kite ecology

Ecological Survey

Land to the south of Pendre, Tavernspite, Pembrokeshire

ATEB Group

Updated Report

February 2026

Contents

1	Executive summary	3
2	Introduction and site description	3
3	Desk study and survey methodology	4
4	Baseline (results and findings)	5
5	Limitations to survey	12
6	Legislation and planning	12
7	Discussion and key recommendations	13
8	Additional Recommendations	15
9	Conclusions	16
10	References	16

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This report, and the information contained in it, is intended to be valid for a maximum of 12 months from the date of the survey, providing no significant baseline changes have occurred.

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1709	003	Draft	29012026
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1 Executive Summary

1.1 An ecological survey of a field to the south of the property known as Pendre, Tavernspite, Pembrokeshire was commissioned by ATEB Group in relation to planning application. Under the current proposals, the site would be developed for housing and associated infrastructure.

1.2 A walkover ecology survey was carried out on 25th January 2018 when the site was surveyed for evidence of use by badgers, bats, dormice and birds as these were considered the species most likely to be utilising the site. Habitats were also recorded. Due to the time that had elapsed since the original survey, a repeat walkover survey was completed on 28th September 2023 and again on 26th January 2026 to ensure no baseline changes had occurred. All surveys were undertaken by a suitably licensed and experienced ecologist.

1.3 The survey area includes an improved grassland field, surrounded on the southern, eastern and western boundaries by well maintained hedgerows. The hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn and blackthorn. No evidence of protected species was found on site. It is likely that the hedgerows would be used by nesting birds at appropriate times of year.

1.4 Under the proposals, a 6m section of the eastern boundary is to be removed to allow access onto the site, with a further 12m section trans-located westwards to improve visibility around the new access point. Hedgerow removal must avoid the bird nesting season, but if this is not possible then the hedgerow must be checked for nesting birds prior to any works commencing.

1.5 To enhance the site for wildlife and maintain arboreal connectivity around the site, two mature native trees will be planted either side of the new access point. A new species rich hedgerow will also be planted along the northern boundary of the site.

2 Introduction and site description

2.1 An ecological survey of a field to the south of the property known as Pendre, Tavernspite, Pembrokeshire was commissioned by ATEB Group in relation to planning application. Under the current proposals, the site would be developed for housing and associated infrastructure. The centre of the site is located at OSGR SN176123.

2.2 The survey area includes an improved grassland field, surrounded on the southern, eastern and western boundaries by well maintained hedgerows, as highlighted on Figure 1.



Figure 1. Survey area highlighted in red.

2.3 Unless the client indicates otherwise, all species records will be submitted to the relevant biological records centre.

3 Desk study and survey methodology

3.1 General

A walkover ecology survey was carried out on 25th January 2018 when the site was surveyed for evidence of use by badgers, bats, dormice and birds as these were considered the species most likely to be utilising the site. Habitats were also recorded. The weather on the day of the survey was relatively clear (40% cloud cover) with south westerly winds of Force 2 and an average temperature of 7˚C. Due to the time that had elapsed since the original survey, a repeat walkover survey was completed on 28th September 2023 to ensure no baseline changes had occurred. The weather was cloudy with regular heavy rain showers and strong south westerly winds of Force 6. A future walkover survey was completed on 26th January 2026. All surveys were undertaken by a suitably licensed ecologist who is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and a Chartered Environmentalist. Surveys and reports have been completed following accepted guidelines and in accordance with CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (2015) and BS 42020:2013 *Biodiversity. Code of practice for planning and development.* (2013).

3.2 Desk study

3.2.1 Local Records Centre

The West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre (WWBIC) was contacted for known records of European Protected Species, other species of conservation concern and locally important species within a 2km radius of the site as part of the 2018 survey.

3.2.2 Aerial photographs

Google Earth was used to identify any important landscape features surrounding the site.

3.2.3 **Designated sites**
The Multi-Agency Geographic Information website (www.magic.gov.uk) was used to identify the presence of any protected sites within 2km of the survey area.

3.3 **On site surveys**
3.3.1 **Phase 1**
A Phase 1 habitat survey was carried out following the standard field methodology set out in the *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – A Technique for Environmental Audit*, Joint Nature Conservation Committee 1990 (2016 edition).

