



Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Merthyr Interchange Link

Green Infrastructure Statement

2025/02/20

2025UK374148 – MIL-ESA-XX-XX-RP-A-000221



Index

INDEX..... 1

FIGURES 1

TABLES..... 1

1.0 DOCUMENT CONTROL..... 2

1.1 DOCUMENT REVISIONS 2

1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2

1.3 DISCLAIMER..... 2

2.0 INTRODUCTION..... 3

2.1 BACKGROUND TO GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE..... 3

2.2 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT 3

2.3 BACKGROUND TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT..... 3

3.0 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (EXISTING & PROPOSED)..... 4

3.1 EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE..... 4

3.2 PROPOSED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE 4

3.3 COMPENSATION & ENHANCEMENT MEASURES..... 6

3.4 PLANNING POLICIES CONSIDERED IN THE PROPOSAL..... 6

3.4.1 Development Plan 7

4.0 BUILDING WITH NATURE STANDARDS FRAMEWORK..... 9

4.1 CORE STANDARDS..... 9

4.2 SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT AND HOW IT MEETS THE CORE STANDARDS 11

5.0 STEPWISE APPROACH 12

5.1 SUMMARY 13

5.2 MANAGEMENT PLAN 13

Figures

Figure 1 - Proposal Overview..... 5

Figure 2 - Stepwise Approach Diagram..... 12

Tables

Table 1 - Stepwise Approach 12

1.0 Document Control

Project Number	2025UK374148
Project Title	Merthyr Interchange Link
Client Name	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Document Name	Green Infrastructure Statement
Document Number	MIL-ESA-XX-XX-RP-A-000221
File Name	MIL-ESA-XX-XX-RP-A-000221_Green Infrastructure Statement
Date of Revision	20/02/2025
Revision	P01
Status	S2 – Suitable for Information
Classification	CONFIDENTIAL

1.1 Document Revisions

Revision	Amendments	Issue Date	Auth/ Chk/ App
P01	First Issue	21/02/2025	EBB/ EBB/ MGT

1.2 Executive Summary

This document has been prepared on behalf of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council for the proposed redevelopment of the Merthyr Lower High Street into Merthyr Interchange Link.

The document demonstrates the suitability of the proposal for the site and its setting. It also explores how the local and historic context has influenced the design proposal. The report includes the assessment of the existing green infrastructure on site (none), and what is being proposed to be put in place.

This project presents the opportunity to introduce an open and inviting route from the High Street to the Train Station, across a gently sloping site. The Merthyr Interchange Link Project will remove select buildings to allow for a new access route. The additional access route will be accessible by pedestrians and cyclists to provide a vibrant and lively public realm. This will contribute to the much-needed regeneration of the town and perform an important role for the local community and visitors of Merthyr Tydfil.

1.3 Disclaimer

General Disclaimer

WSP UK Limited makes no warranties or guarantees, actual or implied, in relation to this report, or the ultimate commercial, technical, economic, or financial effect on the project to which it relates, and bears no responsibility or liability related to its use other than as set out in the contract under which it was supplied.

2.0 Introduction

Green Infrastructure Statement for Lower High Street Public Realm Scheme, Merthyr Tydfil

The Merthyr interchange Link (Lower High Street) public realm scheme in Merthyr Tydfil aims to enhance the urban environment by integrating green infrastructure elements that promote sustainability, biodiversity, and community well-being. This project is a collaborative initiative between Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, the Welsh Government, and Transport for Wales, as part of a broader strategic masterplan to revitalise the town centre.

2.1 Background to Green Infrastructure

Planning Policy Wales describes green infrastructure as a network of natural and semi-natural elements, such as green spaces, rivers, and lakes, that connect various locations. These elements can operate at different scales: on a landscape level, green infrastructure may include entire ecosystems like wetlands, waterways, and mountains. Locally, it could consist of parks, fields, public pathways, allotments, cemeteries, and gardens. On a smaller scale, individual urban features such as street trees, hedgerows, roadside verges, and green roofs/walls can all contribute to the green infrastructure network.

