

**HAWKESWOOD ECOLOGY**  
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**PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AND  
BAT SURVEY AT THE LIDL STORE, TONDU,  
BRIDGEND.**

**ON BEHALF OF  
LIDL STORES**

**May 2017**

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Version 2

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We confirm that in preparing this Report we have exercised reasonable skill and care, taking into account the project objectives, the agreed scope of the work, prevailing site conditions and the degree of manpower and resources allocated to the project.

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## **SUMMARY**

Hawkeswood Ecology carried out a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Survey at the existing Lidl Store, off the Maesteg Road, Tondu, Bridgend. It is proposed to demolish the existing building and construct a new larger store with extended car parking.

The Site is dominated by the store and associated car park hardstanding. There are tree plantings and shrubberies around the Store. A small undeveloped area adjacent to the Site is to be developed as part of the project. The undeveloped area has been levelled during earlier developments and supports an irregularly managed developing grassland principally dominated by sedges and grasses.

There was no direct evidence of bats using the building, and no obvious potential for them to do so was found during the scoping assessment. There was considered to be limited potential for breeding birds to utilise the shrubberies and tree plantings around the Store for breeding purposes.

**With regard to the recommendations made in this report there are no apparent ecological reasons that would prevent the proposed development of the Site going ahead.**

**The conclusions of this report are considered valid for two years from the latest survey dates noted in Section 1 of the report.**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Hawkeswood Ecology was instructed to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Survey of the grounds and buildings at the Lidl Store, off Maesteg Road, Tonbdu, approximate central Grid Reference **SS 89093 84006**, on behalf of Lidl Stores. It is proposed to demolish the existing building and redevelop the Site with a larger store and associated car parking.
- 1.2 The Site is dominated by the existing store and car parking with associated landscaping. There is an area of undeveloped land at the south of the Site which will be developed as part of the project.
- 1.3 The current supermarket is modern and very well maintained, dating from around the early to mid 2000's. The undeveloped land is all made ground and has previously been heavily disturbed and levelled. The Site lies in an area currently being developed with retail and housing. It is on the western edge of an area of remediated former opencast mining. The store is surrounded by development with open countryside approximately 150 metres to the west and 100 metres to the north. To the south and east lie Tondu and Aberkenfig.
- 1.4 The objectives of the survey are:
  - To ascertain the habitats and species present within the Site;
  - To assess the ecological and nature conservation value of the Site;
  - To assess the potential value of buildings on Site for the presence of roosting bats;
  - To assess the potential ecological impacts of the proposed works;
  - To provide recommendations to mitigate the proposed works.
- 1.5 The Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Daytime Bat Scoping Survey and were carried out on 25th April 2017.

## **2 SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE**

- 2.1 The surveyor and report author is Eric Hawkeswood. Eric has many years experience of broad habitat and detailed botanical and species surveying. Eric has been an active member of the Brecknock Bat Group since 1999 and been involved in a number of long running surveys within the county. He is a Natural Resources Wales (NRW) licensed bat worker (no. 74244a:OTH:CSAB:2016) and has extensive experience of roost inspections and emergence work. He has been a professional in the nature conservation field for twenty eight years formerly working as Reserves Manager and Conservation Officer at Gwent Wildlife Trust and Woodland Manager for the Ruperra Conservation Trust. Eric has worked as an Ecological Consultant as joint proprietor of Hawkeswood Ecology since 2001.

## **3 METHODOLOGY AND CONSTRAINTS**

### *Desktop Study*

- 3.1 Consultations were undertaken with the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBReC); records of bats within a 1 kilometre radius and other protected species within 500

metres of the Site. Internationally designated habitats within 1 kilometre of the Site were sought; national and local designations within 500 metres of the Site were asked for.

*Preliminary Ecological Assessment*

- 3.2 The Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) consisted of a walk-over survey of the proposed Site taking into account features within and adjacent to it. Habitats were categorised according to the Phase 1 Habitat Survey guidelines (JNCC, 2010) and annotated onto a map (Figure 1). Plant assemblages were described using the DAFOR scale of cover abundance (Appendix 1) and each habitat was recorded using Target notes (Appendix 2); photographs are given in Appendix 3.

