

**Green Infrastructure Statement &
Biodiversity Enhancement Plan**

on behalf of
Lyn Morgan

for
Woodland View
Pantyffyn Road
Mountain Hare
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 0HU



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Project Overview

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Limitations

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The assessments made assume that the site(s) and facilities will continue to be used for their current purpose without significant change. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this Report are based upon information provided by others and upon the assumption that all relevant information has been provided by those parties from whom it has been requested. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by Little Wing Ecology (CYF).



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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Little Wing Ecology (CYF) was commissioned to prepare a Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) of a site known as, 'Woodland View, Pantyffyn Road, Mountain Hare, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 0HU.' For the purposes of this report this will be referred to as 'the Site.'
- 1.2 This report contains an enhancement plan and details of enhancement features including recommended products. These enhancement features are intended to form an integral part of this development and to increase the biodiversity of the site post-development in line with current planning policy and legislation. For further details of policy and legislation, please refer to Appendix A.
- 1.3 The development proposals are for the Change of use to extend residential curtilage, retention of shed and re-profiling of ground, located on the boundary of an urban settlement, adjacent to broadleaved woodlands and green spaces. The Site is located at the eastern margin of Merthyr Tydfil, between mountain Hare and Thomas Town. The objectives are to identify, maintain and develop a network of green corridors and infrastructure to support biodiversity and ensure they link in with the wider ecosystem.
- 1.4 Site Location: SO 06059 06315

SECTION TWO: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE DEFINITION AND TERMINOLOGY

- 2.1 Green Infrastructure (GI) has been defined by the Landscape Institute in their publication, Green Infrastructure: An integrated approach to land use (2013), as *"the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect villages, towns and cities. Individually, these elements are GI assets, and the roles that these assets play are GI functions. When appropriately planned, designed and managed, the assets and functions have the potential to deliver a wide range of benefits – from providing sustainable transport links to mitigating and adapting the effects of climate change."*
- 2.2 Natural Resource Wales (NRW) defines Green Infrastructure as *"a term that's sometimes used to describe a wide range of natural and semi-natural features, spaces, rivers and lakes including parks, fields, allotments, hedgerows, roadside verges and gardens, not to mention entire ecosystems such as wetlands, waterways and mountain ranges."*
- 2.3 Green infrastructure is broadly analogous to 'Natural Capital', which can be defined as '...the elements of nature that produce value (directly and indirectly) to people, such as the stock of forests, rivers, land, minerals and oceans. It includes the living aspects of nature (such as fish stocks) as well as the non-living aspects (such as minerals and energy resources). Natural capital underpins all other types of capital... and is the foundation on which our economy, society and prosperity is built.' (The Natural Capital Committee 2017).
- 2.4 The Landscape Institute position statement "Green infrastructure: connected and multifunctional landscapes" provides the following definitions for Green Infrastructure terminology:
 - **Green Infrastructure Assets:** GI assets include the natural elements which provide social, environmental or economic benefit. They can be specific sites or broader environmental features within and between rural and urban areas. A useful approach to outlining the different types of GI asset is to classify them according to the spatial scale at which each would typically be found.
 - **Connectivity:** Connectivity between different GI assets will help maximise the benefits that they generate. This connectivity can be visual or notional; however physical connections make the most impact. This connectivity can enhance public engagement with the natural environment, improve opportunities for biodiversity migration and assist in encouraging sustainable forms of travel.

- **Green Infrastructure Functions:** GI functions are the roles that assets can play if planned, designed and managed in a way that is sensitive to, and includes provision for, natural features and systems. Each asset can perform different functions, a concept known as multifunctionality.
- **Multifunctionality:** Understanding multifunctionality is central to the GI approach to land use planning. Where land performs a range of functions it affords a far greater range of social, environmental and economic benefits than might otherwise be delivered. Ecosystem services underpinning the multiple functions that GI assets perform is the concept of ecosystem services. Health and wellbeing depend on the range of services provided by 6 ecosystems and their constituent parts: water, soils, nutrients and organisms. These services include:
 - **Support:** necessary for all other ecosystem services, e.g. soil formation and photosynthesis; — provision: food, fibre, fuel;
 - **Regulation:** air quality, climate control, erosion control; and,
 - **Culture:** non-material benefits for people, including aesthetic qualities and recreational experiences.
- **GI approach:** “GI approaches to land-use planning promote the widest range of functions which can be performed by the same asset, unlocking the greatest number of benefits. Such an approach enables us to demand more from the land in a sustainable way; by helping to identify when it can provide multiple benefits and to manage the many, often conflicting, pressures for housing, industry, transport, energy, agriculture, nature conservation, recreation and aesthetics. It also highlights where it is important to retain single or limited land use functions.”

