

Natural Resources and Biodiversity Impact Assessment

The Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill

Background

We have carried out an assessment of the impacts on biodiversity, as set out under Section 6 of the [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#). As a public authority, the Welsh Government must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions.

In addition, the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) requires us to adopt sustainable development principles in the development of our policies. These principles include considering long-term implications, collaborating with people, communities, and each other, acting to prevent problems, such as climate change and take a more integrated approach.

Natural Resources Policy

The introduction of legislation to prohibit greyhound racing in Wales will not directly deliver any of the national priorities in the [Natural Resource Policy](#). It is not intended to directly affect the environment. However, there may be secondary impacts from its introduction.

The only racecourse in Wales is [Valley Greyhound Stadium](#) in Ystrad Mynach, which sits within Caerphilly County Borough Council. The ban will impact the future of the stadium which is situated on a large brown field site within a floodplain.

The decision about what happens to the land, as a consequence of the ban will be one for the landowner and the Planning Division of Caerphilly County Borough Council. Therefore, it will be subject to rigorous assessment of its impacts on all aspects of natural resources and biodiversity.

Biodiversity

The Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill does not directly impact biodiversity or natural resources policy. As stated earlier, the stadium is a brown field site on a floodplain. However, the Bill and any prohibition does not provide any decision on demolition or otherwise changing the use of the site.

There may well be positive effects for biodiversity if the flood risk is considered too great for any other form of development. Similarly, there could be positive impacts should less people travel to the area for events. However, the future use of the land, should it be sold and/or re-developed will be a decision for owners of Valley Stadium and Caerphilly County Borough Council.

We have reviewed the most up to date knowledge sources to inform this assessment. The Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill does not impact on the species and habitats of principal importance as listed and published under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act. The [State of Natural Resources Report](#) and the [area statements](#) published by NRW are expected to apply when the local authority is asked to make decisions about the land.

Biodiversity records are available through the [Local Environment Record Centres](#), [Atlas of Living Wales](#) or [DataMap Wales](#).

As the purpose of this legislation is to ban greyhound racing in Wales, there will be no impact on the support of citizen-science initiatives or monitoring schemes, nor will it collect any biodiversity data. However, there is the potential for the local authority to use these schemes to influence the current or future landowner to support biodiversity action. The cumulative effect of nudging and influencing businesses over the years could help to build capacity for, and knowledge of, biodiversity action in business leaders. This could contribute to objective 1 of the [Nature Recovery Action Plan](#) for Wales

Climate Change

We have considered the carbon impact of this proposal. We have not quantified the emissions associated with it because we expect them to fall below the threshold for a quantitative analysis. We have high confidence in our assessment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

A [strategic environmental assessment](#) (SEA) is not required for this policy. The [European Directive 2001/42/EC](#) assesses the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. All plans and programmes in the UK which fall within the scope of the Directive should be assessed for major building or development projects.

Article 3(2) makes an SEA mandatory for plans and programmes which are prepared for town and country planning or land use. The decision we are proposing does not relate directly to any form of future development related to town and country planning and land use. Neither does it set a framework for any future development consents and will not have a significant direct impact on the environment.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

A habitats regulations assessment is not required as the Bill will not impact on the Natura 2000 European protected sites network.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Bill is not a project requiring development consent and therefore the various regulations which require environmental impact assessment do not apply.