*Bats*

- 3.3 The principal aim of the daytime inspection was to survey the main structures of the building for the presence of bats and their roost sites. An external examination was made of the design and structure of the buildings to assess the suitability for use by bats and for potential access points. Evidence such as bat droppings (faeces) or urine staining on windows, doors, walls or other surfaces was looked for.
- 3.4 The daytime inspection was carried out with the aid of close focusing binoculars, endoscope, night vision scopes, ladders and a 1,000,000 candlepower spot lamp.

*Constraints*

- 3.5 The store remains open and in full use. Due to hygiene considerations a full internal inspection of the Site was not possible. In this instance, the lack of access to the interior of the building was not considered to be problematic in determining the potential of the store to support roosting bats.

## **4 DESK TOP STUDY FINDINGS**

- 4.1 SEWBRc reported a large number of records from the search area; 740 records of protected and priority species, 397 records of Other Species of Conservation Concern and 178 records of Species of Local Conservation Concern were received. From the number of Protected and Priority species records, 52 were of bat species, the nearest records coming from approximately 170 metres to the northeast of the Site. Animals recorded here included common and soprano pipistrelle, Natterer's, unspecified *Myotis* species, serotine, greater horseshoe and lesser horseshoe bats. Other animals recorded across the search area were of brown long-eared, Daubenton's, whiskered and noctule bats.
- 4.2 Other protected and priority species reported were mainly birds and the majority of records related to Parc Slip Nature reserve which is approximately 300 metres to the west at its nearest point. Other species reported included slow-worm, grass snake and adder. There are historic records of great crested newt.
- 4.3 397 records of Other Species of Conservation Concern were reported and were again mainly relating to birds. Common cudweed was reported in 2004 at a location noted as only 19 metres from the Site. 178 records of Species of Local Conservation Concern were reported, again, mainly of birds but also a number of dragonfly species. Records again were mainly from Parc Slip Nature Reserve.

- 4.4 Habitats reported in the search area include broadleaved woodland approximately 150 metres to the north of the Site and marshy grassland approximately 150 metres west of the Site. Internationally designated sites identified within 10 kilometres include Cefn Cribwr Grasslands Special Area of Conservation (SAC and Blackmill Woodlands SAC, approximately 1.7 and 3.2 kilometres distant respectively. Cefn Cribwr Grasslands re designated for supporting '*Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)*'. Cefn Cribwr Grasslands are also notified for marsh fritillary butterfly; four records of marsh fritillary are reported, all historic with the most recent from 1994. Blackmill Woodlands for supporting '*Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles*'.
- 4.5 Cwm Risca Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies approximately 1.6 kilometres to the northwest and Bryn-Bach Cefn Cribwr SSSI lies approximately 2.3 kilometres to the west. Both designated for their grassland interest.
- 4.6 SEWBReC data is confidential and cannot be released in to the public domain without prior permission in writing from SEWBReC. Hawkeswood Ecology holds the data on the client's behalf for one year (in accordance with conditions) in case of further query. SEWBReC have given this data search a unique reference number, 0178-029, which should be quoted in any communications with them.

## 5 FIELD SURVEY FINDINGS

### *Preliminary Ecological Assessment*

- 5.1 The Site sits in an area currently undergoing a considerable amount of development, both retail and housing. The store is well established and lies on the east of Tondu approximately 300 metres from the western boundary of Parc Slip Nature Reserve. The Site is dominated by the current store and associated car parking. To the south and east is an area of undeveloped land which will be utilised for part of the new store development and car parking. See Appendix 4 for photographs.
- 5.2 The Site consists essentially of buildings and hard standing and associated amenity plantings, tree plantings (Target Note 1) along the road frontage, around the store and in the car park. The undeveloped area, (Target Note 2) has been heavily modified during the original development and is essentially made ground. It is maintained by strimming on an occasional basis.
- 5.3 The undeveloped area (TN2) is surrounded by close board fencing. The vegetation consists of developing grassland dominated by grasses and sedges. It was dry at the time of survey but appears to be compacted and likely to have poor drainage. Carnation sedge and common sedge were abundant through the sward with occasional hairy and pendulous sedge. Grasses present included red fescue, annual meadow-grass, creeping bent, perennial rye-grass and Yorkshire fog. Hard rush was locally frequent.
- 5.4 Broad-leaved species present included creeping buttercup, colt's-foot, ragwort, hairy bittercress, common sorrel, common vetch, daisy, red clover and white clover. Most of these species occurred

occasionally across the site, but some, including white clover, creeping buttercup, colt's-foot and daisy were frequent. Bare ground accounted for at least 10% of this area.