SECTION THREE: ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.1 A desktop assessment was conducted by Little Wing Ecology (CYF) with the aid of current site photography, satellite imagery and online resources such as Magic Map¹. The Site is accessed via a main service road (Pantyffyn Road) and occupies an irregular plot, measures ≈45m by ≈40m at the widest point. Habitats in the immediate vicinity of the building are mixed.
- 3.2 The ecological condition of the Site before and following development has been identified through dialogue with the client and with the use of photographic evidence. The information present herein gives a broad overview of the Site circa 2010. Using this available evidence, we can ascertain that prior to any works taking place the Site was dominated by a bramble scrub. Dense bramble thickets in the UK provide valuable habitat for a diverse range of wildlife. They offer shelter, nesting sites, and food sources for a variety of species, including birds like song thrushes and blackbirds, mammals like hedgehogs and small rodents, and numerous invertebrates, such as butterflies, bees, and spiders. While providing important ecological benefits. In addition to the scrub, three mature trees, subsequently removed, were present on the Site. Based on photographic evidence these are most likely European ash. These were removed following the advice of a tree surgeon on health and safety grounds. Planning Policy Wales (12) emphasises the importance of high-quality replacement planting and securing a net gain in biodiversity. In order to achieve this, it is proposed to replace trees at a ratio of 3-to-1 with native trees/shrubs. This instance, and in addition to the horticultural trees that have been included in the landscaping (Section 3.3), this will be achieved with the introduction of nine standard specimens as follows: 3x downy birch, 3x mountain ash and 3x hazel. These are all native shrubs and will contribute to supporting biodiversity locally.
- 3.3 At the time of writing, works have been completed and gabions have been installed. New turf has been included in the landscaping. The Site is predominantly composed of lawn and bare earth with seven newly planted fruit trees. Five acers (*Acer* spp.) are currently on-site in pots and will be planted along the boundary in the spring, in addition to elder shrubs (locally sourced from cuttings). A mixed-species grass-

¹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

seed mix has been applied to the lawn with the addition of several bee-bombs² - which typically contain 18 species of flowering plants designed to support local invertebrate populations. Several active beehives are maintained on-site by the client. Detached properties are present on one side (east), the front of the plot borders the main service road (Pantyffyn Road) and to the north and west is boarded by woodland and an amenity grassland which itself is bordered by woodland providing a degree of connectivity to several fragmented woodland which predominantly follow the lines of roads and property boundaries. From satellite imagery, the adjacent treeline can be seen to form part of a linear feature in the landscape, providing high levels of connectivity to the north where it follows the A4060 and connects the site to habitat with an upland characteristic, beyond the settlement boundary. To the south there is connectivity to additional fragmented woodlands, and green spaces (predominantly amenity grassland) and a linear green space (former tramroad) on a north-east / southwest alignment which terminates $\approx 300\text{m}$ of the River Tâf (SINC). The River Taf provides a high-quality riparian habitat and excellent connectivity to the north and south.

- 3.4 No part of the Site contains or is within any statutory sites of nature conservation interest, such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), National Nature Reserves (NNRs). Therefore, the proposed scheme of works will not impact on any rare or valuable habitats as the works are due to remain within the site boundary.
- 3.5 The nearest statutory sites are 'Cwm Glo a Glyndyrys,' (SSSI) at $\approx 1.7\text{km}$ and, 'Cwm Tâf Fechan Woodlands,' (SSSI) at $\approx 2.7\text{km}$. These are located to the south-west and north-west of the site respectively. There is a low level of connectivity with these sites.
- 3.6 Due to the current condition of the Site, the high levels of human disturbance and the lack of suitable features present, protected or priority species are considered likely absent from the Site. Taking a stepwise approach to the ecological assessment, no additional survey effort is recommended at this time.



