

Ecological Assessment

Subject	Penallta Colliery, Penallta	Date	12/02/26
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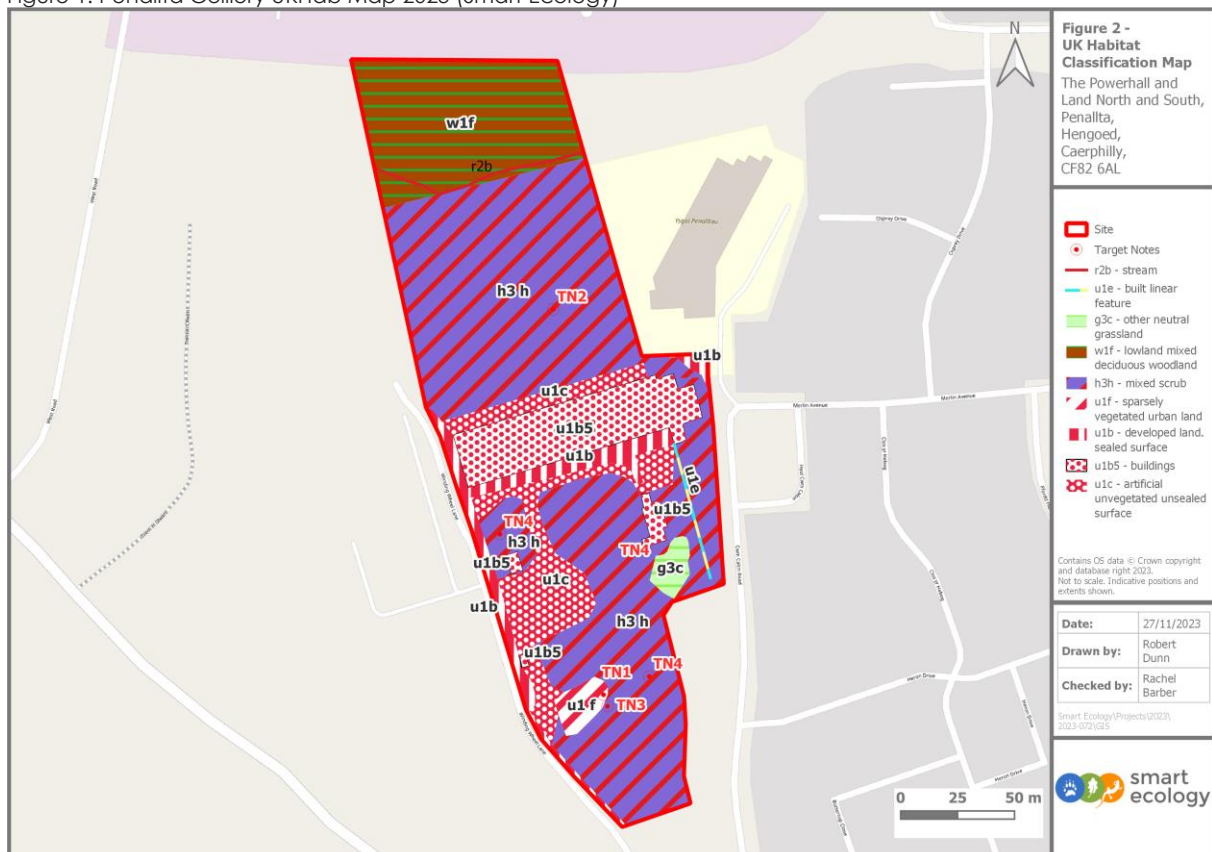
Introduction

Power Hall Ltd of are seeking planning consent to develop a redundant colliery site in Penallta in Hengoed (approximate OS grid reference: ST 13971 95840), where the following works are proposed:

- Conversion of the building 1 - Power Hall into mixed commercial and residential units.
- Construction of new dwellings on Site.
- Landscape and ecological enhancements.

In 2023 a PEA of the Site had been completed by Smart Ecology. The UKHab map of the Site in 2023 can be seen in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1. Penallta Colliery UKHab Map 2023 (Smart Ecology)



The PEA concluded that the site had the confirmed presence of or the potential to support the following notable and protected species:

- Amphibians
- Badgers
- Bats
- Birds
- Hazel dormouse
- Invasive non-native species
- Otters
- Reptiles

The Smart Ecology PEA recommended that a suite of surveys should be completed for the taxa cited above to confirm their presence or absence and to inform appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures.

In November 2025 Daniel Ahern Ecology (now known as Wessex Ecology) was instructed by Power Hall Ltd to complete a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and associated notable and protected species surveys. The UKHab map of the Site in 2026 can be seen in Figure 2, below.

Figure 2. Penallta Colliery UKHab Map 2025 (Wessex Ecology)



Survey revisions between 2023 and 2026

The Wessex Ecology PEA, 2025, largely agreed with the findings of the Smart Ecology PEA, 2023, with the following exceptions, where it is not believe necessary to undertake any further survey work:

- Hazel dormouse

Hazel dormouse potentially inhabit established areas of scrub and woodland with a scrub understorey. The areas of woodland with a scrub understory which were present on Site in 2026 were composed of immature trees and gappy clumps of scrub species. The young nature of this habitat indicates that the Site had recently, in the last 10 years, been cleared of all woody species and the habitat which was recorded in 2026 was re-establishing after this previous removal.

The level of disturbance which the habitat clearance would have caused and the resulting absence of this woodland with a scrub understory habitat would have resulted in the Site being sub-optimal for hazel dormouse.

Survey results 2025 – Wessex Ecology

The following notable and protected species surveys have been completed or are ongoing:

- Bats – static monitoring in building 1, the Power Hall between October 2025 and February 2026. Ground level tree assessment of all trees on Site.
- Badgers – a badger survey of the suitable woodland and scrub in the northern part of the Site.

Badger survey results

Tracks left by this species were recorded within the northern woodland on Site, mainly around the stream. No evidence of a sett was recorded within the Site. Mitigation measures for this species will be set out in the ecological impact assessment informed by all survey findings.

Bat survey results

Building 1 – Power hall - no bats have been recorded using the building to roost, commute or forage between October 2025 and February 2026. These results confirm the this structure does not host a hibernation roost for bats. Surveys will continue until July 2026 to determine whether bats are using the building at other times of year.

Woodland on Site – within the woodland and individual trees across the Site the following were recorded to have potential Roost Features (PRF):

- Oak – *Quercus robur*, NGR ST 13939 95675. Assessed to have MODERATE bat roost potential based on the number of PRF recorded in the main stem and secondary stems.

Further survey work planned for 2026

The following notable and protected species surveys will take place through 2026:

- Amphibians – great crested newt eDNA surveys of ponds within 250m of the Site boundary – April to June 2026
- Bats – bat emergence surveys of building 1, 2 & 3, the Power Hall, Winding Tower 1 and Winding Tower 2 and the oak tree (NGR ST 13939 95675) – May to June 2026

- Birds – to be completed March to June 2026
- Hazel dormouse – not to be completed as the Site is assessed to not provide suitable habitat for this species.
- Invasive non-native species – to be completed June 2026
- Otters – to be completed March to June 2026
- Reptiles – to be completed in April 2026

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) will be completed in June 2026, this will set out all of the ecological survey results, the nature of the proposed development and provide mitigation and enhancement measures to ensure the development results in a net positive outcome for habitats and wildlife within the Site.

NB: The survey schedule may be reviewed should the persistent anti-social behaviour within the Site make continuing with surveys too significant a risk on a health and safety basis to Wessex Ecology staff. Ongoing consultation with the Planning Authority will support a flexible and proactive approach to data gathering to inform the EclA.