- 5.5 Tree plantings were present on the south, west and northern sides of the Store (TN1). They were well maintained but consisted of only a few species and approximately 10 - 15 years old. Field maple and hawthorn were abundant with occasional hazel. The understorey was not developed and wood chips were used to control undergrowth.

#### *Fauna*

- 5.6 No fauna species were noted during the survey actually on the Site and the Site did not support any particular habitat suitable for protected species. The Site's isolation from any surrounding habitats precluded the presence of reptiles. It is probable that common urban bird species will use the site for foraging purposes.
- 5.7 Both lesser black back and herring gull were noted on the store roof but there was no evidence of nesting. The sloping nature of the roof would make breeding unlikely.

#### ***Bat Roost Daytime Assessment***

- 5.8 The Lidl store is a large modern building dating from the early to mid 2000's. It is a concrete frame construction with metal cladding the upper parts of the building and forming the roof cover. The lower walls are glass clad or rendered panels.
- 5.9 No access was possible to survey the building internally, but the store is fully operation and very well maintained and its structure unlikely to allow bats access to internal areas.

#### *Direct evidence of, or potential to support, roosting bats*

- 5.10 There was no direct evidence of bats found in the building. It was well sealed at all points and no potential for bats to access the building interior could be found.

## **6. DISCUSSION AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### *Preliminary Ecological Assessment*

- 6.1 The area at Target Note 2 is best described as developing grassland; it is dominated by grasses and sedges with locally frequent hard rush. It is a small parcel of previously worked land about 0.3 Ha in size which has been completely levelled and compacted in past development of the locality. The species present are generally those which will readily colonise wet ground and the Site displays little naturalness along with poorly developed vegetation. Broad-leaved species were generally rare with the exception of colonising species such as creeping buttercup and white clover. No species of note were identified.
- 6.2 The tree planted areas and amenity shrub plantings were all well maintained and had little biodiversity interest. They may support breeding birds and this should be a consideration of any enabling clearance.
- 6.3 The undeveloped land at TN 2 and some of the tree planting area at TN1 will be lost to the development. Neither habitat is of any significant importance or value and similar habitats are

frequent in the local area. It is considered that the loss of this habitat will result in **no significant impact** in a local or regional context.

#### *Protected Species*

- 6.4 The development will lead to the loss of the existing store and some of the tree planted area at the south of the Site. The store is very well maintained and does not show any direct evidence of bats or potential for them to roost. The tree plantings are young, approximately 10 years old and fairly open; there is limited potential for them to support breeding birds.
- 6.5 The shrubberies offer good cover for breeding birds and typical urban species such as dunnock, robin and blackbird may be expected to make use of them for breeding purposes. The shrubberies will be affected marginally with the removal of small areas.
- 6.6 There is very limited potential for reptiles to be present in the undeveloped area. It's isolation from any suitable nearby habitat and the made nature of the ground and current management regime tend to make the Site unsuitable for them.
- 6.7 Given the limited value of the Site for protected species and the lack of potential for impacting upon them it is considered the development will have **no impact** on the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of bats in the local area or any impact on populations of other protected species. Recommendations are made below (Section 8) to ensure that breeding birds are not adversely affected during the proposed works.

#### *Summary*

- 6.8 There are no habitats or species of note on Site but there is limited potential for breeding birds to use the tree plantings and shrubberies.

## **7 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICIES**

### *Birds*

- 7.1 Part I of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence (with certain limited exceptions and in the absence of a licence) intentionally to kill, injure or take any wild bird, or intentionally to damage, take or destroy its nest whilst being built or in use, or to take or destroy its eggs. Consequently, even common birds such as blackbirds or robins, and their nests and eggs are protected in this way. Any works involving removal or other management of trees or shrubs must be undertaken outside the breeding bird season (March- August).
- 7.2 Further, section 1(5) of Part 1 of the W&C Act states any person intentionally disturbing any wild bird included in Schedule 1 whilst it is building a nest or is in or near a nest containing eggs or young or disturbs the young of such a bird is committing an offence and liable to a special penalty.
- 7.3 Amendments to The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 made in 2012 have effectively strengthened the protection of wild birds and their habitats. The amendment is “To help preserve, maintain and re-establish habitats for wild birds.”