Plate 1



Plate 2

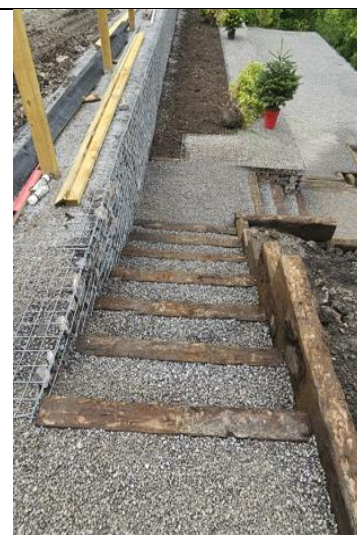


Plate 3

²https://www.beebombs.com/shop?utm_term=&utm_campaign=TSS+%7C+UK+%7C+Performance+Max+%7C+All+Products&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_acc=5534649446&hsa_cam=17136277656&hsa_grp=&hsa_ad=&hsa_src=x&hsa_tgt=&hsa_kw=&hsa_mt=&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiAyJS7BhBiEiWtAyS9uNX13gTewrwCBH-hlphUr27GGL2i_22OU1bkUCuBKHeEdPMBjolirRhoCs2gQAVD_BwE



- 3.7 Due to the relatively dark space offered by adjacent habitat, and proximity to woodland, a bat sensitive lighting scheme is recommended and must follow advice details in 'Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK: Technical Guidance Note 08/23' (2023)³. To prevent any adverse impact upon the potential roosting, commuting and foraging habitats for bats adjacent to the Site (post development), specifically on the nearby vegetation, a lighting plan is required. Lighting for the Site must be functional and directional only and kept to a minimum servicing the public areas of the proposed development (as required for safety and security). It must be achieved using baffles and screens, if necessary, to ensure no light spill on any retained or planted vegetation (including off-site vegetation - e.g., there is a potential to impact animals using the nearby habitat features).
- A sensitive lighting scheme is recommended and must be created. The sensitive lighting scheme must follow advice details in 'Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK: Technical Guidance Note 08/23' (2023) and comprise of:
 - Light fixtures, filaments, light spill and artificial light must be directed away from bat roost entrances, both existing and those to be created as part of the mitigation.
 - Luminaires are to be LED only, due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability. Luminaires must have a warm white spectrum (ideally <2700 Kelvins), reducing the blue light component and increasing the red-light component.
 - Luminaires must feature peak wavelengths high the 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats.
 - Heights of fixtures must be carefully considered to minimise light spill. Only luminaires with an upward light ratio of 0% and with good optical control must be used.
 - Luminaires must always be mounted on the horizontal, i.e., no upward tilt.
 - Any external security lighting must be set on motion sensors and short (15 second) timers.
 - As a last resort, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres must also be used, and directed away from any natural features and must not encroach outside the Site boundaries, particularly the surrounding trees, hedgerows, and other vegetation in the landscape.
- 3.8 In-line with statutory obligations and planning policy, mitigation will be required in regards net gain biodiversity and green infrastructure.

³ <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released>

- 3.9 At the date of writing this report, we can surmise that; in conjunction with a sympathetic lighting scheme and the potential for additional landscaping (in the form of native species), the addition of enhancement features could be of benefit locally and provide a net-gain for priority and protected species.

SECTION FOUR: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT & BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT

4.1 Green Infrastructure

- 4.1.1 Section Four of this report presents a green infrastructure statement. This statement is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development and describes how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. This statement provides an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the development site.
- 4.1.2 In accordance with the provision of Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (Distinctive and Natural Places) and Local Planning Policy, biodiversity enhancement measures should be incorporated into the landscaping scheme of any proposed works to maximise the ecological value of the site. The proposed scheme seeks to follow the Stepwise Approach as detailed within the updated Chapter 6 of PPW.
- 4.1.3 **Avoid:** the location of the groundworks has been identified and developed with the intention of minimising impacts on the existing biodiversity and landscape features of the location. Existing trees have been avoided wherever possible and features such as existing buildings have been incorporated rather than demolished. The most significant area of notable habitat loss is of a bramble scrub which dominated the Site post-development. This was removed circa 2010.
- 4.1.4 **Minimise:** to prevent any adverse impact upon the potential roosting, commuting and foraging habitats for bats adjacent to the proposed unit (post development), specifically on the adjacent tree-line feature and linked gardens, a sensitive lighting scheme is recommended and where necessary should be incorporated into the plans. The lighting plan for the site is functional and directional only and kept to a minimum servicing the public areas of the proposed development (as required for safety and security). It is achieved using baffles and screens, if necessary, to ensure no light spill on any retained or planted vegetated (including off-site vegetation). The sensitive lighting scheme follows advice detailed in 'Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK: Technical Guidance Note 08/23' (2023)⁴.
- 4.1.5 **Mitigate:** habitat creation works have been designed into the site layout to mitigate for the small losses in any notable features. These measures include a sensitive landscape design within a small urban footprint, with the addition of native and diverse grass seed mixes for the lawn and under canopy, provision of native trees and shrubs and structural enhancements including roosting and nesting boxes.
- 4.1.6 **Compensation:** on-site compensation for impacts on nesting birds and roosting bats will be delivered by way of:
- new roosting opportunities for bats,
 - new nesting opportunities for birds,
 - new foraging opportunities for bees (and other invertebrates),
 - hedgehog holes,
 - the addition of species rich seed mixes for green spaces (lawn and under-canopy), and;
 - the addition of native trees/shrubs at the boundary (x3 hazel, x3 downy birch and x3 mountain ash).
- 4.1.7 **Implementation and Maintenance:** The owners of Woodland View will implement these plans and maintain the enhancement features in perpetuity. Should the bird box or bat box fail or become damaged they will be replaced. Likewise, the planting scheme will be implemented and maintained by the owners.
- 4.1.8 **Summary:** It is concluded that appropriate and proportionate mitigation/compensation is to be delivered

