

Prepared for **Daniel Jones**

LAND AT TRE-FORGAN ROAD
NEATH PORT TALBOT

EXTENDED PHASE I VEGETATION SURVEY

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Celtic Wildflowers



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Celtic Wildflowers Ecological Consultants (CWECC) were commissioned by Daniel Jones in February 2022, to carry out a Phase I habitat assessment of a development plot of Tre-Forgan Road, Tre-Forgan, as part of a planning application for a residential development.
- 1.2 The following surveys were carried out:
 - Extended Phase I vegetation survey.
 - Scoping assessment of Protected & LBAP species.
- 1.3 This report presents the initial findings and assessment made during a site visit carried out on 9th March 2022 by Barry Stewart.
- 1.4 The study site comprises part of a larger development plot with sparse vegetation following site clearance works. The study site has an edge of town rural setting the administrative borough of the Neath Port Talbot and has a central Ordnance Survey grid reference of SN79050614.
- 1.5 Note that the study area extends slightly east of the actual development footprint to take into account likely disturbance in this zone. This has minimal consequence to the findings and is only included to provide a more comprehensive assessment.

FIGURE 1: Tre-Forgan Road Study Site
Google Imagery accessed 24-Mar-22



TN1: Pedunculate Oak (with 80cm diameter trunk, housing bird and bat boxes)

TN2: Stone wall community

TN3: Young trees and shrubs on rubbly ground

TN4: Grassy bank below oak with a few woodland edge species

TN5: Sparsely vegetated disturbed ground

TN6: Closed sward ruderal vegetation

2. VEGETATION SURVEY

- 2.1. The recent Google aerial imagery (reproduced at on Figure 1) clearly shows the main habitats noted during a site walkover on 9th March 2022 and a description of each feature shown by a Target Note number on figure 1 is provided below. A total of 112 species were recorded during the walkover (67 vascular plants, 36 bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) and 9 lichens).

- TN1** A mature Pedunculate Oak (Photo 4) with a trunk diameter of approximately 80cm is located close to the western boundary and is to be retained. The tree is in good health and several bat and bird boxes have been erected on it. The tree hosts a good assemblage of common epiphytic bryophytes and lichens such as *Parmotrema perlatum*, *Platismatia glauca* and *Usnea subfloridana*. The beard-lichen *Usnea cornuta* was recorded on one branch and is of local interest.
- TN2** The stone wall along the southern boundary was found to support a modest suite of typical wall species, the most frequent including Atlantic Ivy, Maidenhair Spleenwort and *Brachythecium rutabulum*, with occasional Honeysuckle, *Lepraria lobificans*, *Rhynchostegiella tenella* and *Rhynchostegium confertum*.
- TN3/4** Young trees and scrub were established along the western (Photo 3) and southern boundaries. Species noted included Arrow bamboo, Ash, Beech, Cherry Laurel, Goat Willow Himalayan Honeysuckle, Holly, Horse-chestnut, Pedunculate Oak and Wilson's Honeysuckle. There is a very large Austrian/Corsican Pine in the adjacent garden close to the southern boundary.
- TN5** A surprising total of 75 species was recorded on the area of disturbed ground (Photos 1 & 2). No species were dominant with only American Willowherb, Hairy Bittercress and Yorkshire-fog being locally frequent. All other species were recorded as occasional or rare, none being anything more than of local interest, e.g. Common Figwort, Barren Strawberry, Bush Vetch, *Didymodon nicholsonii*, Hart's-tongue, *Pleuroidium acuminatum*, Wood Avens and Wood-sedge.

3. SCOPING FOR PROTECTED HABITATS AND SPECIES

3.1 DESIGNATIONED SITES

There are no SACs, SPAs or SSSIs within a 5km buffer of the site. The nearest Ancient Woodland is 380m to the west, but the site does not form any part of a woodland habitat corridor. The nearest NPT *Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation* (SINC) sites lie 170m to the south-west (Treforgan Grassland SINC) and 160m to the north-east (Rhos Common SINC). These and two other slightly more distant SINCS (Gelli Dochlithe and School Road, Crynant).

Scoping Opinion: Although four SINC sites lie within 200m of the study site, these are all grassland sites that have no connectivity with the study site. The limited quality of the habitats on site are considered unlikely to contribute to the functionality of the SINCS ecology, nor does the study site provide any obvious connectivity to other SSSI or SINC habitats in the local area. It is considered very unlikely that the development of the site would have adverse effect on any SINCS or other designated features.