- 7.4 Under the amended Regulations, Local Planning Authorities (as well as national statutory conservation bodies such as Natural Resources Wales) are required to protect and create bird habitat.
- Bats*
- 7.5 British bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Schedule 5 of this act made it illegal to intentionally kill, injure or take any British bat. It is also an offence to intentionally damage or destroy their place of rest (the roost).
- 7.6 Further all bat species are protected under Annex IV of the European Communities Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora (The Habitats Directive) as amended which requires the United Kingdom government to provide bats with strict protection. Lesser horseshoe bats are also protected under Annex II of the Habitat Regulations which requires the national government to identify Special Areas of Conservation to protect and enhance core populations of Annex II species.
- 7.7 The Habitats Directive is transcribed into England and Wales Law by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. This legislation states in Part 3, Protection of Species, paragraph 41(1) that a person who:
- (a) deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,
  - (b) deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,
  - (c) deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or
  - (d) damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,
- is committing an offence.
- 7.8 Further, with regard to disturbance of EPS, Paragraph 41(2) that disturbance is an act which is likely to:
- (a) to impair their ability—
    - (i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
    - (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
  - (b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
- 7.9 In the case of a development involving the loss or modification of a building which may affect bats the above legislation must be considered and it may be necessary to apply to Natural Resources Wales for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL).
- 7.10 The introduction of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, has removed the defence of killing or injuring a protected species during a lawful operation, thus even in an instance where planning permission is granted, the presence of bats must be considered and mitigated for prior to commencement of works. Under the above regulations, a WAG licence can only be given if three tests are satisfied:
- The action proposed is in the interest of preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance to the environment;
  - That there is not a satisfactory alternative;
  - That the action proposed will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

- 7.11 Failure to satisfy the regulations and obtain an EPSL where required is likely to result in prosecution and can lead to severe fines of up to £5000 per bat and possible imprisonment.
- 7.12 Eight species of bat are Listed under section 42 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) (NERC) as Species of Principal Importance for Biological Conservation in Wales. This is a list of species considered at threat within Wales and in need of conservation management to maintain and enhance population numbers.
- 7.13 A duty is placed on the Local Authority by the Welsh Assembly Government to maintain and enhance populations of species listed in Section 42.

#### *Reptiles*

- 7.14 All common reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) schedule 5, from deliberate injury or killing (Section 9(1)) and sale (Section 9(5)).
- 7.15 A Welsh Government licence is not required to handle or disturb slow worms or common lizards but there must be proper consideration of the presence of these animals on site and mitigating measures implemented to minimise any impacts on them.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 There is no requirement for any works to be undertaken as compensation or mitigation for bats at the Site.
- 8.2 Removal of tree plantings or shrubberies should be undertaken outside the accepted bird breeding season of March to August. If this is not possible, the affected areas will be searched by a suitably experienced ecologist prior to commencement of works. There is no licence for the destruction of birds' nests and translocations invariably fail. Any nest will be protected by a buffer zone until as such time as it is no longer in use.
- 8.3 Any landscaping plan should introduce native species reflecting those present in the local area; all planted species should be of local provenance. Plantings should include species known to be valuable for foraging birds and bats such as those producing berries and attractive to insects, i.e. heather, hawthorn, hazel, cotoneaster.
- 8.4 Should a bat be found at any time during the demolition works, they must cease immediately and advice sought from a licensed bat ecologist or Natural Resources Wales (NRW) on how best to proceed.

#### *Artificial Lighting*

- 8.5 Bats and other nocturnal species are affected by artificial light and this can have an impact upon their foraging success. Consideration will therefore be given to the level of external lighting around the Site. Lighting will be located with consideration for bats and other nocturnal species,

i.e. any lights will be pointed towards the ground and not to the surrounding areas, in particular the trees on the southern boundary.

## **9 CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 The Site is presently dominated by the Store and hard standing with landscaped plantings and a small area of developing grassland to the south and east.
- 9.2 No evidence was found of bats using the building for roosting purposes and there was no obvious potential for them to do so.
- 9.3 The Site does not support any habitats or species of particular note, however the amenity plantings do offer some opportunities for breeding birds.

