



**Cyfoeth  
Naturiol  
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Wales**

**Ein cyf/Our ref:** CAS-36445-N0H8

**Eich cyf/Your ref:** 2016/01427/OUT

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## **FAO Steven Rennie**

18 August 2017

Annwyl Syr/Madam / Dear Sir/Madam

### **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 300 UNITS AND ASSOCIATED WORK, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND STRATEGIC ACCESS POINTS AT LAND OFF COWBRIDGE ROAD, ST ATHAN**

#### **European Protected Species**

We have reviewed the Dormouse Survey Report, Flemingston (dated July 2017) prepared by TerrAqua Ecological Services Ltd. This states that no evidence was found indicating that dormice are present within the survey boundary. We accept these findings. As such our concerns have been addressed and we advise that the applicant has demonstrated the proposal will not be detrimental to the species favourable conservation status.

You should be aware of the conclusions in the July 2017 Dormouse Survey, which states where possible some hedgerows are retained within any proposed site layout in particular hedgerows around the boundary of the site with good links to the surrounding countryside. This will allow for the potential use of the site by dormouse to be retained in the long term following any development of the site.

In summary we have no objections to the proposal on grounds of European Protected Species, subject to your Authority attaching the condition set out in our letter dated 21 February 2017 (Condition 1 – European Protected Species (Lighting Plan)).

#### **Rare Arable Plants**

Since our letter dated 21 February 2017 we have received correspondence from the agent and have been in discussions with your Authority regarding proposed mitigation for the loss of viable seed banks of Corn Buttercup and Shepherds Needle at the site.

There were several inaccuracies in the letter / supportive ecology note dated 9 May 2017 and prepared by Geraint John Planning. However, given the current position, we accept the general principle surrounding proposed mitigation measures. Therefore we

recommend your Authority attach a planning condition to secure a method statement for implementation. We recommend the following condition, however you may wish to use other suitable wording. Please contact us if you wish to discuss further.

#### Condition

No development until a detailed method statement for the management of Corn Buttercup and Shepherds Needle on the site is submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This shall detail which areas the soils will be transposed to and from, the volumes and depths of soils, the timings of these works, and any post transposition works and/or aftercare. Development must proceed in accordance with the approved method statement.

#### Reasons

To help conserve rare plant species.

#### Informative

The method statement should include details of how the soils will be moved and the volume and depths of soil to be moved. It should clearly indicated all areas within the site and the mitigation land where the works will be carried out. The timings of the work will be critical to any success of the mitigation measures. We advise this should be done in Autumn (i.e. September – December) or Autumn 2018. We advise aftercare in the form of looking for seedlings later in the Autumn or the following Spring, and then Summer when any plants would be more developed and obvious. Details when this is done and by whom should be included in the method statement.

We advise the method statement includes details on how the mitigation fields will be prepared, for example F3 should be ploughed just prior to the soils being added and then worked in (and crop can be added to bulk of field leaving wide headland and with no herbicide).

The method statement and works should be prepared and carried out by a competent and licensed ecologist. We strongly recommend that the ecologist contact us when drafting the statement to ensure the detail and requirements within the method statement are adequate. They are advised to contact Julian Woodman ([Julian.Woodman@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk](mailto:Julian.Woodman@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk)) or myself on the details above.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully

**James Davies**

**Uwch Ymgynghorydd Cynllunio Datblygu / Senior Development Planning Advisor**