

Green Infrastructure Statement

Project: Conversion of former church to 8 1 bedroom Welsh DQR compliant flats

Site Address: Brynhyfryd Chapel, Thomas St, Treharris

This Green Infrastructure Statement accompanies the variation of condition for the planning submission - P/22/0326. The proposal includes biodiversity enhancement features in both the parking area and rear garden spaces to support local wildlife and enhance the ecological value of the property.

Green Infrastructure Approach:

Paragraph 6.4.15 details a step-wise approach for the consideration of green infrastructure within development proposals. In summary this approach follows the below steps:

- **AVOID** - Consider options to avoid any potential harm to an ecological feature,
- **MITIGATE** - If negative effects are unavoidable, measures should be implemented to minimise and reduce potential effects,
- **COMPENSATE** - If negative effects are still likely to be experienced, despite measures to reduce impacts being implemented, appropriate compensatory measures should be implemented,
- **ENHANCEMENT** - Works should always seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity to help meet the section 7 & 6 requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The DECCA Framework helps to implement the Section 6 biodiversity duty of The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. In summary the DECCA Framework requests:

- **DIVERSITY** - can the proposals deliver a more diverse habitat and species assemblages.
- **EXTENT** - can the proposals help to maintain or increase the extent of habitat or species assemblages.
- **CONDITION** - can the proposals help to maintain or increase the conditions of habitats and species range within a site or local area.
- **CONNECTIVITY** - can the proposals deliver opportunities to connect ecological networks within the local or regional area.
- **ADAPTABILITY** - do the proposals help to provide measures which ensure ecological networks can adapt to external pressures

Site Context and Design

The pChurch is located on a steep street between other buildings, the separate parking area is on the same street but located on the corner. This separate plot is made up of grass and gravel and already used for parking, therefore there is little ecological value. The new design will include plants and a hedge to help improve biodiversity, as per below details.

The church itself is having the rear extension demolished and will then be replaced by garden with laid grass and flowering lawn mixture EL1 in its place. There are no trees on site or impacted by the development. The garden is enclosed by a 6 ft fence, while the front of the property contains 50m² of grass, where pollinator-friendly plants will be introduced to enhance biodiversity.

Green Infrastructure Features

To offset the loss of a minor area of grassland in the parking area and increase biodiversity, the following green infrastructure features are proposed:

- **Bat and Bird Boxes:** 2no. Improved Crevice Bat Box, Double (supplied by wildcare.co.uk) will be mounted on the north facing wall
- **Biodiversity Enhancement in the Greenspace around parking area:**

The remaining green area around the parking will be utilised to enhance biodiversity through the following measures:

 - **Native Planting Scheme:**
 - **Native Shrubs:**
 - **3 x Apple tree (Dogwood):** Planted between hedge (details below) and the parking to provide cover for birds and other small wildlife.
 - **1 x Willow hedge:** Planted along road side (interrupted for 1m to allow postbox access to remain) and this will allow the most bee friendly habitat as per woodland trust advice
 - These hedges and the trees will be planted in late autumn, trees approximately 7 metres apart, and maintained with mulch to support growth.
 - **Pollinator-Friendly lawn (100m²):** An additional 100m² will be dedicated to planting a lawn with flowering mix EL1 in, this is coming from the demolition of the existing buildings:
 - **EL1 lawn mix**
 - Mow newly sown flowering lawns regularly (every 7 -10 days during growing season) throughout the first year of establishment. Cut to a height of 40-60mm, removing cuttings if dense. This will gradually develop a good sward structure, help maintain balance between faster growing grasses and slower developing wild flowers, and control annual weeds. Dig out any residual perennial weeds such as docks.

Environmental and Well-being Benefits

The proposed planting and biodiversity features will contribute to the following:

- **Pollinator Support:** The pollinator-friendly plants will attract a range of insects, including bees and butterflies, helping to increase local biodiversity.
- **Wildlife Habitat:** The shrubs, bat box and lawn will provide shelter and breeding sites for birds, bats, and insects.
- **Aesthetic and Well-being Benefits:** The introduction of diverse, colourful plant species will enhance the site's visual appeal while promoting mental well-being by creating a tranquil space for relaxation.

Conclusion

This Green Infrastructure Statement outlines how biodiversity and ecological value will be enhanced at Brynhyfryd Chapel conversion. By introducing pollinator-friendly planting in the front garden and maintaining wildlife-supportive features in the rear, the development aligns with green infrastructure principles and contributes positively to the local environment.