3 Biodiversity Gain

It is recommended that the planting of species of value to wildlife is included in the landscaping scheme. This enhancement of the diversity of the planting, combined with an appropriate management regime complies with Section 6 of the Environment Wales Act (2016), which requires Planning Authorities to seek Biodiversity gain as a routine part of planning consents being issued.

Native plants suitable for inclusion in the new planting scheme include:

Hawthorn; (*Crataegus monogyna*)

Holly; (*Ilex aquifolium*)

Elder; (*Sambucus nigra*)

Dog rose; (*Rosa canina*)

Guelder rose; (*Viburnum opulus*)

Rowan; (*Sorbus aucuparia*)

Whitebeam; (*Sorbus aria*)

Cherry; (*Prunus avium*)

Bird cherry; (*Prunus padus*)

Cherry plum; (*Prunus cerasifera*)

Crab apple; (*Malus sylvestris*)

9 Legal Implications

None

11 Appendices

11.1 Site photographic record



Building 1 – the show room



Building 1 – the workshops



Storage space utilised up to the roof in building 1



Building 3 – garage workshops



The two-storey brick section



The whole site is comprised of buildings and hard standing

11.2 Review Table

Name	Task	Date
Kate Williamson	Author	16.09.2019
Chris Hall	Review	17.09.2019