⁴ <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released>

on-site through habitat creation and enhancement.

4.1.9 The proposed ecological mitigation and enhancements fit with the DECCA Framework by;

- Increasing diversity within local ecosystems by providing new species-rich and grassland seed mixes to further improve net-gain biodiversity. This will be achieved through structural enhancements to create a range of environmental conditions which will therefore have the potential to support a different and more diverse assemblage of species compared to baseline conditions.
- Improving/maintaining connections within and between ecosystems, by creating new habitat in locations that will directly link with existing habitats of value, e.g. existing hedgerows and tree lines.
- Improving ecosystem resilience and adaptability to future pressures, through the planting of trees (carbon capture, shading), the management of surface water runoff (continued vegetation cover, surface water interception) and the creation of greater variations in ground cover and vegetation structure capable of offering niche habitats to a wide range of flora and fauna.

4.1.10 Therefore, because of the ecological measures embedded within the proposed scheme, it is expected that there will be a demonstrable net benefit for biodiversity. The Site has been identified as being of low value, with immediate on-site impacts adequately mitigated on-site - and net gain being achieved primarily through the addition of features (see Section 5). All habitats retained/created/enhanced on site, will be subject to domestic management, with this management plan being proportionate for this setting and maintained in perpetuity.

4.2 **Biodiversity Enhancement Plan**

4.2.1 Under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, public authorities (including local councils and the National Parks), 'must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions; in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.' This replaces the section 40 duty in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act 2006), in relation to Wales, which states that; 'All public authorities have a statutory duty to conserve biodiversity in all of their functions.'

4.2.2 Local authorities are legally required to make efforts to protect and enhance wildlife and its habitat and this is executed, in part, through the requirement of an ecological assessment for planned development sites and, therefore, we recommend the following principles of design should be followed.

4.2.3 **Bats:** To support the local bat population and increase roosting opportunities locally; post-development, the inclusion of:

- A surface mounted Beaumaris Bat box⁵ (or equivalent) to be included in the southern gable, near the apex.

4.2.4 **Birds:** To support the local bird population and increase nesting opportunities locally; post-development, the inclusion of:

- A Bilbao Nest box⁶ (or equivalent) to be fitted to the northern gable of Building A, near the apex.

4.2.5 **Invertebrates and Botany:** To support invertebrates locally; the planting of native trees and shrubs including x3 hazel⁷, x3 mountain ash⁸, and x3 downy birch⁹, and the inclusion of a species rich lawn

5 https://www.wildcare.co.uk/beaumaris-bat-box.html?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw65-zBhBKEiwAjrGtVbTavFlgGTV2ry0OGQEWnqN0eVseleG460NUffHmj6NAF2TcGZhoCsKEQAvD_BwE

6 https://www.nhbs.com/low-visibility-woodstone-nest-box?bkfno=266260&ca_id=1495&adlocale=uk&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQIAs5i8BhDmARIsAGE4xHwIHLu8WP7vkUqfAZoKQg_cA9fl_vaD1olk8ZvXt7bVFN3txQfYI8aAu4AEALw_wcB