Recently, there have been updates to Chapter 6 of the National Planning Policy, and Planning Policy Wales version 12 was released in February 2024. Now, all planning applications must include a green infrastructure statement detailing how green infrastructure is integrated into the development plans.

2.2 Green Infrastructure Assessment

The purpose of a Green Infrastructure Assessment (GIA) is to ensure that all aspects of green infrastructure are coordinated from the beginning. This includes biodiversity, trees, soils, landscaping, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), amenities, access, recreation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, all integrated into a scheme that provides multiple benefits. Ideally, a GIA should serve as a strategy that guides the design and layout of a scheme, rather than retrospectively justifying its functionality.

2.3 Background to Proposed Development

Merthyr Tydfil is situated at the northern end of the Taff Valley, South Wales, approximately 30 kilometres to the Northwest of central Cardiff. The town centre stands on the East bank of the River Taff surrounded by a mountainous landscape setting. Historic road and rail links run through and into the town centre, including the Taff Valley Branch Railway Line, terminating at Merthyr Tydfil. The town contains the historic commercial, religious and administrative centre of the industrial district that developed between the mid-18th and early 20th centuries. The existing Train Station is located centrally to the town centre, however disconnected to the High Street and Bus Station. The arrival and way-finding is unclear and obscure. There is an opportunity to improve arrival to the town centre by supporting a space for activity that animates the area upon arrival to the town. The scheme will open up the High Street connection and will be centred around the inclusion of a high-quality Public Realm that unites and integrates the whole with the existing historic High Street. The proposals have been developed with the town centre regeneration of Merthyr Tydfil as its focus, in alignment with the Merthyr Tydfil Regeneration 15 Year Masterplan (2035), prepared by The Urbanists and Mott MacDonald.

3.0 Green Infrastructure (Existing & Proposed)

3.1 Existing Green Infrastructure

In recent years there have been multiple ecological surveys undertaken on site and in the surrounding area including:

- GC3964-RED-74-XX-RP-L-0003 – Roof Nesting Birds Survey Report July 2023,
- GC3964-RED-74-XX-RP-L-0004 – Bat Survey Report July 2023,
- UK-WSP-70122512-RED-74-XX-RP-L-0001 – Ecology Technical Note September 2024.

The surveys and technical note concluded that there was no bird or bat roosting/nesting within the proposed project boundary.

Further to the survey findings, there is zero external green space or planting for any of three buildings that have been proposed for demolition. External space to the rear of all three properties is very limited due to add-on extensions, all external space has been hard paved to create areas for parking or bin storage. All rainwater that lands within the site boundary is currently directly towards a combined sewer.

It is clear that from on site observations and professional surveys conducted the current green infrastructure on site is zero and there are no green features that act as habitats or attracted bird, bat or insect populations.

3.2 Proposed Green Infrastructure

The proposed design to replace the three disused buildings is to create a green open public realm space that links the train station directly to High Street. There are several key features of the proposed design that contribute and enhance the existing site include:

- **Green Corridors:** Establishment of green corridors that connect High Street to Masonic Street, providing continuous habitats for wildlife and enhancing the visual appeal of the urban landscape. Tree pits will also be installed and will offer a haven for birds breaking up a previously build-up area of the High Street.
- **Public Green Spaces:** Creation of new parks and green areas that offer recreational opportunities and improve the overall quality of life for residents.
- **Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS):** Implementation of SuDS to manage stormwater, reduce flooding, and improve water quality. This includes the use of sunken bio-retention areas that help to capture and filter rainwater, promoting natural infiltration and reducing surface runoff. The sunken, wet planters also offer an alternative habitat that will be enjoyed by different wildlife and plants to the traditional raised planters. All paving in the proposed scheme is also permeable.
- **Native Planting:** Use of native Welsh plant species to ensure ecological compatibility and support local biodiversity. Raised and ground level planters will be installed throughout the public realm, featuring a variety of native plants that enhance the aesthetic appeal and provide habitats for local wildlife.
- **Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure:** Development of safe and accessible routes for pedestrians and cyclists, promoting active travel and reducing carbon emissions.

