

Ecological Statement

Retain use of building as an office and store for heating engineers, erect rear fencing, gates and bin store.

225 New Road

Skewen

SA10 6UU

Sept 2023

PHONE

MOB PHONE

EMAIL

Background

On 24 February 2021, Welsh Government published 'Future Wales – the National Plan 2040'. The Government has emphasised that Future Wales sits at the centre of the new and refreshed network of legislation, strategies and plans that now govern planning across the country. It is clear that Future Wales, and the planning process more widely, is seen as being a central force for delivering cross cutting, national objectives for the economy, environment and society

Future Wales sets out a number of key approaches/ policies. Policy 9 states that in all cases, action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity (to provide a net benefit), the resilience of ecosystems and green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature-based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment.

As a result, Local Planning Authorities will be looking to secure these biodiversity enhancements as part of the planning application process.

Proposal

The proposal seeks consent to retain the use of the premise as an office and store for heating engineers, erect rear fencing, gates and bin store

The Site

The application site consists of a former public library

Assessment

It is accepted that Future Wales now requires ecological enhancement however, it is submitted that any ecological enhancement must be proportional to the development proposed.

Given the scale of the proposal it is considered that the provision of a bird boxes, and wild flower planting within the site will provide adequate ecological enhancement. Details of the location and type of box set out below **Figure 1**.

Location of bird box

Figure 1



Box Specifications

Boxes to attract garden birds and woodland breeding species such as tits, nuthatch, redstart and pied flycatcher can be placed in gardens, orchards, woodlands and a wide variety of other habitats. The species of birds attracted to the box will depend upon the size of the entrance hole (see table below).

Boxes should be fixed two to five metres up a tree or wall, out of the reach of predators such as domestic cats. Unless there are trees or buildings, which give permanent shelter, it is best facing between north and east.

General		
Example	Description	Picture
Schwegler No. 1B General Purpose Nest box	www.arkwildlife.co.uk Suitable for various garden and woodland birds, created with different sized entrance holes to avoid competition between species. Other variations (e.g. 2M) can be free hanging, to deter predators	
Entrance Hole	Species	
26mm	Blue-, Marsh-, Coal- and Crested Tit, possibly Wren. All other species are prevented from using the nest box due to this smaller entrance hole.	
32mm	Great-, Blue-, Marsh-, Coal- and Crested Tit, Redstart, Nuthatch, Pied Flycatcher, Tree and House Sparrows.	
Oval	Redstart; also used by species that nest in the diameter 32 mm boxes. However, because more light enters the brood chamber, it is preferred by Redstarts.	

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is an offence to disturb breeding birds and therefore annual cleaning cannot be undertaken between the months of March and

September inclusive. Bird nest boxes should be cleaned in October to prevent the build-up of nest parasites in the boxes whilst avoiding the risk of disturbing birds using the boxes as a roost site during the cold winter months. All nesting material and other debris should be removed from the box. Ideally, it should then be scrubbed clean with boiling water to kill any parasites (avoid using any chemicals). Once the box is clean, it should be left to dry out thoroughly. Bird boxes should be left up over winter as they can provide useful roosting sites for birds in bad weather.

Site lighting and dark corridors

Measures will be taken to minimise light pollution to reduce any impact on nocturnal fauna such as bats and moths. Any lighting within the rear garden will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT 2018). Appropriate ground facing, energy-saving lighting will be used, on timers. There will be no light spillage into landscape areas such trees and hedgerows on site will not be affected that's allowing dark corridors to be maintained for Nocturnal wildlife.

Implementation

- Bird Boxes - Within one month of the completion of the development