3.2 HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitats

No UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats or Habitats of Principal Importance for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in Wales under Section 7 of Environment (Wales) Act 2016 are present within the study. The act lists the habitats of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats

Neath Port Talbot Local BAP Habitats additional to those listed above occur within the study site and include:

- **None**

3.3 PROTECTED AND SIGNIFICANT FLORA

Protected Plant Species

No plants species listed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were noted or suspected as occurring within the study site.

Plants of European Significance

No plants included on Annex i of the European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC were noted or suspected as occurring within the study site.

3.4 BATS

Only the large oak, with its multitude of bat a bat boxes was found to provide features that could be used as roost sites for bats although it is considered possible that southern boundary hedgerow is used a flight line for foraging bats. **Scoping Opinion: The site has already been assessed for bats and mitigation provided (Rob Colley, pers. comm.)**

3.5 PROTECTED BIRDS AND BIRD SPECIES OF SIGNIFICANCE

No species listed under Schedule 1 of the WCA were recorded or are suspected of occurring on site during the breeding season. Hedgerows and adjacent gardens provide suitable habitats for high concern bird species including Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*). **Scoping Opinion: It is possible breeding could be made by one or more species listed above in the remnant hedgerow material and these should not be disturbed during the bird nesting season without an inspection by a suitably qualified bird surveyor.**

3.6 REPTILES

No suitable habitat for reptiles was identified within the study site. **Scoping Opinion: Further survey for reptiles is considered unnecessary.**

3.7 AMPHIBIANS

No breeding habitat for amphibians was identified within the study site and foraging opportunities are largely restricted to marginal habitats on site. **Scoping Opinion: Further survey for reptiles is considered unnecessary.**

3.8 OTHER PROTECTED AND SIGNIFICANT FAUNA

The site does not support appropriate habitat for other protected species, UK BAP Priority Species or Section 7 Species of Principal Importance in Wales, such as Badger (*Meles meles*), Brown Hare (*Lepus europeus*), Water Vole (*Arvicola terrestris*), Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

and Marsh Fritillary butterfly (*Eurodryas aurinia*). **Scoping Opinion: Further survey for these taxa considered unnecessary**

3.9 NON-NATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES

No Japanese Knotweed or other notifiable weed species were identified during the survey. **Scoping Opinion: No measures necessary, but should this species be subsequently discovered on site, control measures should be undertaken following Environment Agency guidelines.**

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 A phase I habitat assessment and scoping survey of the development plot at Tre-Forgan Road (shown in Figure 1), was undertaken on 9th March 2022 by Barry Stewart. No significant habitats or species were identified that warrant specific mitigation.
- 4.2 The vegetation on site was found to be reasonably diverse with 112 species recorded. The communities were of predominantly made up of ruderal species and early colonists, with only a few remnants of semi-natural vegetation, these being restricted to the site boundaries.
- 4.3 Whilst no specific mitigation is proposed, the site provides opportunities for delivering wildlife enhancements and we would recommend developing better tree and shrub cover around the western and southern boundaries to make the existing bird and bat mitigation more effective.

Photo 1: Study area, looking south across development footprint and terrace cutting.



Photo 2: Study area, looking south-east down access track



Photo 3: Study area, looking north-east into south-western corner with small trees.



Photo 4: Study area, mature oak with bat and bird boxes



APPENDIX 1

VEGETATION

Colonists on cleared ground

American Willowherb	<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>	f
Annual Meadow-grass	<i>Poa annua</i>	o
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	r
Barren Strawberry	<i>Potentilla sterilis</i>	r
* Bicoloured Bryum	<i>Bryum dichotomum</i>	o
* Bird's-claw Beardmoss	<i>Barbula unguiculata</i>	r
Black Medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	r
* Bonfire Moss	<i>Funaria hygrometrica</i>	o
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	o
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	r
Broad-leaved Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	o
Broad-leaved Willowherb	<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	r
Bush Vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>	r
Butterfly-bush	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	r
Cat's-ear	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	r
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	r
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	o
* Common Feathermoss	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	r
Common Field-speedwell	<i>Veronica persica</i>	o
Common Figwort	<i>Scrophularia nodosa</i>	r
* Common Pottia	<i>Tortula truncata</i>	r
Common Sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	r
Common Vetch	<i>Vicia sativa subsp. segetalis</i>	o
Creeping Bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	r
Creeping Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	o
* Crimson-tuber Threadmoss	<i>Bryum rubens</i>	r
* Cylindric Beardmoss	<i>Didymodon insulanus</i>	r
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	r
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum agg.</i>	o
* False Beardmoss	<i>Didymodon fallax</i>	r
False Oat-Grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	r
Feverfew	<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>	r
Great Willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	r
* Green Pocketmoss	<i>Fissidens viridulus</i>	r
Hairy Bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>	lf
Hart's-tongue	<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>	r
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	r
Hoary Mustard	<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	r
* Hornschuch's Beardmoss	<i>Pseudocrossidium hornschruchianum</i>	r
Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra agg.</i>	r
* Lesser Bird's-claw Beardmoss	<i>Streblotrichum convolutum var. convolutum</i>	o
Lesser Trefoil	<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	o
* Nicholson's Beardmoss	<i>Didymodon nicholsonii</i>	r
Nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>	r
* Pale Glaucous Threadmoss	<i>Pohlia wahlenbergii var. wahlenbergii</i>	r
Pendulous Sedge	<i>Carex pendula</i>	o
Perennial Rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	r
Pineappleweed	<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>	r

