

Ecology/Nature Conservation meeting with Newport City Council

Date: 27 May 2015, 10.00am
Location: Newport Civic Centre

Attendees:
Katie Godfrey (KG) Newport City Council - Ecology Officer
Hannah Corcoran (HC) Hyder
Keith Jones (KJ) RPS

Apologies: None.

Item/Action	Lead	Date
1 KG asked for clarification of some points relating to the programme and dates/locations of public exhibitions arising from the ELG meeting on 11 May. KJ explained that submission of the Draft Orders would be in March 2016, with the Public Inquiry in winter 2016/2017, and subject to a positive decision construction would be expected to commence in spring 2018. KG queried how information about the scheme would be made available to the public. HC explained that there would be public exhibitions. Further information detailing the arrangements will be provided.	HC	
2 KG asked about the general approach to ecology surveys. KJ explained that Arup had carried out a wide range of surveys for the Welsh Government in 2014 but did not have access to all land. RPS had reviewed the survey reports and discussed the requirements for further surveys with NRW. The additional surveys were now in progress. These would be set out in the EIA Scoping report which would be published shortly.		
3 KG explained that the Newport SINC were currently being reviewed. The Council had a general requirement for development affecting SINC that habitats would be replaced at a ratio of loss:replacement of 1:1.5.		
4 KG explained that all ancient woodland in Newport was considered to have SINC status so the same replacement criteria would apply.		
5 KG referred to eels in the levels and their status as a Severn Estuary Ramsar site feature. KJ confirmed that this would be considered in the EIA and similar measures would be incorporated in new sluices as were being installed by the IDB/NRW.		
6 KG asked if the River Usk Bridge would be lit. KJ said this was unlikely but would confirm.	KJ	
7 KG referred to the proposed demolition of the vicarage in Magor and asked whether this had potential as a bat roost. KJ confirmed that this did contain a bat roost and would confirm status.	KJ	
8 The Newport BAP was discussed and KG advised that this was under review. She agreed to provide a copy of the draft revised version.	KG	

Deleted: 2

M4 Corridor around Newport



9	KJ asked if the River Usk Strategy was still current policy. KG advised that it had not been replaced.		
10	The Living Levels Project was discussed. It was agreed that it would be useful to meet with the RSPB and Gwent Wildlife Trust (who were partners in the project with Newport and NRW) to discuss how the M4 Project might affect the project proposals, and the extent to which it may be able to contribute to the project objectives. KJ explained that RPS was intending to meet with RSPB and GWT. KG explained that the project was very focussed on the levels to the east of the Usk and Newport CC was keen to provide more benefits on the west side of the Usk which was perceived to be more difficult. KG explained that the funding application for the Living Levels Project was about to be submitted and she would investigate whether the technical submission could be made available.	KG	
11	KJ referred to the various Newport BAP habits and species which were likely to be affected by the project. Some specific points arising from this discussion were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) KG advised that the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Urban & Brownfield Group were due to visit Newport Docks shortly. 2) KG advised that Sinead Lynch of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust was currently involved with a project mapping bee habitat connections. In addition, Sinead would be the most appropriate point of contact in relation to the shrill carder bee in the Levels. KJ would contact her. 3) KJ asked if the report of the Otter Habitat Survey of the River Usk carried out in 2006/2007 was available. KG would investigate. 	KJ KG	