## **10 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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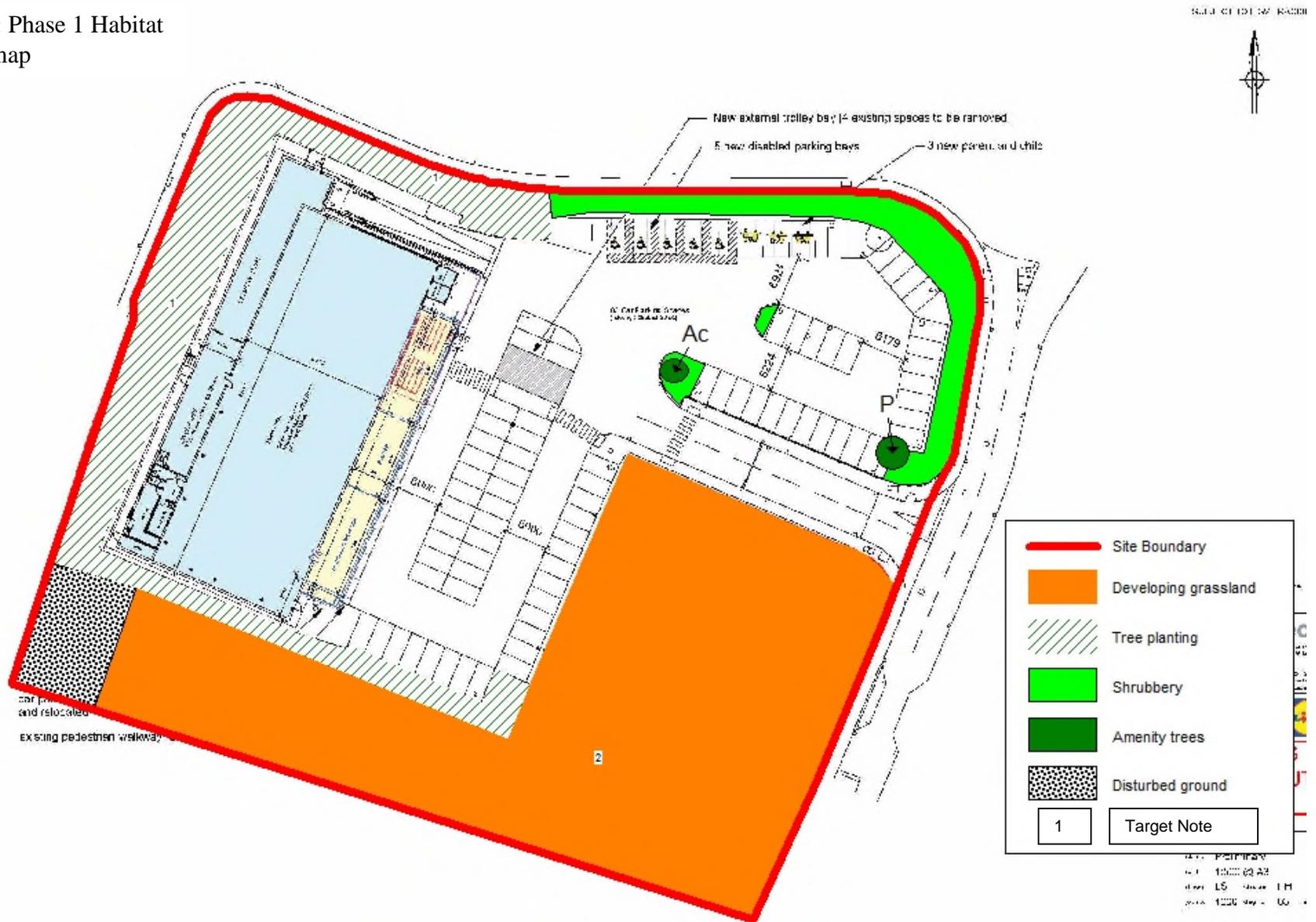
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**FIGURE 1:  
PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP**

Figure 1: Phase 1 Habitat Survey map



**APPENDIX 1**  
**DAFOR SCALE OF COVER ABUNDANCE**

The DAFOR scale is used as a simple measure of cover abundance for individual plant species within a habitat. The scale is as follows:

- D Dominant
- A Abundant
- F Frequent
- O Occasional
- R Rare
- (L Locally – sometimes used as a prefix to the above)