Prickly Sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	r
Procumbent Pearlwort	<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	r
* Redshank	<i>Ceratodon purpureus</i>	r
Remote Sedge	<i>Carex remota</i>	r
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	r
Rosebay Willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	r
Rough Meadow-grass	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	r
* Rough-stalked Feathermoss	<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	o
* Rufous Beardmoss	<i>Bryoerythrophyllum ferruginascens</i>	r
	<i>Streblotrichum convolutum</i> var.	
* Sardinian Bird's-claw Beardmoss	<i>commutatum</i>	r
* Schreber's Forklet-moss	<i>Dicranella schreberiana</i>	r
Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	o
* Silver-moss	<i>Bryum argenteum</i>	r
Smooth Sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	o
Snapdragon	<i>Antirrhinum majus</i>	r
Sticky Mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>	o
* Swartz's Feathermoss	<i>Oxyrrhynchium hians</i>	r
* Taper-leaved Earthmoss	<i>Pleuridium acuminatum</i>	o
Thyme-leaved Speedwell	<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>	r
* Tree-moss	<i>Climacium dendroides</i>	r
Tufted Hair-grass	<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	r
* Variable Forklet-moss	<i>Dicranella varia</i>	o
Wavy Bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	r
White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	r
Wood Avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	r
Wood-sedge	<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	r
Yorkshire-fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	lf
Boundary trees and scrub		
Arrow Bamboo	<i>Pseudosasa japonica</i>	o
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	r
Austrian Pine / Corsican Pine	<i>Pinus nigra</i>	r
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	r
Cherry Laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	r
Goat Willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	r
Himalayan Honeysuckle	<i>Leycesteria formosa</i>	r
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	r
Horse-chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	r
Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	lf
Wilson's Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera nitida</i>	o
Boundary walls		
** a lichen	<i>Lepraria incana</i> sens. lat.	p
** a lichen	<i>Lepraria lobificans</i>	o
Atlantic Ivy	<i>Hedera hibernica</i>	lf
* Bifid Crestwort	<i>Lophocolea bidentata</i>	r
* Capillary Threadmoss	<i>Bryum capillare</i>	r
* Clustered Feathermoss	<i>Rhynchostegium confertum</i>	o
* Common Feathermoss	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	o
* Creeping Feathermoss	<i>Amblystegium serpens</i>	r
* Cylindric Beardmoss	<i>Didymodon insulanus</i>	o
* Fern-leaved Hookmoss	<i>Cratoneuron filicinum</i>	r
* Forked Veilwort	<i>Metzgeria furcata</i>	r

Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	o
Maidenhair Spleenwort	<i>Asplenium trichomanes subsp. quadrivalens</i>	f
Male-fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	r
* Rough-stalked Feathermoss	<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	f
	<i>Streblotrichum convolutum var.</i>	
* Sardinian Bird's-claw Beardmoss	<i>commutatum</i>	o
Snow-in-summer	<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	r
* Tender Feathermoss	<i>Rhynchostegiella tenella</i>	o
Epiphytes on oak and willow		
** a lichen	<i>Evernia prunastri</i>	p
** a lichen	<i>Parmelia sulcata</i>	p
** a lichen	<i>Parmotrema perlatum</i>	p
** a lichen	<i>Platismatia glauca</i>	p
** a lichen	<i>Ramalina farinacea</i>	p
** a lichen	<i>Usnea cornuta</i>	p
** a lichen	<i>Usnea subfloridana</i>	p
* Dilated Scalewort	<i>Frullania dilatata</i>	p
* Frizzled Pincushion	<i>Ulota phyllantha</i>	o
* Mamillate Plaitmoss	<i>Hypnum andoi</i>	f
* Whiskered Veilwort	<i>Metzgeria consanguinea</i>	r
* Bruch's Pincushion	<i>Ulota bruchii</i>	r
* Dilated Scalewort	<i>Frullania dilatata</i>	o
* Forked Veilwort	<i>Metzgeria furcata</i>	lf
BIRDS		
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	2
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	1
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	1
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	2
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	2
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	1
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	1
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	1