

# Gwent Wildlife Trust

## Ymddiriedolaeth Natur Gwent



15<sup>th</sup> January 2014

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For the attention of Geraint N Roberts

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*Reg. charity no. 242619*  
*Lim. Liability co.no. 812535*

Dear Sir

**Planning Application 13/1279 248 Dwellings – South of Glan Usk Primary School**  
**Also relates to planning application 13/1165 Dumping of inert materials to raise soil level**

The Gwent Wildlife Trust wishes to **object** to the above planning application, as we believe it will have a detrimental impact on the River Usk SAC, a site which is designated under the Habitats and Species Directive. This site is given the highest level of protection by the European Union, and it should be afforded the highest level of protection under planning law.

The road access to the proposed development runs along the top of the bank of the river Usk which is designated as a SAC. The presence of this road would dramatically increase disturbance of the river bank areas with headlights, noise and lighting. The large scale and density of the housing development is also likely to lead to a dramatic increase in use of the river bank by the public which is likely to disturb wildlife using the river and bank.

We believe this development should be scaled down in size and moved further away from the river bank. This would allow for a wider corridor of natural and semi-natural habitats to be retained along the top of the river bank. We believe this is necessary to provide a satisfactory buffer zone to enable the wildlife using the SAC more appropriate protection and reduce disturbance of wildlife from the road and housing development.

Gwarchod **Natur** ar gyfer y Dyfodol ● Protecting **Wildlife** for the future

This would also be more in line with the areas of the site identified in the current Local Plan for residential development.

We believe this **additional** buffer zone should be a minimum of 20 metres wide. This wider wildlife corridor can then be managed for both wildlife and informal quiet recreation along a river bank path, providing a relaxed and peaceful environment for wildlife and walkers.

In addition, we do not believe it is appropriate to develop housing on the long strip of land adjacent to the river at the southern end of the proposed development. This area of land is already narrow and we believe this area should not be built on or have road access. Instead we believe road access to a development should be from Herbert Road further away from the river.

We wish to highlight the following objectives and policies in the Newport Revised Local Development Plan which place a high priority on the protection of designated sites. We believe new housing development this close to the SAC cannot be justified.

- **Objective 6 – Conservation of the Natural Environment**

**To protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment, including landscape, protected habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity in Wales (regardless of greenfield or brownfield status) and the protection of controlled waters.**

- **CE4 Environmental Spaces and Corridors**

**IN AND ADJOINING THE URBAN AND VILLAGE AREAS, AND IN AREAS IDENTIFIED FOR COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT, SITES HAVING EXISTING IMPORTANCE FOR THEIR VISUAL QUALITIES, AS WILDLIFE HABITATS OR FOR RECREATIONAL OR AMENITY PURPOSES, WILL BE SAFEGUARDED AS “ENVIRONMENTAL SPACES AND CORRIDORS”.**

**DEVELOPMENT IN THESE SPACES WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHERE:**

- THE EXISTING OR POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITIES OF THE SITE WILL BE IMPROVED OR COMPLEMENTED;**
- THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL, EUROPEAN, NATIONAL, REGIONAL OR LOCAL NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST;**

- **SP9 Conservation of the Natural, Historic and Built Environment**

**THE CONSERVATION, ENHANCEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF RECOGNISED SITES WITHIN THE NATURAL, HISTORIC AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT WILL BE SOUGHT IN ALL PROPOSALS.**

We view the Usk River as one of the most important sites for wildlife in the City of Newport, and its protection must therefore be an extremely high priority.

Yours sincerely,

Lindi Rich  
Conservation Officer