

Biodiversity Strategy

PROJECT TITLE: Refurbishment & Alterations to Orchard House
SITE ADDRESS : Orchard House, 11A, Norman Street, Caerleon, Newport,
NP18 1BB
PLANNING REF: 18/1236
DATE: 26th March 2025

1.Introduction

1.1) Planning Consent has been granted for refurbishment and alterations to Orchard House Care Home to create 7 self-contained supported living apartments. The main building will have the roof renewed. There will be the demolition of selected outbuildings and construction of a single storey communal garden pavilion including associated landscaping work.

1.2) The site is centred at ST 33955 90837. Planning consent has been granted (ref: 18/1236) and a number of pre-commencement conditions have been added to the decision notice. Condition 8 of the planning consent relates to biodiversity enhancements that the scheme can deliver. The condition states:

Condition 8: *'Notwithstanding the information submitted prior to the commencement of development a scheme of ecological enhancement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.'*

Reason: To provide net benefit in accordance with NLDP Policy GP5, Planning Policy Wales and Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

1.3) An internal and external bat scoping assessment of the building was completed by BE Ecological Ltd in February 2019. Potential entry points and roost features were identified during the external inspection. Potential roost features noted include gaps beneath slipped tiles, ridge tiles and fascias. A single bat dropping, thought to be Pipistrelle

species, was identified during the internal inspection, subsequently rendering the building to be a confirmed bat roost with HIGH bat roost suitability.

1.4) Three bat emergence, re-entry activity surveys were undertaken on 13th May 2019 dusk, 26th May 2019 dusk and 12th June 2019 dawn by BE Ecological Ltd. A common pipistrelle was identified emerging from the hip of the roof, a second common pipistrelle emerged from beneath a tile on the roof on two separate occasions. A common pipistrelle was also observed re-entered the roof beneath a tile during the dawn visit. Subsequently, the building was identified as an occasional day roost for no more than three Common Pipistrelle bats. The building had three points within the roof where bats were seen emerging or reentering the structure.

1.5) Two further bat emergence surveys were undertaken by Ecological Services Ltd on 17th July 2024 dusk and 24th August 2024, both undertaken during suitable weather conditions. No bats were seen emerging from the building but a number of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats were observed foraging around the building and flying up to the building itself on both surveys.

1.6) A blue tit nest was identified on the southwest elevation of the building during the bat activity surveys.

1.7) The development proposals seek to retain Orchard House but undertake internal renovation works and renew the building roof. The summer house and existing outbuildings will be demolished. A garden pavilion will be built on the location of the existing outbuildings to the north west of Orchard House. The proposed works will result in the disturbance, destruction and loss of bat roost locations within the building. There should be no habitat loss experienced within the grounds of Orchard House, hardstanding locations are already in situ.

1.8) Ash Harris from Ecological Services Ltd attended a site meeting on the 5th March 2025 to discuss the proposed development works and mitigation and enhancement measures that could be incorporated into the design.

2. Biodiversity Enhancement Measures

2.1) The Environment Act (Wales) 2016 places a duty on competent authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Measures must be provided to ensure long term biodiversity gain can be achieved via development proposals.

Nesting Birds

2.2) 3 x tree mounted bird boxes will be provided within the grounds of Orchard House. The bird boxes will be installed at least 2m from ground level on three separate mature trees which are large enough to support the boxes. Photographs of the correctly mounted boxes will be sent to Newport Planning Department. Boxes to be provided are:

- 1 x Blackbird FSC Nest Box (or similar design)
- 2 x Vivara Pro Seville 28mm WoodStone Nest Box (similar design)

Bats

2.3) Photographs of the building are provided within Appendix 2 of this report. Given the amount of glazing present on the building and the required levels of external lighting it is difficult to find suitable locations for bat boxes to be fitted within the building. It was agreed that two 1bstock bat boxes (or similar design depending on stock availability) will be integrated into the brick work of the building. The bat boxes will be provided at eaves level on the north west corner of the building. The proposed location is shown in the adjacent photograph.



Suggested Integrated Bat Box Locations

2.4) Four wall mounted bat boxes will be added to the chimneys retained within the roof line. Two x 1FQ bat boxes (or similar design depending on stock availability) will be added to each chimney as part of the proposed roofing works.

Lighting

2.5) Careful consideration must be given to the use of lighting within the development site, as this can adversely affect the activity of a variety of fauna. Light spillage into adjacent semi-natural habitats must be avoided and brightness kept to the lowest permissible level in the areas adjacent to such habitats. All lighting must meet recommendations in the BCT Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.

2.6) The minimal amount of external lighting possible will be used within the development site boundary. All external lighting around buildings shall be restricted to use of down lighters or cowled or hooded luminaries angled downwards preventing light spill above the horizontal plane and there shall be no direct or indirect illumination of hedgerows, wildflower grassland and trees or bat mitigation features including roost entrances (including bat boxes) and flight lines.

2.7) Bulbs emitting light from the warm-white colour spectrum only (<2700oK) with a peak wavelength exceeding 550nm shall be used. Any PIR motion sensors will be set to a maximum of 1 minute and angled to prevent accidental triggering.

3. Responsible Persons

3.1) The Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) during construction works:

Project Ecologist - Ecological Services Ltd; info@ecologicalservices.wales ; 07305143857

3.2) Willis Construction are the lead contractors for the development works. They will have the responsibility to ensure all enhancement features within the document are installed. Willis Construction will be responsible for ensuring confirmation of the correctly installed enhancement features are sent to Newport Planning Department. **Site Contractor** - Willis Construction; matthew@willisconstruction.co.uk; 02920 797073

3.3) Pobl Group (The Client) will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the development site. They will be responsible for all monitoring work and ensuring enhancement features are maintained in good condition in perpetuity.

Best Wishes

Beth Lewis
Ecologist
Ecological Services Ltd

Signed: *Beth Lewis* Date: March 2025

Appendix 1 - Aerial Image of Development Site



Appendix 2 - Bat & Bird Boxes



Blackbird FSC Nest Box



Vivara Pro Seville 28mm WoodStone Nest Box



1FQ Schwegler Bat Box

Appendix 3 - Site Photographs



North east elevation of building



South east gable end of building



South west elevation of building



North west elevation of building



North west elevation of single story section of building



North elevation of building



Chimney to south east of roof - bat box location



Chimney on south west pitch of roof - bat box location