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Powys
SY10 0BP

Planning Services
Powys County Hall
Spa Road East
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

25th March 2024

Dear Planning Officers,

RE: Application for permission to create new wildlife ponds and seasonal scrapes at Ty Gwyn, SY10 0BP

Please find enclosed my application to create a series of eight new wildlife ponds and seasonal scrapes on the field adjacent to my home at Ty Gwyn, SY10 0BP. My partner Fiona Slater and I are working hard to improve the quality of the land for wildlife with a view to increasing biodiversity as much as possible. As the council has acknowledged, we are facing an ecological emergency and we would like to do our small part to address this.

To inform the work, we commissioned an ecological survey of the land last year from Oakwood Ecology, which I have attached to this application. One of the key recommendations of this was that “the fastest way to boost biodiversity at Ty Gwyn would be to construct some new wetland habitats”, including “a series of new ponds and scrapes within the wetter areas of the site. Some of these ponds can be designed to permanently retain water, whereas others could dry out to various extents to provide a drawdown zone that is attractive to some specialist plant and animal species”. The proposed ponds and scrapes fulfil this, with a variety of planned depths and sizes to maximise the available habitat.

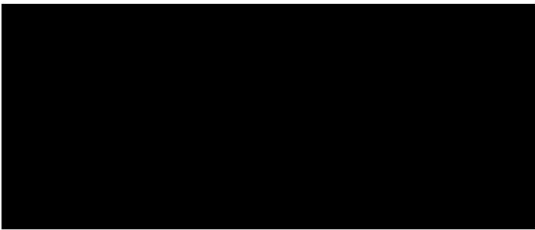
The new Welsh Government Sustainable Farming Scheme proposals also make it clear that “[f]armland ponds and temporary scrapes (shallow pools which dry out most summers) are important habitat for wetland wildlife in the agricultural landscape”. As well as biodiversity benefits, ponds and scrapes “play a valuable role in intercepting water to help with natural flood management...help remove pollutants from surface waters, including sediment, phosphorus and nitrogen...[and] absorb carbon”. With the introduction of the new Sustainable Farming Scheme next year, farmers will be encouraged and supported to create new ponds and scrapes much like those proposed at Ty Gwyn¹.

1 <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-07/sustainable-farming-scheme-outline-proposals-for-2025.pdf>

The land adjacent to Ty Gwyn is naturally very wet, and other unimproved land nearby retains this character, with large areas of marshy ground. The land at Ty Gwyn has been extensively drained in the past to provide sheep and cattle grazing, but the land remains very wet for much of the year and is still poor quality pasture. Since the proposed ponds and scrapes are situated on the wettest areas of the site, they will help restore much of the original character of the land and its original wildlife value without compromising much of the grazing potential or removing any good quality pasture from production.

I hope, with your approval, that the new ponds will help create a rich and varied tapestry of habitats on the site, and help us bring back much of the biodiversity that has been lost at Ty Gwyn, preserving the landscape and its wildlife for future generations.

Yours faithfully,



Alan Bridger