

Neath Abbey New Car Park

Technical Note to accompany Planning Application.

An Extended Phase-1 Habitat Survey was undertaken by Ecologist (Consultancy & Planning) Megan Price (BSc) in clear weather conditions on 12th June 2024. The survey is based on the standard Phase-1 survey technique (JNCC, 2010) which involved identifying and mapping the principal habitat types. In addition, any actual or potential protected/priority species are identified.



Figure 1- Site location shown outlined in red

The proposal is to turn the site outlined above into a car parking area for the Neath Abbey Ruins which are directly to the East of the site.

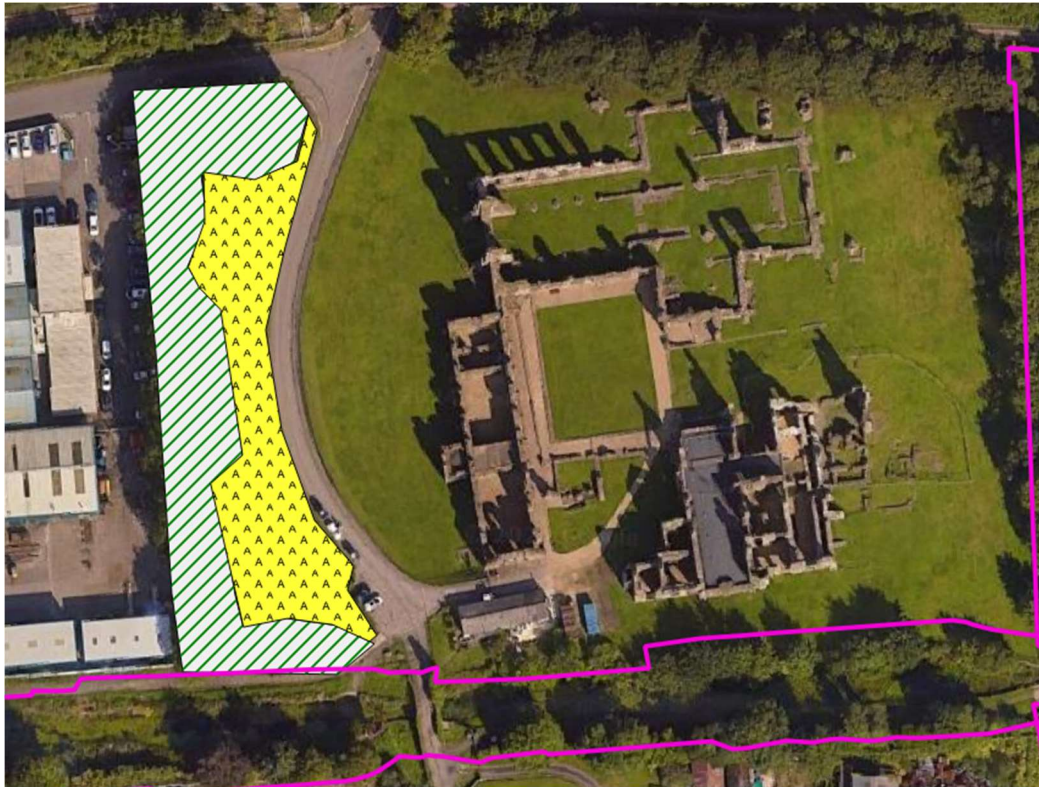


Figure 2 - Phase 1 Habitat Map of site

Key



- Amenity Grassland



- Broad leaved plantation woodland

Broad Leaved Woodland

The site consisted of broad-leaved woodland along the western edge – this was made of up mainly Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Lime (*Tilia tomentosa*), Red Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus carnea*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) trees. Stinking Iris (*Iris foetidissima*) was present underneath the lime trees to the N of the site.

These trees have been planted to screen the Abbey ruins from the large industrial unit to the west. The trees are planted in uniform rows quite close together and are of a similar age. Most of the ash trees on site are suffering from Ash dieback.

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Figure 3- Woodland to the west of the site.

Amenity Grassland

The rest of the site consists of amenity grassland that is mown on a very regular basis so is kept extremely short. Species present were white clover (*Trifolium repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum sp*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Greater Plantain (*Plantago major*), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*) and Perennial Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) amongst other common amenity grassland species.



Figure 4- Amenity grassland.

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Summary

The amenity grassland has low biodiversity value, there are several short flowering lawn species present which will provide resource for the local pollinator population.

Development of the grassland will be possible if an equal area to that which is lost is put into a meadow grassland mowing regime. This area needs to be close to the site and it will provide a better resource for invertebrates and wildlife than the current grassland. This will provide the biodiversity enhancement that is required.

The woodland on site should not be removed. Any trees that are removed will need to be replaced under a 3:1 ratio of a similar type and compensatory size (Planning Policy Wales 12). The Ash trees which have die back are also an important resource for dead wood so should be retained on site/ appropriate mitigation to replace the lost dead wood resource if these are to be removed (as well as the replacement planting).

Any landscaping planting to be carried out on site should consist of native and/or wildlife friendly species to provide a biodiversity enhancement for the scheme.