3.3.2 **Badgers**
The site, and where possible, a radius of 30 metres from the site boundary was searched for badger setts. Sett entrances are recognised by entrances c.300mm wide and c.200mm high and tend to have large accumulations of earth outside. Other signs searched for included 'snuffle holes' (holes dug by badgers when searching for invertebrates), 'dung pits' (small pits in which badgers deposit their faeces) and 'day nests' (nests of bedding material made by badgers for sleeping above ground).

3.3.3 **Bats**
3.3.3.1 *Trees*
The site was assessed for its potential use by bats. Any trees were surveyed for potential features that may be used by roosting bats. Trees were categorised as being of low, medium or high potential depending on the type of features present. Features used by bats include cracks and splits, loose or peeling bark, dense covering of ivy and woodpecker holes.

3.3.4 **Dormice**
The hedges were assessed for their potential use by dormice and any areas of fruiting hazel were searched for hazel nuts opened in the characteristic way.

3.3.5 **Birds**
Any birds seen or heard on site during the survey were recorded and the habitat was assessed for its potential use by nesting birds at appropriate times of year.

3.3.6 **Other species**
Incidental records of any other species seen or heard on site during the survey were also recorded.

4 Results

4.1 General
The site is located on the western periphery of the rural village of Tavernspite. There is a minor road along the eastern boundary, with farmland to the south and west and existing property to the north.

4.2 Desk study
4.2.1 Local Records Centre
4.2.1.1 *General*
There are 125 individual species records within a 2km radius of the site. Of these, the most relevant relate to bat species, as these are a mobile species which often forage and commute along features such as hedgerows. Species recorded include Whiskered/Brandt's *Myotis mystacinus/brandtii*, Natterer's *Myotis nattereri*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*,

brown long eared *Plecotus auritus* and pipistrelle species. These species records are summarised on Figure 2.

