

**LAND AT HERBERT ROAD, NEWPORT
IMPLEMENTATION OF OTTER MITIGATION**

March 2018

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A parcel of land off Herbert Road, Newport has been granted planning permission (Ref 13/1279) for the creation of domestic dwellings. Keepmoat are undertaking the construction stage of the development on behalf of Pobl Group. The eastern boundary of the site lies adjacent to Herbert Road and the railway line, while to the north lies Glan Usk Primary School, with housing to the south. The western boundary of the site lies adjacent to the River Usk, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 1.2 Due to the proximity of the development to the River Usk SAC a requirement of the planning permission (Condition 5) is that an otter mitigation strategy be implemented.
- 1.3 The otter mitigation strategy, devised in agreement with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), comprises off-site habitat enhancement and the installation of an artificial otter holt. Habitat enhancement is to include the installation of a length of mesh-weld dog-proof fencing to provide a section of undisturbed riverbank. This will offer suitable resting areas for otters. An artificial otter holt will also be installed. Other habitat enhancements will involve the removal of stands of Japanese knotweed, once eliminated these areas will be planted up with thorny shrubs eg hawthorn and blackthorn to provide additional suitable resting places for otter. Land along the riverbank within the SAC margin, between the northern boundary of the site and the M4 bridge, has been earmarked for this purpose. Further details of the otter mitigation can be found in the Otter Mitigation Strategy report (DCE, 2017).

2.0 Implementation of Otter Mitigation

- 2.1 The location of the fencing and artificial holt was agreed during a site visit on 2nd February 2017 those present included Vicky Hannaford, Ecologist at David Clements Ecology Ltd, Dylan Hammet and Thomas James, both of Keepmoat and Katie Godfrey, County Ecologist with Newport County Council.
- 2.2 A meeting between the fencing contractor and Vicky Hannaford from David Clements Ecology Ltd took place in April 2017; the position of the fencing was marked out and details of the dimensions and installation requirements of the fencing confirmed. An area of scrub needed to be removed to facilitate the installation of the fencing. Prior to works commencing, the scrub and other vegetation in the immediate vicinity were checked for nesting birds and existing otter holts by the ecologist; no otter holts or nesting birds were found.
- 2.3 Installation of the artificial otter holt took place in May 2017. Prior to installation, vegetation to be removed and in the immediate vicinity was checked for nesting birds and existing otter holts by the ecologist. The contractors were advised on the orientation of the otter holt to ensure its correct installation. Photographs of the fencing and otter holt installation can be found at the end of this report.

2.4 A Japanese knotweed management plan has been produced by Elcot Environmental and removal works started in April 2017. Further treatment of the Japanese knotweed on the site will continue until 2020, in accordance with the management plan.

Reference

David Clements Ecology Ltd, (2017), *Land at Herbert Road Newport, Otter Mitigation Report* Unpublished Report

Surveyor(s) : V Hannaford
Report : V Hannaford, 12 March 2018
Version : Issued Final, v.1.1
Checked : J Lee, 13 March 2018
Revisions : Updated planning consent number

Photographs of Otter Mitigation May 2017



Fencing with scrub



Fence return towards river



Fence through scrub



Internal structure of artificial holt

Position of holt



Entrance to river



Additional entrance/exit into surrounding vegetation



Additional vent

Holt completed