These key features of the proposed design have all been incorporated to meet planning policy guidance and to allow the scheme to hit its key objectives which include:

Objectives:

1. **Enhance Biodiversity:** The scheme will introduce a variety of native Welsh plant species to create green spaces that support local wildlife. This includes the planting of trees, shrubs, and ground cover that provide habitats for birds, insects, and other fauna.
2. **Promote Sustainable Transportation:** The project will improve pedestrian and cycling routes, encouraging active travel and reducing reliance on motor vehicles. This aligns with the Welsh Government's target of achieving 45% of journeys by walking, cycling, and public transport by 2040.
3. **Improve Air Quality and Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect:** The introduction of green spaces and tree canopies will help to filter pollutants from the air and provide shade, thereby mitigating the urban heat island effect and creating a more comfortable environment for residents and visitors.
4. **Enhance Aesthetic and Recreational Value:** The green infrastructure will create attractive and inviting public spaces that encourage social interaction and recreational activities. This includes the development of plazas, green areas, and an active riverside.
5. **Support Climate Resilience:** The scheme will incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff, reduce flood risk, and enhance water quality. This will contribute to the town's resilience to climate change impacts.

Further details on the design of the proposed scheme (submitted with the planning application) can be found in:

MIL-ESA-XX-XX-RP-A-000010 - MERTHYR INTERCHANGE LINK DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

For applicable design information and drawings, please refer particularly to Section 4: STAGE 3 REPORT
APPENDIX

Drainage,
Highways,
Ecology Technical Note,
Architectural.



Figure 1 - Proposal Overview

3.3 Compensation & Enhancement Measures

Through the most recent site survey (September 2024), it was established there is no bird or bat roosting at Monique's, Peacocks or British Red Cross. Based on survey evidence and the lack of bird nesting and bat roosting, there would be no requirement for compensation features to be included in designs. Bat and bird boxes recommended in the below referenced reports are purely enhancement opportunities which could be installed post-completion.

- GC3964-RED-74-XX-RP-L-0003 – Roof Nesting Birds Survey Report July 2023,
- GC3964-RED-74-XX-RP-L-0004 – Bat Survey Report July 2023,
- UK-WSP-70122512-RED-74-XX-RP-L-0001 – Ecology Technical Note September 2024.

Please note the Bird and Bat surveys carried out in 2023 cover a larger area than the current proposed site, therefore there are compensation measures noted in these reports that sit outside of this project scope to implement.

3.4 Planning Policies Considered in the Proposal

Although this is picked up in detail in the accompanying Design & Access statement (MIL-ESA-XX-XX-RP-A-000010 Section 2) for MIL, planning policies applicable directly to the GIS have been noted below.

National Planning Policy

The Planning Policy Wales (PPW) document sets out land use planning policies and provides the policy framework for the preparation of local planning authorities' development plans. This document sets out the underlining basis for the formulation of development management policies and can therefore be a 'material consideration'. Paragraph 1.2 states that "The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places." Paragraph 1.18 states that "Legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated." Paragraph 1.22 states that "Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the adopted plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

Active and Social Streets

Paragraph 4.1.19 states that well-designed, people orientated streets are fundamental to creating sustainable places and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport. New development should improve the quality of place and create safe, social, attractive streets where people want to walk, cycle and enjoy, and children can play. Paragraph 4.1.20 explains the design and layout of streets must give a high priority to their role as public spaces and meeting the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, reflecting the principles of the sustainable transport hierarchy. 4.1.21 encourages that well integrated green infrastructure, such as SUDS, street trees and verges, not only create a pleasant environment but can also achieve a range of other benefits, including pollutant filtering, urban cooling, water management and habitat creation. Such features should be included as part of a well-designed street layout.

Green Infrastructure

Paragraph 6.2.1 defines green infrastructure as a network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places. Component elements of green infrastructure can function at different scales. At a local scale, it might comprise parks, fields, public rights of way etc. The planning system should protect and enhance green infrastructure assets and networks.

