



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

Project Proposed Forest classroom (Stand alone Timber Structure)

Address: Little Rascals Pre-School
Cwm Golau Integrated Children's Centre, Dyffryn Rd, Pentrebach, CF48 4BJ.

Date: 24th June 2024

General Introduction:

In accordance with Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales, this Green Infrastructure Statement has been prepared to support a Planning Application made to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council for the construction of a detached, standalone forest classroom within the grounds of Cwm Golau Integrated Children's Centre, Dyffryn Rd, Pentrebach.

It will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal and will be an effective way of demonstrating the impact of the development and how it is mitigated against.



Aerial view of application site and surrounding area

Site Description:

The application site is located in a well built-up suburban area with a mix of residential properties, educational establishments and industrial units all within a 1 mile radius.

The proposed location is set within the grounds of Cwm Golau Integrated Children's Centre in a small area of well-established woodland, with mature trees and scrub grassland.

The site is fairly level throughout and accessed directly of a large car park associated with the children's centre. *(Refer to CPD 001 and 'Google earth' view opposite).*

Existing Green Infrastructure:

The application site is set within a well-established area of woodland, well connected within the local landscape with numerous established trees, hedgerows and areas of grassland. There are numerous areas mature scrub woodland with the River Taff flowing North to South to the South East of the site.



Enlarged Aerial view of application site and position of proposed building

Development Impacts / The Proposal:

It is proposed to construct a detached standalone timber structure to provide a 'forest classroom'. The structure will be built on timber sleepers so no major excavation is required. The new forest classroom will be clad in timber ship lap cladding with a pent roof of corrugated metal sheeting.

(Refer to CPD-002– Proposed elevations for details).

The building will be positioned in a small clearing within the area of woodland and would not require the removal of any trees. However, some minor site clearance work will be required and so replacement planting of native species shrubs would be introduced to compensate for the minor loss of existing ecological features.

Existing lighting is present to the car park adjacent to the application site. No additional high level lighting is proposed however some small bollard type lighting may be installed to illuminate any pathways leading to the classroom. These will be of low level / wattage, therefore minimal impact beyond the limited localised issues within the neighbouring areas.

Proposed Green Infrastructure Measures and Bio-diversity enhancement:

To further enhance the local connectivity and green infrastructure, it is proposed to introduce a number of native (and non-native) species plants and shrubs. These will be provided in small, raised beds and planters. These would include wildlife friendly species, to encourage insects and pollinators, creating additional small habitats and further improving localised connectivity.

Planting species may include: *(not limited to)*

Sedum (*Hylotelephium spectabile*)
Dog rose (*Rosa canina*) Red valerian (*Centranthus ruber*)
Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
Clematis Buddleia (butterfly bush)
Verbena bonariensis Hebe species
Common snowdrop (*Alanthus nivalis*)
Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*)
Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*)
Berberis species Bell heather (*Erica cinerea*)

It is also proposed to install a bat box ('Harlech Woodstone or similar) on one of the well-established trees within the vicinity of the forest classroom. This should be positioned on a southeast elevation which should provide shelter from prevailing wind and rain.
(Refer to CPD 001 for details)

Conclusion:

The site currently has very good connectivity with the existing green infrastructure providing excellent connectivity to the surrounding habitats and the wider landscape.

The work would aim to minimize any adverse environmental effects and given the extent of work proposed it is considered the introduction of various shrubs and plants along with provision of the new bat box would enhance the ecological features creating additional small habitats and increase the connectivity in the local surroundings.