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**PROJECT:** **3433 – St David's Catholic College, Ty-Gwyn Road, Cardiff, CF23 5QD**
**CLIENT:** **St David's Catholic College**
**Date:** **30/06/2021**

## PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL: INITIAL FEEDBACK

Further to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Survey undertaken on 29th June 2021, please find set out below an interim summary of our findings and recommendations.

The purpose of the PEA survey was to identify the ecological constraints and opportunities presented by the site in order to assess its capacity to deliver the proposed development, any potential requirements to comply with planning policy, wildlife legislation and guidance.

### Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the demolition of the existing lecture theatre and covered access walkway, and construction of a new larger two storey teaching facility in its place.

### Site Context

The site is located within the wider college grounds, off Ty-Gwyn Road, Cardiff. The site comprises the existing lecture theatre, a portion of a larger carpark, and a small amount of amenity grassland (approximately 300 $m^2$).

Beyond the site boundary, within the wider college grounds, lies further areas of amenity grassland, an artificial sports pitch, scattered mature trees and hardstanding areas associated with parking and access. A line of trees runs along the south of the college and a thin strip of woodland separates the college grounds to the north from the A48. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) is the City of Cardiff Council.

### Data Search

An online data search using Magic (www.magic.gov.uk) confirmed that the nearest Statutory designated site is Gwent Levels - Rumney and Peterstone SSSI, lying approximately 3 km east of the site, designated for its extensive area of reclaimed wet pasture, rich in plant species and communities.

Due to the scale and nature of development, no impacts on statutory sites are anticipated.

The local biological records centre, South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC) has been contacted to provide records for non-statutory sites and protected or notable species. We are awaiting their results.

## Habitats

The site itself comprises the existing lecture building, a covered access way, amenity grassland and hard standing, in the form of access paths and a portion of a parking area. These habitats are of *low ecological value*.

The wider College site was also surveyed during the PEA survey, which contains habitats of greater ecological value such as woodland, mature scattered trees and poor semi-improved grassland.

Habitats present within the site include:

- Buildings & Hardstanding;
- Amenity grassland;

Habitats within the wider site include:

- Buildings & Hardstanding;
- Amenity grassland;
- Broad-leaved woodland;
- Scattered trees;
- Poor semi-improved grassland;
- Tall ruderal;

The proposals will only impact upon the existing lecture theatre, small area of amenity grassland and hardstanding, all of which will be lost. Eight scattered mature trees are located in close vicinity to the west of the site. These will not be impacted by the proposals.

There is potential to create new habitats within the site through the incorporation of a green roof or rain garden feature.

## Protected Species

A summary of the protected species assessment is provided within **Table 1** below.

An indication of the potential requirement for further surveys has been provided within **Table 1** however this may be subject to change following receipt of the data search and full assessment against the proposed scheme within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR).

Only habitats within the footprint of works have been considered.

**Table 1: Protected Species Assessment Summary**

| Species / Sp. group | Suitability of habitats for this species | Evidence | Potential to occur / Assessment | Further consideration required/ survey works required. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MAMMALS** | | | | |
| Badgers (*Meles meles*) | <u>Setts</u><br>No suitable sett building habitat within the site.<br><br><u>Foraging</u><br>The site itself provides sub-optimal foraging habitat. Better quality habitat lies within the wider college grounds. | <u>Field survey</u><br>No conclusive signs of badger were noted during the PEA survey. | Yes: foraging potential. | <u>Survey requirement:</u><br>None pre-application. Precautionary construction measures employed to safeguard badger and other species. |
| Bats | <u>Foraging</u><br>The site itself provides sub-optimal foraging habitat for bats in its amenity grassland, and external lighting was noted on buildings.<br><br><u>Roosting</u><br>Existing lecture building could contain roosting bats. | <u>Field survey</u><br>No field evidence identified.<br><br>The existing lecture theatre was considered to offer *low* potential for roosting bats due to lifted areas along the edge of the roof.<br><br>The covered walkway was considered to offer *negligible* potential. | <u>Foraging</u><br>*Negligible* foraging potential within the site itself.<br><br><u>Roosting</u><br>Current status unknown, further consideration required. | <u>Survey requirement:</u><br>Due to the existing building offering *low* potential roosting habitat, in line with best practice guidance (Collins, 2016) one dusk or dawn survey should be undertaken during the period May-August. If bats are found roosting within the building, further surveys will be required, and a licence granted from Natural Resources Wales before demolition can commence.<br><br>Although external lighting is present on the existing building, a sensitive lighting scheme should be incorporated into the new building in line with the BCT & ILP Guidance note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK. Any necessary external lighting should be motion triggered by passive Infrared sensors and directed away from boundary features and nearby scattered mature trees, on a short |

| Species / Sp. group | Suitability of habitats for this species | Evidence | Potential to occur / Assessment | Further consideration required/ survey works required. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | timer (<1 minute). Lighting should be mounted on the horizontal, with no upward tilt. It should not have UV elements, with no lighting of metal halide of fluorescence sources used.<br>Design measures:<br>– Natural boundary features / scattered trees should be protected from light pollution.<br>– Incorporation of bat boxes on the building or on nearby scattered mature trees. |
| Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) | No suitable habitat within the site. | Field survey<br>No evidence identified. | No: Considered to be absent | No further consideration required. |
| Otter (*Lutra lutra*) and Water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) | No suitable habitat present. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified | No: Considered to be absent | No further consideration required. |
| Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) | Sub-optimal habitat within the site in its amenity grassland. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified. | Yes: Foraging potential. | Survey requirement:<br>No surveys required.<br>Design/construction measures:<br>Precautionary construction measures employed to safeguard hedgehog and other species. |

| Species / Sp. group | Suitability of habitats for this species | Evidence | Potential to occur / Assessment | Further consideration required/ survey works required. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BIRDS** | | | | |
| Breeding birds | No suitable habitat on site. The existing building's design offers negligible potential for nesting birds. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified. | No | Survey requirement:<br>No further surveys required.<br>Design/construction measures:<br>– Incorporation of bird boxes on the building or scattered mature trees in the wider site. |
| Wintering birds | No suitable habitat on site. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified. | No: Considered to be absent | No further consideration required. |
| **AMPHIBIANS** | | | | |
| Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) | No suitable habitat within the site.<br><br>No ponds identified on OS maps within 500 m of the site. GCN considered to be absent. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified. | No: Considered absent. | No further consideration required. |
| Other Amphibians | No suitable habitat within the site. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified. | No: Considered to be absent | No further consideration required. |
| **REPTILES** | | | | |
| Common reptiles | No suitable habitat within the site. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified. | No: Considered to be absent | No further consideration required. |
| **INVASIVE SPECIES** | | | | |

| Species / Sp. group | Suitability of habitats for this species | Evidence | Potential to occur / Assessment | Further consideration required/ survey works required. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Invasive flora | Suitable habitat for invasive flora. | Field survey<br>No field evidence identified. | No: Considered absent. | No further consideration required. |

Conclusion

The proposals will have minimal ecological impacts due to their siting on habitats of low ecological value – a building, amenity grassland and hardstanding. Further survey effort is required for bats. The existing lecture theatre should be subject to an emergence/re-entry survey following best practice guidance (Collins, 2016) to establish if bats are roosting within the building. If bats are found roosting, further surveys will be required, and a licence granted from Natural Resources Wales before demolition can commence.