Securing Biodiversity Enhancements

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12 Paragraph 6.4.2 identifies that the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced an enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty (Section 6 Duty). It is recognised that the planning system has a key role in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increasing resilience of ecosystems. The policy states that it is important that biodiversity and resilience considerations are taken into account at an early stage in both development plan preparation and when proposing or considering development proposals.

3.4.1 Development Plan

The following demonstrates the compliance of the scheme in relation to the relevant policies within the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016- 2031:

Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Place Making

Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection

Policy EcW5 - Town and Local Centre Development

Improving Social Well Being

- Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Place Making

In reference to Policy SW11, the development must contribute to the creation of attractive and sustainable places through high quality, sustainable and inclusive design. The scheme ensures that it does not negatively impact on the environment or the existing infrastructure at large. The design of the development has been considered carefully and the proposed scale, form, mass and materials used in the construction and renovation of buildings and the public realm will not detract from the character of the surrounding built environment.

The construction will utilise high-quality materials and meticulous detailing, ensuring consistency with the character and aesthetics of the neighbouring architecture within the conservation area. The High Street is complemented by a high-quality Public Realm that aligns with the existing landscape design of the area enhancing the experience for those arriving to the centre or navigating between transport nodes, contributing to an improved urban environment. The goal is to create a healthy, active, visually appealing space while reducing opportunity for anti-social behaviour.

The proposed scheme ensures minimal negative impact on local amenity, light, and privacy. By removing buildings, recreational space is provided, enhancing the setting of historic structures like the listed chapel. The Public Realm design includes sustainable drainage features including planting beds and varied paving. Measures to improve water quality and enhance biodiversity through diverse plant species are incorporated. The level of planting and green space being proposed far exceeds the existing site which has no planting at all.

Improving Environmental Well Being

- Policy ENW1: Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Policy EnW1 necessitates that the development proposal must prioritise the promotion of ecosystem resilience and the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity. Despite the current biodiversity value of the site, the proposal recognises the need for development and presents opportunities for improving the natural environment in the area.

The Public Realm concept is carefully designed to align with the local context and established landscape styles while actively seeking opportunities to enhance ecosystem resilience and biodiversity conservation within the town centre. This is achieved through the implementation of sustainable drainage systems and the incorporation of diverse planting strategies. Any potential impacts of the scheme will be mitigated and effectively managed through future maintenance and management practices.

- Policy ENW4: Environmental Protection

Development proposals must comply with Policy EnW4, ensuring that they do not have an unacceptable impact on people, residential amenity, property, or the natural environment. The design of the project is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals, safeguarding property, and promoting a sustainable built environment through the creation of a high-quality Public Realm.

To enhance the water environment, the development will incorporate measures aimed at improving water quality wherever feasible. In terms of flood risk, the design of the Public Realm considers appropriate measures to avoid unnecessary risks and align with the requirements outlined in Technical Advice Note 15 (TAN 15).

The scheme ensures that there will be no presence of hazardous substances, land contamination, or land instability, guaranteeing a safe and secure environment for residents and the surrounding area. Furthermore, design considerations have been made towards minimising any noise, vibration, odour, and light pollution associated with the development. This commitment ensures a pleasant atmosphere for residents, visitors, and the wider community.

- Policy EcW5 - Town and Local Centre Development

Policy EcW5 promotes the enhancement of the Town and Local Centre vitality and viability. The town centre boundary in Merthyr Tydfil encompasses the primary retail area and other concentrated areas of town centre uses, such as civic offices and educational institutions. Its primary purpose is to designate the area where retail, leisure, and other town centre uses should be concentrated, following the sequential approach and protecting uses under the retail impact test.

The principal shopping area, which spans a small portion of the Town Centre, includes both sides of High Street between John Street in the north and Swan Street in the south. It also encompasses properties in Victoria Street, Market Square, Beacons Place, and the St. Tydfil's Square Shopping Centre. Recognising the importance of integrating retail with cultural, leisure, and other uses, the scheme aims to contribute to a vibrant and thriving town centre by strategically removing select existing buildings. This vision is supported by the design of the Public Realm which works to improve the overall attractiveness of the town's arrival experience.

