

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT:

**ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT DETACHED DWELLING – LAND AT 40 MOUNT PLEASANT,
HEOLGERRIG, MERTHYR TYDFIL**

**On behalf of
Mr. J. Slocombe**

UPDATED VERSION – JUNE 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) supports the full planning application for the erection of a replacement detached dwelling and associated works at 40 Mount Pleasant, Heolgerrig, Merthyr Tydfil.
- 1.2 The statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Wales (PPW Edition 12), Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and the Welsh Government guidance contained within the Ministerial Letter to Heads of Planning dated 11 October 2023 relating to Green Infrastructure Statements and the stepwise approach.
- 1.3 The purpose of this statement is to identify existing green infrastructure assets associated with the site, assess the impact of the proposed development upon those assets and demonstrate how the development has followed the stepwise approach of avoiding, minimising, restoring and enhancing green infrastructure and biodiversity.
- 1.4 The statement should be read alongside the submitted planning application drawings, ecological assessment and supporting information.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) describes green infrastructure as ‘the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places’. PPW requires a stronger emphasis on taking a proactive approach to green infrastructure including the requirement of proportionate green infrastructure statements with planning applications.
- 2.2 The letter to Heads of Planning from the Minister for Climate Change dated 11th October 2023 states that a green infrastructure statement should demonstrate a stepwise approach has been taken. Figure 1 below provides an overview of the stepwise approach included in the annex to the letter referred to above.

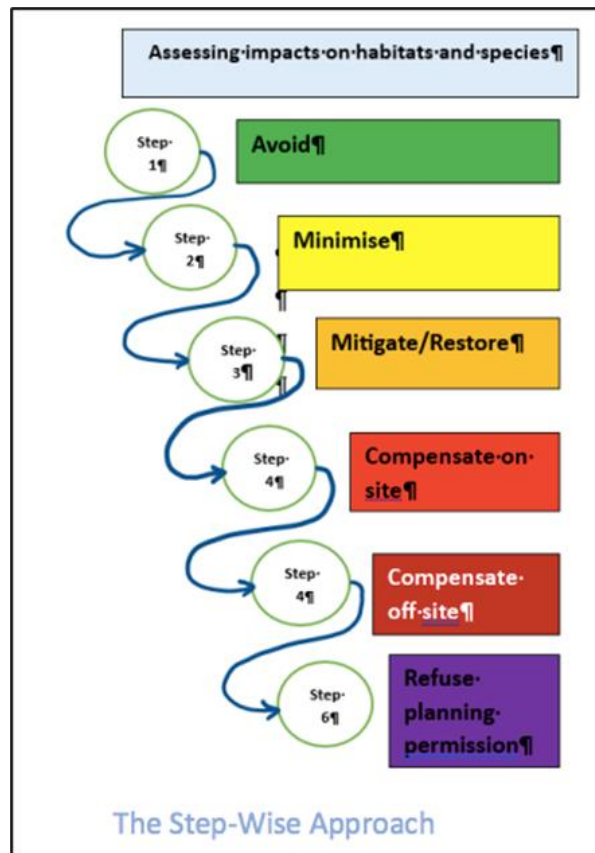


Figure 1: Extract of Stepwise Approach flow chart from the Letter to Heads of Planning (11/10/2023)

3.0 APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

3.1 The Site consists of an existing flat roofed single storey detached dwelling set within its own curtilage. The existing dwellings footprint is roughly square with a single storey extension to the north west corner. The dwelling benefits from a garden area to the north and south, as well as a detached single garage located in the south-west corner of the curtilage.

3.2 The boundaries of the Site are defined by existing well maintained hedgerows along the northern, eastern and western extents of the Site, and a wall/timber fencing along the southern boundary. The existing property is set above road level and the Site rises gently from east to west. The Site is also bounded by highways along its western and

eastern boundaries, with residential properties located to the south. To the north of the Site is a triangular parcel of land occupied by a detached garage structure and hedgerows.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing bungalow and the construction of a replacement detached dwelling together with associated access works, retaining walls, landscaping, parking and external amenity areas.
- 4.2 Due to the topography of the site, retaining walls are required to facilitate the development and create suitable external amenity areas around the proposed dwelling.
- 4.3 The amended plans submitted during the course of the application process provide additional detail regarding the retaining wall arrangements and associated boundary treatments.

5.0 IDENTIFIED ON-SITE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

- 5.1 The application site currently contains a range of green infrastructure assets associated with its residential garden setting.
- 5.2 The principal green infrastructure features comprise the existing boundary hedgerows and areas of garden vegetation. These features provide visual amenity benefits and contribute towards local ecological connectivity within the wider urban area.
- 5.3 An Ecological Assessment has been undertaken in support of the planning application. The Ecological Assessment identifies the site as comprising buildings, overgrown garden habitat and boundary hedgerows.
- 5.4 The ecological survey identified no evidence of bats roosting within the existing

dwelling and concluded that the building does not support a bat roost. The survey also identified opportunities for ecological enhancement through habitat creation, planting and the provision of integrated biodiversity features.