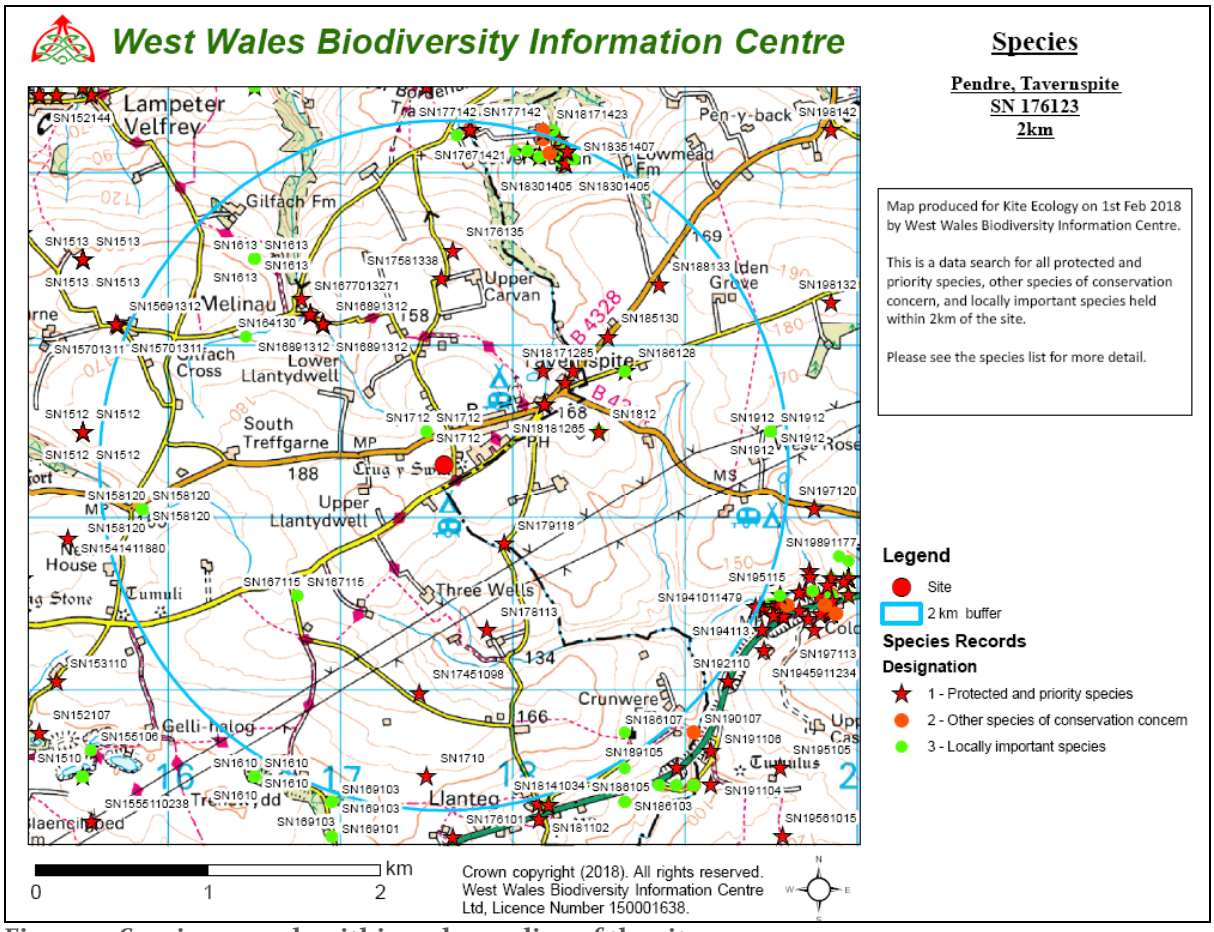


Figure 2. Species records within a 2km radius of the site.

4.2.1.2 Dormice

A wider search area of 5km was conducted for dormice. Records for this species were found 2.5km to the south east of the site (summarised in Figure 3).

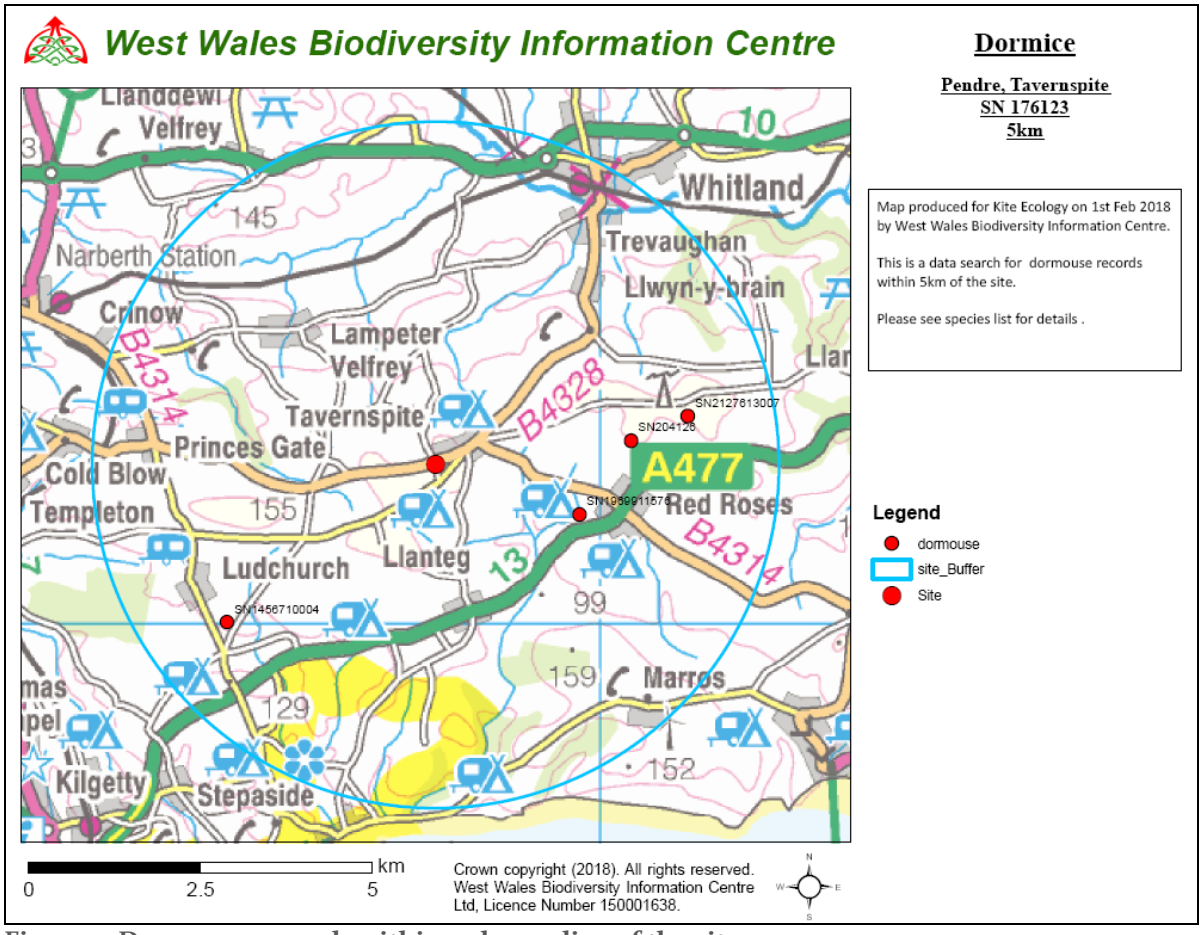


Figure 3. Dormouse records within a 5km radius of the site.