7 https://www.chewvalleystrees.co.uk/products/detail/corylus-avellana?section=containerGrown&id=14873&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQIAs5i8BhDmARIsAGE4xHwIHLu8WP7vkUqfAZoKQg_cA9fl_vaD1olk8ZvXt7bVFN3txQfYI8aAu4AEALw_wcB

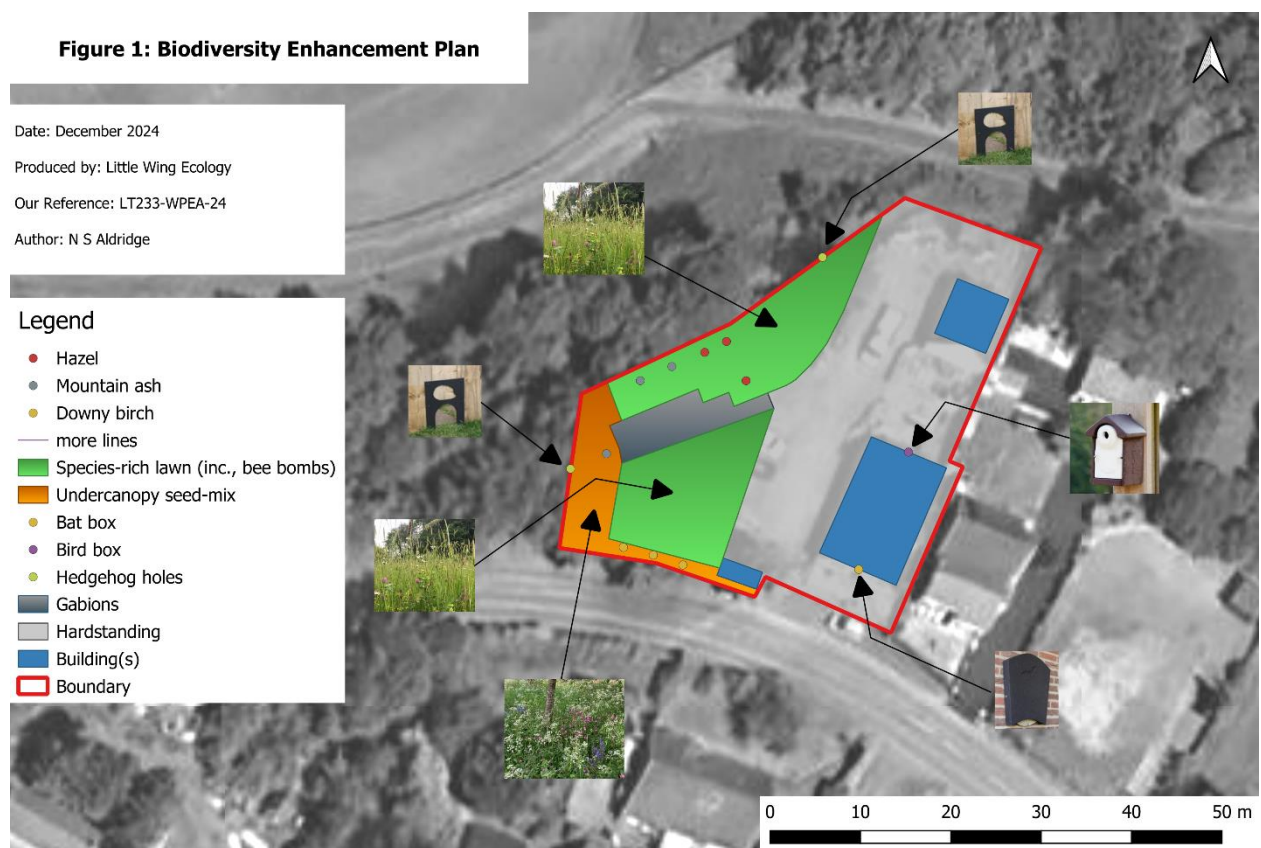
8 https://www.ashridgetrees.co.uk/p/garden-trees/sorbus/aucuparia-mountain-ash-rowan?utm_campaign=20731047289&utm_medium=cpc&utm_source=google&utm_content=&utm_term=&utm_marketing_tactic=20731047289&utm_creative_format=&utm_source_platform=g_x&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQIAs5i8BhDmARIsAGE4xHwIHLu8WP7vkUqfAZoKQg_cA9fl_vaD1olk8ZvXt7bVFN3txQfYI8aAu4AEALw_wcB

9 <https://www.bowhayestrees.co.uk/product-page/betula-pubesces-downy>

mix¹⁰ over the rear garden and under canopy seed-mix¹¹. This flowering lawn mixture contains slow growing grasses with a selection of wildflowers that respond well to regular short mowing¹². The establishment, and ongoing maintenance of broadleaves trees is provided by The Woodland Trust¹³.

