

## CONSULTATION RESPONSE: COUNTRYSIDE AND ENVIRONMENT (ECOLOGY)

To / I:	Operational Manager Development & Building Control	From / Oddi Wrth:	Ecology, Development Services  Countryside and Economic Projects.
FAO	Mr. Morgan P. Howell		Mrs Erica Dixon
Date / Dyddiad:	10 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	Tel / Ffôn:	(01446) 704855
Your Ref / Eich Cyf:	2016/01160/OUT	My Ref / Fy Cyf:	
Location	Woodside Hamlet, Ham Manor, Llantwit Major		
Proposal	Proposed tourist (Tree Tent) accommodation development on land adjacent to Woodside Hamlet, with associated parking, wash up and toilet facilities		

### ECOLOGY RESPONSE

<input type="checkbox"/> No comment	<input type="checkbox"/> Notes for applicant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Object (holding objection)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Request for further information
<input type="checkbox"/> Object and recommend refusal	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommend planning conditions

### Summary

The works to assess the Ecological value and Health and Safety of the trees has already been carried out and submitted by the applicant. This information needs to be cross-referenced to allow the LPA to assess the likely impact on bats.

### Detailed Comments

We refer to the following documents in our response:-

- *Ham Wood, Llantwit Major, Extended Phase I Habitat survey 2015 (amended) by East Ecology*
- *Ham Woods, Llantwit Major. Ecological Impact Assessment 2016, revision 1.1 by East Ecology*
- *Ecology planning consultation response of 3 November 2015*
- *Letter from Andrew Hurst (NRW) to Morgan Howell (VoGC Planner) of 19 December 2016*
- *Email from Erica Dixon (VOGC Ecologist) to Morgan Howell (VoGC Planner) of 11 January 2017*

- *Email from Simon Morgan (Morgan Design Studio) to Morgan Howell (VoGC Planner) of 28 February 2017*
- *Letter received from Jack Taylor (Woodland Trust) to Morgan Howell (VoGC Planner) of 3 March 2017*
- *Email from NRW (Andrew Hurst) to Morgan Howell (VoGC Planner) of 6 April 2017*
- *Email from Simon Morgan (Morgan Design Studio) to Morgan Howell (VoGC Planner), 12 December 2017*
- *Letter from NRW to Morgan Howell (VoGC Planner) of 3 January 2018*
- *Email from Andrew Hurst (NRW) to Morgan Howell (VoGC planner) 5 January 2018*
- *Email from Erica Dixon (VoGC) to Morgan Howell (VoGC planner) 15 March 2018*
- *Woodland Trust 2<sup>nd</sup> response of 10 January 2018*

*This consultation response updates and replaces previous responses.*

We note much correspondence between the planning agent, Vale of Glamorgan Council and Natural Resources Wales. We shall not detail all the discussions here, but will summarise the outstanding issues/conflicts.

## BATS

NRW have agreed to the inclusion of a lighting plan as a planning condition. However, NRW have failed to identify the Health and Safety tree works in assessing the likely impact of this development on potential bat roosts.

As confirmed by the planning agent in the most recent email, (and their ecologist), a number of trees have high to moderate potential to support a bat roost, namely T13, T14, T41, T46, T52, T53 and T60 which are recommended for survey for the identification of bat roosts in spring / summer 2018 (these are named in the email of 12/12/18. However, the Ecological Impact Assessment report identifies 10(no) category 1\* trees (very high potential) and 16(no) category 1 trees and the Ecological Impact assessment map shows 5 Grade 1\*, 33 Grade 1 and 7 Grade 2 bat roost potential trees.

We note that some trees will require removal, crown reduction and/or pruning on Health and Safety grounds and that this is an outline application and the exact locations of the tree pods has not been fixed. Regardless of the reason for removal, where a tree supports a bat roost, its removal will require a licence from NRW. The Ecological Impact Assessment has an unidentified number of trees with very high, high or moderate potential for supporting a bat roost. In addition, bat roosts may be impacted by the siting of tree pods too close to, and thereby obstructing access to the roost; and/or by pruning and crown reducing of trees, as bat roost locations are not always in the main trunk.

Due to the outline nature of the application, it remains unclear as to the location of the bat potential trees with respect to the tree pods and tree safety works. It is unclear therefore whether any bat roost trees will be adversely impacted as a result of this application.

We are not able to condition surveys regarding protected species as this would be contrary to planning case law and policy.

Therefore, to progress this application, we recommend the following

### ***Recommendations***

The ecology report showing location of very high, high and moderate potential bat roosts is cross-referenced with the Arboricultural survey identifying which trees are unsafe. This will show which of the higher potential bat trees will be subject to tree surgery. We can then make an assessment on the likely impact of the development on bat roost trees. We recommend the ecologist is reconsulted following submission of this information.

In principle and without prejudice to the point above, providing no trees will be directly impacted by tree surgery works, we can then include a condition on the consent for the submission of a detailed plan showing location of tree tents at Reserved Matters stage.