4.2.2 Aerial photographs

The site is situated in a rural environment, with existing properties immediately to the north and east, and farmland extending to the south and west.



Figure 4. Aerial photograph of the site in relation to the surrounding habitat.

4.2.3 **Designated sites**

There are no designated sites within a 2km radius of the site.

4.3 **On site surveys**

4.3.1 **Phase 1**

4.3.1.1 *Grassland*

The central area of the field is improved grassland including species such as Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*, buttercup *Ranunculus sp.*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, dandelion *Taraxacum sp*., Cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*.. It has a relatively short sward height.



Figure 5. Panoramic view of the site taken from the southern boundary facing northwards.

4.3.1.2 *Hedgerow 1 – Eastern hedgerow*

A well maintained roadside hedge which has recently been flailed, It includes hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*

and occasional gorse *Ulex* sp. The hedgerow sits on small bank, with the eastern elevation adjacent to the road (Figure 6 and 7).



Figure 6. Western aspect of eastern hedgerow (H1).



Figure 7. Eastern aspect of eastern hedgerow (H1).

4.3.1.3 *Hedgerow 2 – southern hedgerow*

A well maintained boundary hedge which has recently been flailed. It is dominated by hawthorn and blackthorn, as shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8. Northern aspect of southern hedgerow (H2).

4.3.1.4 *Hedgerow 3 – western hedgerow*

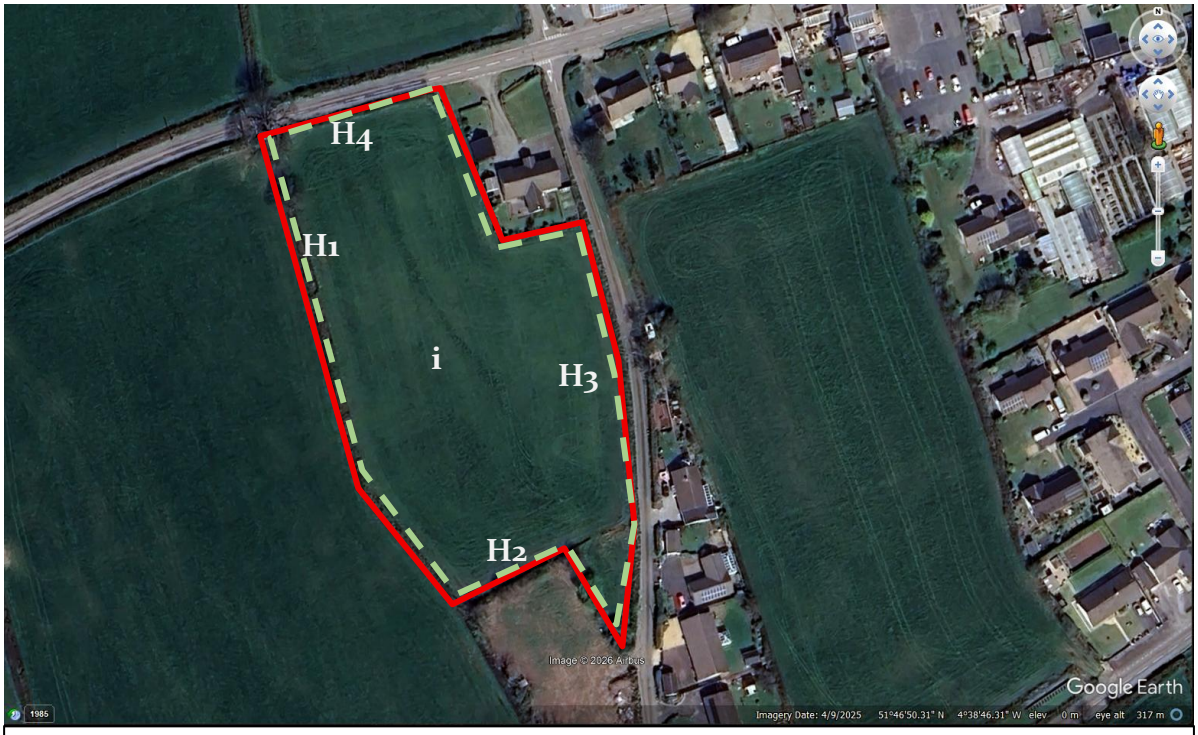
A well maintained boundary hedge which has recently been flailed. It includes hawthorn, blackthorn, elder, ash and occasional gorse *Ulex* sp (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Eastern aspect of western hedgerow (H3).