- 4.2.6 **Small Mammals:** Enhancement for hedgehogs to be provided in the form of; (x2) Eco Hedgehog Hole Plate to be fitted at the base of each new garden fence to mitigate against defragmentation locally¹⁴.
- 4.2.7 The above enhancement features and habitats will be managed and maintained for the long-term (i.e., at least 25 years).

Figure 1: Biodiversity Enhancement Plan



QGIS Development Team, <2024>. QGIS Geographic Information System. Open-Source Geospatial Foundation Project.

SECTION FIVE: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5.1 Encountering a Protected Species During Works

¹⁰ <https://www.cumbriawildflowers.co.uk/habitats/neutralhaymeadowmix>

¹¹ https://www.pitchcare.com/products/shade-hedgerow-woodland-wildflower?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAIA3JCvBhA8EiwA4kuiZoajG-WP6tDAjs71P4QXzKHYYhZOnsDjaD0cfR0j9fwOW1kwRX0LdLxoCqp8QAvD_BwE

¹² https://ehq-production-europe.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/c6d1aeea252b8babca757293ab301578fe4adc59/original/1649936554/a95f81812d7c47fd385c58fa177cf60c_Grass_Management.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIJHZMYNPA%2F20250114%2Feu-west-1%2F33%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20250114T143626Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=367eb5fd2a8e6c0e0770cd770897de6742e59a0d1de4607fa464b1c622245b01

¹³ <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/care/>

¹⁴ https://www.nestbox.co.uk/products/eco-hedgehog-hole-plate?_pos=2&_sid=cfc475fd2&_ss=r

- 5.1.1 If at any point during works a protected species is encountered on-site, it is essential that all work is to cease and that a suitably experienced ecologist is contacted for advice.

5.2 Expiration of this Report

- 5.2.1 This document is valid for two years. Should work not start within two years (i.e., November 2026) further survey and assessment will be necessary to qualify the results of this report and its recommendations.

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Appendix A: National Planning Policy

Future Wales - The National Plan 2040 (Welsh Government 2021)

Policy 9 Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure of the Future Wales - The National Plan 2040 states the following with regard to green infrastructure:

"To ensure the enhancement of biodiversity, the resilience of ecosystems and the provision of green infrastructure, the Welsh Government will work with key partners to:

- *identify areas which should be safeguarded and created as ecological networks for their importance for adaptation to climate change, for habitat protection, restoration or creation, to protect species, or which provide key ecosystems services, to ensure they are not unduly compromised by future development; and*
- *identify opportunities where existing and potential green infrastructure could be maximised as part of placemaking, requiring the use of nature-based solutions as a key mechanism for securing sustainable growth, ecological connectivity, social equality and well-being.*

Planning Policy Wales sets out a range of policies to maintain and enhance biodiversity, promote the resilience of ecosystems, including the stepwise approach, and to maximise the provision of green infrastructure. The strategic focus of Future Wales on urban growth requires an increased emphasis on biodiversity enhancement (net benefit) in order to ensure that growth is sustainable.

As the population of Wales becomes increasingly urban, the opportunity to optimise well-being benefits from green infrastructure will be greatest in and around these areas. Innovative use of nature-based solutions and integrating green infrastructure in and around urban areas can help restore natural features and processes into cities and landscapes. Providing locally accessible, high quality green spaces and corridors helps to maintain and enhance the strategic functioning of 8 of our natural resources and ecological networks and address physical and mental well-being. Local green infrastructure assets such as public rights of way, common land, parks, village greens and allotments can all make a cumulative contribution towards wider national scale ecological connectivity. The real-life importance of urban green spaces was demonstrated when people were restricted to taking exercise in immediately local green spaces during the COVID-19 lockdown."

Planning Policy Wales - Edition 11 (Welsh Government 2021)

Planning Policy Wales - Edition 11 states the following with regard to green infrastructure; "Integrating Green Infrastructure and Development: Green infrastructure plays a fundamental role in shaping places and our sense of well-being, and are intrinsic to the quality of the spaces we live, work and play in. The planning system should protect and enhance green infrastructure assets and networks because of these multi-functional roles. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity must be carefully considered as part of green infrastructure provision alongside the need to meet society's wider social and economic objectives and the needs of local communities. The multiple benefits that resilient ecosystems and green infrastructure offer to society, including the economic and social contribution they make to local areas, should be taken into account when balancing and improving these needs.