**APPENDIX 2**  
**PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY TARGET NOTES**

1. Tree plantings, approximately 10 years old or less. Limited species with hawthorn and field maple abundant and hazel occurring occasionally.
2. Area of developing grassland to the south and east of the current store and car parking footprint. The area has been levelled during earlier developments and is essentially made ground with impacted drainage. Dry at the time of survey, it appears to hold water when wet. Species present were mainly sedges and grasses with broad-leaved herbs occurring occasionally, the sedges were generally typical of those species that colonise bare ground. Species present are:

| <b>Species</b>           | <b>Frequency</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Annual meadow-grass      | LF               |
| Bare ground              | F                |
| Bramble                  | O                |
| Colt's-foot              | F                |
| Common sedge             | F                |
| Common gorse             | R                |
| Common nettle            | O                |
| Common sorrel            | O                |
| Common vetch             | R                |
| Creeping bent            | LF               |
| Creeping buttercup       | LF               |
| Dandelion                | F                |
| Dovesfoot cranesbill     | R                |
| Glaucous sedge           | F - LA           |
| Hairy bittercress        | O                |
| Hairy sedge              | O                |
| Hard rush                | LF               |
| Lady's smock             | O                |
| Meadow buttercup         | R                |
| Pendulous sedge          | R                |
| Perennial rye-grass      | O                |
| Perforate St John's wort | R                |
| Ragwort                  | F                |
| Red clover               | O                |
| Red fescue               | F - LA           |
| Ribwort plantain         | F                |
| Rosebay willowherb       | O                |
| Silverweed               | O                |
| Spear thistle            | LF               |
| White clover             | F                |
| Yorkshire fog            | F                |

**APPENDIX 3**  
**LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED IN THE SURVEY**

| <i>Species</i>           | <i>Scientific Name</i>          |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Annual meadow-grass      | <i>Poa annua</i>                |
| Bramble                  | <i>Rubus fruticosus</i>         |
| Colt's-foot              | <i>Tussilago farfara</i>        |
| Common gorse             | <i>Ulex europaeus</i>           |
| Common nettle            | <i>Urtica dioica</i>            |
| Common sedge             | <i>Carex nigra</i>              |
| Common sorrel            | <i>Rumex acetosa</i>            |
| Common vetch             | <i>Vicia sativa</i>             |
| Creeping bent            | <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>     |
| Creeping buttercup       | <i>Ranunculus repens</i>        |
| Dandelion                | <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg |
| Dovesfoot cranesbill     | <i>Geranium molle</i>           |
| Field maple              | <i>Acer campestre</i>           |
| Glaucous sedge           | <i>Carex flacca</i>             |
| Hairy bittercress        | <i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>        |
| Hairy sedge              | <i>Carex hirta</i>              |
| Hard rush                | <i>Juncus inflexus</i>          |
| Hawthorn                 | <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>       |
| Hazel                    | <i>Corylus avellana</i>         |
| Lady's smock             | <i>Cardamine pratensis</i>      |
| Meadow buttercup         | <i>Ranunculus acris</i>         |
| Pendulous sedge          | <i>Carex pendulosa</i>          |
| Perennial rye-grass      | <i>Lolium perenne</i>           |
| Perforate St John's wort | <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>     |
| Ragwort                  | <i>Senecio jacobaea</i>         |
| Red clover               | <i>Trifolium pratense</i>       |
| Red fescue               | <i>Festuca rubra</i>            |
| Ribwort plantain         | <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>      |
| Rosebay willowherb       | <i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>  |
| Silverweed               | <i>Potentilla anserina</i>      |
| Spear thistle            | <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>          |
| White clover             | <i>Trifolium repens</i>         |
| Yorkshire fog            | <i>Holcus lanatus</i>           |

**APPENDIX 4  
PHOTOGRAPHS**



The main entrance to the Store



The rear of the Store

Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Survey, Lidl Store Tondy, Bridgend  
Hawkeswood Ecology – May 2017



The front of the property



The Store roof

Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Survey, Lidl Store Tondu, Bridgend  
Hawkeswood Ecology – May 2017



Views across the developing grassland (TN2)

Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Survey, Lidl Store Tondu, Bridgend  
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Typical tree planted area (TN1)



Shrubbery at the front of the Store

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