4.3.1.5 **Hedgerow 4 – northern hedgerow**

A well maintained boundary roadside hedge which has recently been flailed. It is dominated by hawthorn and blackthorn,



Key

	Site boundary	i	Improved grassland
	Species poor hedgerow		Hedgerow numbers

Figure 10. Habitat map of the site.

4.3.2 **Badgers**

No evidence of badgers was found on site or within a 30m radius of the site boundary.

4.3.3 **Bats**

4.3.3.1 *Trees*

There are no mature trees in the hedgerows around the site affected by the proposals, however it is likely that these boundary features would be used by foraging and commuting bats.

4.3.4 **Dormice**

The hedgerows surrounding the site are well maintained (recently flailed) and are managed as boundary features. They have a mixture of species, including hawthorn, blackthorn and elder and do extend into the wider countryside. However, the closest known record is over 2.5km to the south east of the site (Figure 3). The hedgerows are very well maintained as boundary features and lack the variety of species usually required by dormice.

4.3.5 **Birds**

Magpie *Pica pica* and house sparrow *Passer domesticus* were recorded on site during the survey. It is likely that the hedgerows around the site would be used by nesting birds at appropriate times of the year.

4.3.6 **Other species**

No other species were recorded.

5 Limitations to surveys

5.1 The results and recommendations of the report are based on findings as they were at the time of the survey. Kite Ecology cannot be held responsible for any base line changes to the site that have occurred since the survey was carried out that may have any effect on the results and recommendations.

6 Legislation and planning policy

6.1 Designated sites

Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest are strictly protected through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

6.2 Dormice

The dormouse is strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which transcribes the EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild flora and fauna) into UK law. The deliberate and reckless capturing, disturbing, injuring and killing of dormice is prohibited, as is damaging or destroying their breeding site or resting places. Licences are available from Natural Resources Wales to allow actions that would otherwise be unlawful.

6.3 Birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

6.4 Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a duty on public bodies listed in the Act to carry out sustainable development.

6.5 Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Environment (Wales) Act has been designed to complement the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act by applying the principles of sustainable development to the management of Wales' natural resources. The Act puts the ecosystem approach into statute through a set of Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) principles, which are based on the 12 principles (Ecosystem Approach principles) contained in the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

6.6 Nature Recovery Plan for Wales

The Nature Recovery Plan for Wales is aimed at addressing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss. It sets out how Wales will deliver the commitments of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to halt the decline in our biodiversity by 2020 and then reverse that decline.

6.7 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015

The Act sets out a series of legislative changes to deliver reform of the planning system in Wales, to ensure that it is fair, resilient and enables development. Taken together with proposed changes to secondary legislation, policy and guidance, one of the objectives of the environments.

6.8 **Technical Advice Notes 5**

TAN 5 gives advice to local authorities on development control issues for Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). It also covers the selection and designation of non-statutory nature conservation sites, such as local nature reserves, and the protection of species, commons and greens.

6.9 **Local Development Plan**

Policy GN.37 (Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity) from the Pembrokeshire Local Development Plan states:

> *'All development should demonstrate a positive approach to maintaining and, where ever possible, enhancing biodiversity. Development that would disturb or otherwise harm protected species or their habitats, or the integrity of other habitats, sites or features of importance to wildlife and individual species, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the effects are minimised or mitigated through careful design, work scheduling or other appropriate measures.'*

6.10 **Additional Regulations**

Local Authorities also have a duty under Regulation 9 (Parts 1 and 5) of the Habitat Regulations to have regard for the requirements of the Habitat Directive which includes a requirement to maintain the populations of Protected Species in a 'favourable Conservation Status'.

7 Discussion and key recommendations

7.1 Bats

7.1.1 *Lighting*

While there were no trees on site suitable for use by roosting bats, it is likely that the hedgerows would be used by foraging and commuting bats. All lighting must be hooded and downward facing and positioned to avoid shining directly onto the features such as woodland edges and hedgerows. The lighting should also be PIR sensitive LED type which have a much more directional lighting range, as shown in Figure 11.



Figure 11. Example of different PIR LED lighting.

