

Biodiversity Checklist: identifying need for ecological information / assessment

Tick all relevant boxes and send to BEO	Development Activity	Potential considerations
	1 Developments on, adjacent to, or likely to impact protected nature conservation sites (SAC, SPA, RAMSAR, SSSI, SINC or LWS), see MonMaps & SEWBRc data.	Protected sites
	2 Developments on, adjacent to, or likely to impact discreet or large areas of Habitat of Principal Importance for Biodiversity under S.42 of the NERC Act 2006 or LBAP habitat , for example- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrub, trees, woodland, parkland, & orchard. • Grasslands • Boundary features including hedgerows, verges, arable margins, and green lanes • Brownfield, open mosaic habitats on developed land, built environments. • Wetlands and still/running open water • Marine and coastal habitats 	Priority and LBAP habitat
Send Bats and Buildings Part A to applicant / agent	3 Conversion, alteration, renovation, modification, demolition, or removal of built structures and walls with particular attention to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern buildings adjacent to woodland/waterbodies • Modern buildings with features that can be used by bats • Buildings with weather boarding and hanging tiles • All pre-1914 buildings • Pre-1960 buildings within 200m of woodland/waterbodies • Agricultural buildings 	Bats
		Barn owl
		Birds
	4 Erecting single or multiple wind turbines or other renewable energy applications such as photo-voltaic	Bats Great Crested Newts Birds
	5 Proposed development which includes the modification, conversion or removal of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all tunnels, mines, kilns, ice-houses, adits, military fortifications, air raid shelters, cellars and similar underground ducts and structures; 	Bats Birds Great Crested Newts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all bridge structures, aqueducts and viaducts (especially over water and wet ground). 	Otters Water Vole Amphibians
6	Proposals involving lighting of buildings or floodlighting of green space (including Multi Use Game Areas) within 50m of woodland, water, field hedgerows and/or tree lines with obvious connectivity to woodland or water.	Bats Barn owl Birds
7	Proposals affecting woodland, or field hedgerows and/or trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water bodies.	Bats Birds Great Crested Newts Otters Dormouse Badger Plants
8	Proposed tree work (felling or lopping and/or development affecting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> old and veteran trees that are older than 100 years; trees with obvious holes, cracks or cavities, trees with a girth greater than 1m at chest height; 	Bats Birds Dormouse Plants
9	Proposals affecting gravel pits or quarries and natural cliff faces and rock outcrops with crevices, caves or swallets.	Bats Peregrine Birds Reptiles Plants
10	Major proposals within 500m of a pond or Minor proposals within 100m of pond (including Multi Use Game Areas) (Note: A major proposal is one that is more than 10 dwellings or more than 0.5ha or for non-residential development is more than 1000m ² floor area or more than 1ha).	Birds Great Crested Newts Otters Amphibians
11	Proposals affecting or within 200m of rivers, streams, canals, lakes, or other aquatic habitats.	Bats Birds Great Crested Newts

		Otters Badger Amphibians Plants
12	Proposals affecting 'derelict' land (brownfield sites), allotments and railway land.	Birds Great Crested Newts Badger Reptiles Amphibians
13	Proposal affecting rough grasslands possibly associated with overgrown gardens/scrub and similar habitats	Reptiles Birds
14	Proposed development affecting any buildings, structures, feature or locations where protected species are known to be present- check site history with applicant and SEWBRc data.	All species known to be present
15	Having considered the proposals against the information above, there are no likely implications to any protected/rare species sites or habitats on or adjacent to the site.	Where applicable seek biodiversity enhancements in line with MCC Policy

Exceptions for when survey may not be required:

- a) Following consultation by the applicant at the pre-application stage, the LPA has stated in writing that no ecological assessments are required.
- b) If it is clear that no protected species are present, the applicant should submit evidence with the planning application to demonstrate that such species are absent (e.g. this might be in the form of a letter or brief report from a suitably qualified and experienced person or relevant local nature conservation organisation).
- c) If it is clear that the proposal will not affect any protected species present, then only limited information needs to be submitted. This information should, however, (i) demonstrate that there will be no significant affect on any protected species present and (ii) include a statement acknowledging that the applicant is aware that it is a criminal offence to disturb or harm protected species should then be found or disturbed.
- d) *International and National Sites:* A survey and assessment will not be required where the applicant is able to provide copies of pre-application correspondence with Natural Resources Wales, where the latter confirms in writing that they are satisfied that the proposed development will not affect any statutory sites designated for their national or international importance.
- e) *Regional and Local Sites and Priority Habitats:* A survey and assessment will not be required where the applicant is able to provide copies of pre-application correspondence with the Local Planning Authority's ecologist, or ecological advisor and/or the local Wildlife Trust that they are satisfied that the proposed development will not affect any regional or local sites designated for their local nature conservation importance or any other priority habitats or listed features.

SUPPORTING GUIDANCE NOTES ON MEETING MCC REQUIREMENTS FOR BIODIVERSITY

Monmouthshire County Council planning authority has a duty to consider the conservation of biodiversity when determining a planning application; this includes having regard to the safeguard of species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 or the Badgers Act 1992. Where a proposed development is likely to affect designated sites, habitats or protected species, the applicant may be required to submit further information, assessments or surveys in this regard. Exceptions to when a survey is not required are explained above.

All survey should be undertaken and prepared by competent persons with suitable qualifications and experience. Many ecological surveys are seasonally constrained or are sub-optimal at certain times of year. All surveys should be undertaken in suitable conditions using nationally recognised survey guidelines/methods¹.

The survey should be informed by the results of a search for ecological data from the South East Wales Biological Record Centre (SEWBRc) and where appropriate, the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the relevant local group or organisation.

Whether informed by desk-study or site survey, assessments must identify and describe potential development impacts likely to impact protected species and/or habitats identified by the survey (these should include both direct and indirect effects both during and post construction). Where an impact is identified proposed mitigation and compensatory measures must be submitted to show:

- How alternative designs or locations have been considered;
- How adverse effects will be avoided wherever possible;
- How unavoidable impacts will be mitigated or reduced;
- How impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated will be compensated.

In addition, proposals should enhance, restore or expand habitats of value to biodiversity. Assessment should also give an indication whether there will be a net loss or gain as a result of the proposals.

An ecological survey and assessment may form part of a wider Environmental Impact Assessment.

¹ Survey guidelines published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and links to accepted survey methods include

- Guidelines on Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
<http://www.cieem.net/guidance-on-preliminary-ecological-appraisal-gpea->
- other species and habitat specific survey methods can be found in *Sources of Survey Methods*
<http://www.cieem.net/sources-of-survey-methods-sosm>