- Policy EcW8 - Renewable Energy

Planning Policy Wales and the Welsh Government's Net Zero Strategic Plan prioritises renewable energy and low carbon energy. Renewable energy sources encompass wind, water, solar, geothermal energy, and biomass derived from plant material. Low carbon energy technologies focus on energy efficiency, excluding nuclear power. The Council actively supports the adoption of renewable energy as a tangible approach to reducing the local carbon footprint. To align with these objectives, the scheme incorporates several renewable energy strategies, and the development aims to contribute to the utilisation of renewable and low carbon energy sources in the area.

4.0 Building with Nature Standards Framework

The proposed development also meets several of the green infrastructure standards as outlined in the Building with Nature Standards Framework. There are six Core Standards and three themes, Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife, containing two standards in each. The six Core Standards create a solid foundation for the delivery of high-quality green infrastructure through design, planning and development.

4.1 Core Standards

Standard 1: Optimise Multifunctionality and Connectivity

The new development proposals incorporate green infrastructure that enhances multifunctionality and connectivity within the project boundary, while also linking with existing and planned green infrastructure in the surrounding area. The public realm has been designed to be a multi-functional space, whether it be an active travel route, habitat for wildlife or a place for the public to sit down and relax. The tree pits, raised planters, level planters and sunken bio-retention areas offer a range of different habitats and incorporate several different planting species. The green areas connect High Street to Masonic Street providing a corridor of green.

Standard 2: Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency

The green infrastructure is designed to be climate resilient by incorporating mitigation and adaptations that respond to the impacts of climate change. This can be met within the development by the increased enhancement of planting throughout, as it will play a crucial role in air purification and pollution absorption. The plants in these gardens act as natural air filters by absorbing harmful pollutants and releasing cleaner air. Through photosynthesis, plants also absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, contributing to a healthier and cleaner atmosphere. The inclusion of ornamental grasses is especially good for climate change and supporting biodiversity, as they separate more carbon and require less water than other plants. The sustainable urban drainage strategy that has been incorporated into the proposal also has a huge part to play. The bio-retention areas and permeable paving give the site a far larger scope to deal with the climate emergency. With storms becoming worse and more frequent events, the proposal now has the capacity to slow down storm water entering the sewer system and prevent surface flooding.

Standard 3: Maximises Environmental Net Gain

The green infrastructure is designed to actively mitigate any unavoidable harmful environmental impacts of development on soil and air quality, and to minimise light and noise pollution. The proposed development is taking a completely sterile, built site and replacing it with a green open space. The existing site contains no green infrastructure, and the proposal has a huge amount so there is significant net gain.

Standard 4: Champions a Context Driven Approach

The proposed design positively responds to the local context, including the physical environment, such as landscape and urban character and social, economic, and environmental priorities. As noted in section 3.4 of this report, several planning policies have been identified and have closely informed the design. The proposal is in scale with its surroundings and strongly adds to the context of the area. The fact that the design has been context driven ensures it will enhance the local area in an effective/sustainable way for the long-term.

Standard 5: Creates Distinctive Places

The green infrastructure is integral to the project and is designed to reinforce local distinctiveness and/or create a distinctive sense of place. Currently, the site has no green spaces or habitats and therefore has no ecological value, due to all of the site comprising hard standing. Therefore, the new proposals will increase the sites quality and distinctiveness by the creation of new grassed area, planters and bio-retention areas which together will make good placemaking communities and the natural environment. The Merthyr Interchange Link will bring some much-needed greenery to the lower end of High Street and will no doubt be a focal point for the local community to enjoy.

Standard 6: Secures Effective Place-Keeping

Throughout the design of the proposal, key stakeholders from the Council's maintenance teams have been integral in steering the scheme. The purpose of this is to ensure the long-term management and maintenance of the site is possible; this will ensure the benefits of the green infrastructure are felt into the future. Ultimately the Local Authority is responsible for production of a 25-year management plan (or LEMP) to ensure the success of the site. There has been a round of public consultations that have been picked up in the accompanying Stage 3 report submitted with the Planning Application.