7.1.2 *Enhancements*

To enhance the roosting opportunities on site, at least four bat boxes will be included in the scheme. In this instance, Beaumaris woodstone bat boxes (Figure 12) or similar design would

be most appropriate as these are flat backed to fit against buildings. Bat boxes should be sited as high up on a building as possible but, avoid being positioned over windows or doors.



Figure 12. Example of a Beaumaris woodstone bat box.

7.2 Dormice

7.2.1 While the hedgerows surrounding the site have some species used by dormice, there are no records for this species within the immediate area, with the closest known record being 2.5km to the south east. The hedgerows are well maintained boundaries and lack the variety of species usually required to support dormice. In this instance, the possibility of it being used by dormice is classed as low, so best practice for site clearance is recommended as set out in 7.2.2.

7.2.2 All vegetation in the section of hedgerow to be removed will be cut to 5cm above ground level during the winter months between November and March as this is a time when dormice are in hibernation so very unlikely to be utilising the site. When the dormice then emerge from hibernation in the spring (April) the lack of vegetation will encourage them to naturally disperse off site into the surrounding habitat. The remaining vegetation can then be removed off site. Vegetation should also be cleared in a southerly direction so that should any animals be disturbed they will again be able to disperse into the surrounding habitat. In the unlikely event of a dormouse being encountered during such works all work in that area must immediately cease and either Kite Ecology or Natural Resources Wales be contacted for advice on how to proceed.

7.2.3 To maintain arboreal routes around the site, two mature trees will be planted on either side of the new access road. These will be a native species such as oak, and the branches will be allowed to grow over the access road to provide a green corridor, so maintaining links around the site.

7.3 Birds

7.3.1 Any site clearance should be carried out between late August and early March in any year which will avoid the bird nesting season, so preventing the potential killing or injuring of birds or destruction of their eggs or active nests. If it is unavoidable to carry out site clearance during the bird nesting season, then it should be conducted carefully and the presence of birds and/or their nests checked for throughout the clearance. Should a nest be encountered during such works, then clearance in that area should cease immediately with the nest being protected until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer in use.

7.3.2 *Enhancements*

To enhance the biodiversity opportunities on site, at least four woodcrete sparrow terrace will be included in the scheme, as shown in Figure 13. Bird boxes should be sited as high up on a building as possible but, avoid being positioned over windows or doors.



Figure 13. Example of a house sparrow terrace.

8 Additional recommendations

8.1 Hedgerows

8.1.1 The hedgerows surrounding the site will benefit from a management regime which would thicken up the hedgerow, so act as a natural screen between the site and surrounding landscape. The new hedgerow along the northern boundary will include locally sourced, native species including hawthorn, blackthorn, ash, holly and hazel. Hedgerows can also be used as natural screens between the different units. This would again enhance the site for biodiversity.

8.1.2 *Management*

- only cut each hedge every 2 years; this reduces maintenance and labour costs, creates a bushier hedge for wildlife and allows flower and berry production in the intervening years.
- hedges with slow growing species, such as hawthorn, can be cut on a 3 year cycle.
- do not cut back to the same height repeatedly, raising the cutting height each time will avoid placing the hedge under stress and allow it to regenerate more vigorously.
- cut hedges to a variety of shapes and sizes; "A" shaped hedges provide good stock proofing and shelter, create song posts for birds and enable hedgerow trees to develop if left untopped.
- leaving 1-2 metre (or wider) verges of tall grass by hedges provides nesting habitat for birds and protects hedgerows from pesticide or fertiliser spray drift.
- hedges can be trimmed, laid and coppiced from September to February but try and cut as late in the winter as possible so wildlife can take advantage of the nuts and berries produced in the autumn.

8.1.3 *Grasslands*

Where possible, grassy areas should be cut in late July or early August (once grasses have seeded) to maintain a greater sward diversity. Chemical fertilisers should be avoided as these can encourage fast growing species which limits diversity.



Figure 14. Summary of proposed development.

9 Conclusions

Under the proposals, a 6m section of the eastern boundary is to be removed to allow access onto the site, with a further 12m section trans-located westwards to improve visibility around the new access point. Hedgerow removal must avoid the bird nesting season, but if this is not possible then the hedgerow must be checked for nesting birds prior to any works commencing. To enhance the site for wildlife and maintain arboreal connectivity around the site, two mature native trees will be planted either side of the new access point. A new species rich hedgerow will also be planted along the northern boundary of the site.

10 References

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