The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design. With careful planning and design, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places, helping to overcome the potential for conflicting objectives, and contributing towards health and well-being outcomes. There are multiple ways of incorporating green infrastructure, dependent on the needs and opportunities a site presents. Landscaping, green roofs, grass verges, sustainable urban drainage and gardens are examples of individual measures that can have wider cumulative benefits, particularly in relation to biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems as well as in securing the other desired environmental qualities of places."

Update to Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales: Welsh Government recently made changes to Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 to address the nature emergency by publishing a revised Chapter 6 'Distinctive and Natural Placemaking and Well-Being'. The policy changes came into immediate effect in October 2023 and impacts on all planning applications. There is a great deal to consider in the revised Chapter 6, however the main policy changes relate to:

- Green Infrastructure
- Net Benefit for Biodiversity and the Step Wise Approach
- Protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Trees and Woodlands

One key change is the requirement for all planning applications to be submitted with a 'Green Infrastructure Statement' (para 6.2.5). A 'Green Infrastructure Statement' is now required with all new applications and should describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal.

The statement should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development, for example on householder and minor developments this would normally be a short description.

The Green Infrastructure statement will be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the 'Step-wise Approach' (Paragraph 6.4.21) has been applied.

Building Better Places, The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures Placemaking and the Covid-19 recovery (Welsh Government 2020)

Within the above document under 'Green infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience' it states the following regarding green infrastructure: "Resilient ecological networks, whilst vital for nature recovery, are also integral to our health and well-being and form part of our response to climate change. The crisis has highlighted the importance of access to green spaces and opportunities to connect with the natural and historic environment. It has highlighted that easy access and proximity to quality greenspace is severely lacking in some areas and to some sections of our communities and actions to reduce such inequalities should be prioritised as part of wider regeneration and improvement activities as a matter of social and environmental justice. At the same time it is notable how, with the advent of fewer unnecessary journeys and increased walking and cycling, biodiversity has the opportunity to thrive.

We must reverse biodiversity decline and enhance the resilience of ecosystems, as well as enable opportunities for social and economic activity based on valuing and enabling access to the natural and historic environment. The planning system has a key responsibility in securing green infrastructure, which plays a fundamental role in shaping places and our sense of well-being and is intrinsic to the quality of spaces in which we live, work and play."

Active Travel (Wales) Act (2015) The Active Travel (Wales) Act (2015)

This Act set out that Welsh ministers must publish annual reports on the amount of active travel journeys made in Wales. There is also a requirement for Local Authorities to identify and plan for active travel routes and increase the provision for walking and cycling, and encourage users to rely less on cars. Local highway authorities are required to give greater consideration to the requirements of walkers and cyclists and provide greater infrastructure provision to them. The act also highlights the need to build connections between key sites such as workplaces, hospitals, schools and shopping areas with active travel routes.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to consider the longterm impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

The Planning Act (Wales) 2015 states that Local Planning Authorities must exercise their function in relation to the determination of planning applications "...as part of carrying out sustainable development in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (annex 2), for the purpose of ensuring that the development and use of land contribute to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales." (PA(W), Sec.2(2)).

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

Technical Advice Notes should be read in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales (PPW). TANs should be taken into account by the local planning authorities in the preparation of Development Plans. They may be material to decisions on individual planning applications and will be taken into account by inspectors and the Welsh Government in the determination of appeals and called-in planning applications. The following TANs are relevant to green infrastructure:

TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009): This Technical Advice Note provides advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation. It brings together advice on sources of legislation relevant to various nature conservation topics which may be encountered by local planning authorities. The key principles of planning for nature conservation are set out followed by advice about the preparation and review of development plans, including the relevant statutory requirements.

TAN 12: Design (2016): The revised Technical Advice Notes (TAN) aims to equip all those that are involved in the design of development with advice on how sustainability, through good design, may be facilitated through the planning system. It sets out the core design principles that any development proposal must follow to help create a sustainable environment and exhibit a high level of design quality. These are structured via five the following key objectives of good design:

- Access - Ensuring ease of access for all;
- Character - Sustaining or enhancing local character; promoting legible development; promoting a successful relationship between public and private space; promoting quality, choice and variety; and promoting innovative design;
- Community Safety - Ensuring attractive, safe public spaces and security through natural surveillance;
- Environmental Sustainability - Achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources and enhancing biodiversity; and,
- Movement - Promoting sustainable means of travel.

TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (2009): This Technical Advice Note provides advice on the role of the planning system in making provision for sport and recreational facilities and informal open spaces, as well as protecting existing facilities and open spaces in urban and rural areas in Wales. The guidance includes advice on Open Space Strategies and Open Space Assessments, and outlines the need to consider green corridors and natural and semi-natural greenspaces when forming development proposals.

Assessment of Existing Green Infrastructure

For all major developments, the existing green infrastructure resource in and around the site must be described and assessed. A thorough contextual analysis of the role of existing green infrastructure in and around the site (e.g. hydrology, habitats, public rights of way and parks)

should be provided, appropriate to the scale of the proposed development. This should include a large-scale map identifying the role of existing green infrastructure in the connecting wider landscape and neighbourhood context. Evidence used to describe this resource can include novel approaches such as mapping of ecosystems and ecosystem services, and GIS network and opportunity analysis, as these and other resources become available.

An Ecological Assessment, proportionate to the size of the development is required to identified existing Green Infrastructure features such as;

- Streams/rivers;
- Woodland, hedgerows and scrub;
- Roadside verges and street trees;
- Footpaths; and
- Open mosaic habitat/previously developed land (Brownfield sites), etc.,



CYFYNGIADAU

Mae Little Wing Ecology (CYF) wedi paratoi'r Adroddiad hwn at ddefnydd y Cleient neu ei Asiantau uchod yn unig yn unol â'n telerau busnes, y cyflawnwyd ein gwasanaethau oddi tanynt. Ni roddir unrhyw warant arall, wedi'i mynegi neu ei hawgrymu, ynghylch y cyngor proffesiynol sydd wedi'i gynnwys yn yr Adroddiad hwn nac unrhyw wasanaethau eraill a ddarperir gennym ni. Ni all unrhyw barti arall ddibynnu ar yr Adroddiad hwn heb gytundeb ysgrifenedig penodol ymlaen llaw gan Little Wing Ecology (CYF).

Mae'r asesiadau a wnaed yn rhagdybio y bydd y safle(oedd) a'r cyfleusterau yn parhau i gael eu defnyddio i'w pwrpas presennol heb newid sylweddol. Mae'r casgliadau a'r argymhellion yn yr Adroddiad hwn yn seiliedig ar wybodaeth a ddarparwyd gan eraill ac ar y dybiaeth bod yr holl wybodaeth berthnasol wedi'i darparu gan y partïon hynny y gofynnwyd amdani. Nid yw gwybodaeth a gafwyd gan drydydd partïon wedi'i dilysu'n annibynnol gan Little Wing Ecology (CYF).

Cynhyrchwyd gan:

Rhif cwmni:

Cyfeiriad:

E-bost:

Ffôn:

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About Us

Little Wing Ecology is a not-for-profit ecological consultancy based in the South Wales Valleys. Specializing in bat surveys for housing developments, but providing a wide range of ecological services, it provides appropriate expertise on behalf of a range of clients.

We are a small ecological consultancy dedicated to providing an easy-to-use and jargon-free service.

We produce the following products:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Preliminary Roost Assessment
- Bat Surveys
- Mitigation Planning
- Green Infrastructure Statements
- European Protected Species License Applications
- On-site Services to Support Planning Applications and Development
- eDNA Reports
- Reptile Surveys

As a Consultancy, we use our experience, expertise, and love of wildlife to provide an easy to access and pragmatic service, that upholds the highest standards of conservation.

As a Not-for-Profit Social Enterprise, we reinvest our profits. We work with valleys communities, conservation groups, local authorities, and other groups to support these three key areas:

A. Helping Nature

Developing and supporting habitat gain in the valleys through:

- Habitat improvement.
- Developing the built environment for the benefit of wildlife.
- Long-term monitoring projects for wildlife populations in the valleys.

B. Working with People

- Providing employment, training and voluntary opportunities for the local community and young people to help them build their skills, develop a stronger relationship with nature and build confidence in themselves.

C. Supporting Communities

- Reinvesting in nature and people, locally.
- Supporting education within communities to promote a positive relationship between people and wildlife.
- Providing pro-bono surveys for worthwhile causes.

Adroddiad Arolwg gan



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