Standard 7: Brings Nature Closer to People

The proposed design ensures that the green infrastructure features are available and accessible for all in the local area to use and enjoy. The development is on a High Street so people in the immediate surroundings live, work, and relax. The scheme is designed to optimise use and enjoyment for everyone across the year, to maximise health and wellbeing outcomes and to promote active living for existing and future communities.

Standard 8: Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

The green infrastructure is designed to encourage and enable everyone, including those from vulnerable or excluded groups, to use and enjoy it, to help reduce health inequalities and to build a shared sense of community and belonging. The proposal has been designed to fully accessible to a range of users from cyclists, pedestrians, prams and wheelchairs. Users of all types will be able to interact with the green infrastructure to positively effect their well-being.

Standard 9: Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management

The proposed scheme has been subject to rigorous flood risk assessment modelling and has specialist drainage/highways Engineers appointed. Th drainage strategy has been designed to mitigate the volume of storm water entering the sewer network as far as possible. There are two bio-retention areas, and a large attenuation tank incorporated into the scheme as part of the SuDs. The paving is also all permeable so there is no anticipated surface water flooding present on the scheme.

Standard 10: Brings Water Closer to People

Whilst the proposal does not include any flowing or permanent water installations, the two bio-retention area will contain standing water for periods of time. The sunken bio-retention areas will also be damp as they will naturally retain water, this offers a different habitat for other wildlife and planting that enjoys differing conditions.

Standard 11: Delivers Wildlife Enhancement

The proposal optimises long term and climate resilient net benefits for nature, by enhancing the sites ecological assets and creating locally relevant new habitats within the boundary of the project. Wildlife measures have been secured at all stages of the project so far with site visits from specialist ecologists and appropriate surveys informing the wider project team. Whilst no specific enhancement measures for birds or bats have been identified by the Ecologists, the newly created habitats act to break up the urban high street and act as a haven for wildlife. There is also opportunity to further enhance the site after construction has completed with the addition of bird/bat boxes should the Council wish to pursue this.

Standard 12: Underpins Nature's Recovery

The design of the proposed scheme appropriately addresses opportunities to assist in natures recovery by providing effective and resilient green infrastructure. The scheme offers effective ecological networks within the site boundary but also ties into the wider masterplan to eventually provide a green corridor from the bus station through to the train station. This will revitalise the lower end of High Street and provide a huge enhancement on the existing condition of green infrastructure in the area. The project offers newly created, resilient habitats that are a huge enhancement for wildlife in the locality.

4.2 Summary of Development and How it Meets the Core Standards

It is clear to see from section 4.1 that the proposed scheme clearly meets the core standards set out in the Building with Nature Standards Framework. The design has been thoroughly and sensitively put together with the input of specialist Ecologists and design team members.

5.0 Stepwise Approach

The below table shows how the project has implemented the Stepwise approach during the design of this proposed development:

Table 1 - Stepwise Approach

	Steps	Assessment	Enhancement	Long Term Maintenance	Net Benefits
1	Avoid	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Minimise	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Mitigation/Restore	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	Compensate on site	In line with best practice and planning policy guidance, opportunity to maximise site biodiversity and green infrastructure to be taken.	Newly formed habitats provided on site for wildlife. Newly formed SuDs incorporated into the project. Extensive planting on site.	Long term maintenance in continued up-keep of newly formed habitats. i.e. pruning, replacing dead plants, litter picking, etc. Plan to be confirmed by Council.	Yes – as described in the report above, existing sterile site has been greatly enhanced under the proposals.