- 5.5 There are no ponds, watercourses or other significant ecological features within the site. There are no statutory ecological designations located within the application site.

6.0 IDENTIFIED LOCALISED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

- 6.1 The application site is located within an established residential area where green infrastructure is primarily provided through private gardens, boundary vegetation and incidental green spaces.
- 6.2 The surrounding residential gardens and boundary vegetation create a network of interconnected habitats that provide opportunities for birds, bats and invertebrates.
- 6.3 The retained vegetation around the application site will continue to contribute towards this wider ecological network.

7.0 APPLICATION OF THE STEPWISE APPROACH

Avoid

- 7.1 The design process has sought to avoid unnecessary impacts on existing green infrastructure wherever possible. Existing vegetation along the northern and eastern boundaries will be retained. Existing walls and landscape features will also be retained where practicable.

Minimise

- 7.2 The amended proposals have been designed to minimise impacts on existing vegetation and ecological features. The western boundary hedgerow will require

removal to facilitate the construction of the retaining wall and associated engineering works. The removal of this hedgerow is considered unavoidable given the significant changes in site levels and engineering requirements necessary to safely develop the site.

- 7.3 The loss is limited to a relatively small area within the overall site and does not result in the fragmentation of a wider ecological corridor. Construction impacts will be minimised through good site management practices and protection of retained vegetation during the construction phase.

Restore

- 7.4 The loss of the western hedgerow will be compensated through replacement native planting elsewhere within the site. New landscaped planting areas will be established around the retaining walls and within available soft landscaped areas.
- 7.5 The development therefore provides an opportunity to restore habitat value within the site through the introduction of new native planting and species-rich vegetation.

Enhance

- 7.6 The proposed development provides opportunities to significantly enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure value compared to the existing situation.
- 7.7 The development will incorporate a range of biodiversity enhancement measures, including native planting, wildflower grassland creation, integrated bird and bat features and biodiversity-led drainage solutions.
- 7.8 These measures will provide habitat types and ecological features that are currently absent from the site.

8.0 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

- 8.1 Whilst the development will result in the loss of a section of western boundary hedgerow, the amended site layout demonstrates that sufficient opportunities remain within the application site to deliver meaningful green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements.
- 8.2 At this stage a detailed landscaping scheme has not been prepared. However, the submitted plans clearly identify a number of opportunities for soft landscaped areas, retained planting areas and opportunities associated with the proposed retaining walls and external amenity spaces that are capable of accommodating additional planting and biodiversity enhancement measures.
- 8.3 The submitted plans also identify areas capable of accommodating species-rich grassland and wildflower planting. Such areas would provide additional foraging opportunities for pollinating insects and contribute towards overall ecological enhancement within the site.
- 8.4 In addition to soft landscaping opportunities, the proposed dwelling has been specifically designed to accommodate integrated biodiversity enhancement features in the forms of integrated bat tubes and bird nesting features. These measures will provide permanent nesting and roosting opportunities that are not currently available within the existing dwelling.
- 8.5 The proposed development also incorporates permeable surfacing and will be subject to separate Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) approval. The detailed drainage design process will provide further opportunities to incorporate multifunctional SuDS features that contribute towards biodiversity enhancement, climate resilience and water management objectives.
- 8.6 Whilst the precise details of the landscaping and biodiversity enhancement measures can be controlled by way of landscaping condition and biodiversity enhancement condition, the application site clearly contains sufficient space and opportunity to

accommodate additional native planting, species-rich grassland, ecological enhancements and biodiversity-led drainage features.

8.7 Accordingly, it is considered both reasonable and appropriate for the detailed landscaping and biodiversity enhancement proposals to be secured through a planning condition requiring the submission and approval of a comprehensive landscaping and biodiversity enhancement scheme prior to the commencement of development.

8.8 Such a scheme could include, but would not necessarily be limited to:

- Native species planting;
- Replacement hedgerow planting where appropriate;
- Species-rich grassland and wildflower planting;
- Pollinator-friendly planting;
- Integrated bird nesting features;
- Integrated bat roosting features;
- Biodiversity enhancements associated with the approved SuDS design; and
- Long-term management and maintenance measures.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement has been prepared in accordance with Planning Policy Wales and the Welsh Government stepwise approach. The development has sought to avoid and minimise impacts upon existing green infrastructure wherever possible.

9.2 Whilst the proposal requires the removal of a section of western boundary hedgerow, the loss is unavoidable due to engineering and site level constraints and will be appropriately compensated through replacement planting and biodiversity enhancement measures.

- 9.3 The development provides opportunities for significant ecological enhancement through native planting, species-rich grassland creation, integrated bird and bat features and biodiversity-led SuDS measures. Sufficient space remains within the site to accommodate these enhancements and the final details can be secured through appropriately worded planning conditions.
- 9.4 This GIS and the proposed enhancements are considered proportionate to the application proposals and can be secured via planning condition.