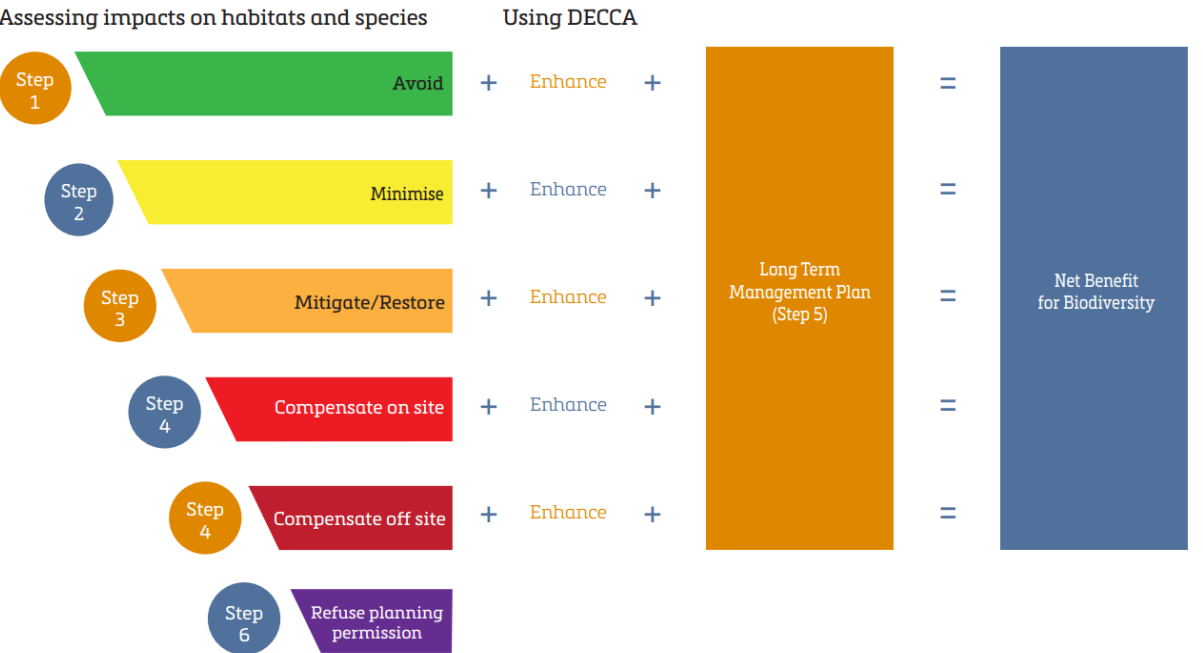


Figure 2 - Stepwise Approach Diagram

5.1 Summary

Avoid: Multiple surveys conducted to establish to viable or currently used habitats present on site prior to demolition of existing buildings to make way for proposed scheme. Based on survey evidence and the lack of bird nesting and bat roosting, there would be no requirement for compensation features to be included in designs. Bat and bird boxes recommended in the reports are purely enhancement opportunities which should be installed post-completion should the management team wish to do so. No existing green infrastructure on site so the need to avoid damage to it is not applicable.

Minimise: Disruption is unavoidable due to the need to demolish the buildings currently on site.

Mitigation/Restore: Due to full demolition of the buildings there is no opportunity to repair or restore.

Compensate on site: As explained throughout this report and accompanying Design & Access Statement, the project is introducing a raft of new green infrastructure across the site. The net benefit of the proposed design in this case far outweighs the existing condition of the site.

The Merthyr Interchange Link public realm scheme represents a significant investment in the future of Merthyr Tydfil. By integrating green infrastructure, the project will not only enhance the town's aesthetic and recreational value but also contribute to environmental sustainability and community well-being. This initiative aligns with the broader goals of the Welsh Government and local authorities to create a vibrant, resilient, and sustainable urban environment.

5.2 Management Plan

The project team has undertaken extensive stakeholder engagement where long term maintenance of the site has been discussed. The scheme has been designed to minimise the level of regular maintenance required through materials, street furniture and planting selected. The project team in conjunction with the appointed Contractor will prepare a manual containing O&Ms upon completion of the works however, ultimately the responsibility to maintain the site for the next 25-years falls to the Local Authority. The Local Authority will need to be consulted on their proposed methodology and plans for ongoing long-term maintenance of the site once works complete.

wsp



wsp.com