

Proposed dwelling on land south of
"The Rise", Glyncastle, Resolven,
Neath. SA11 4NW
(E283702, N202635)
November 2023
Revision -
Green Infrastructure Statement

Introduction

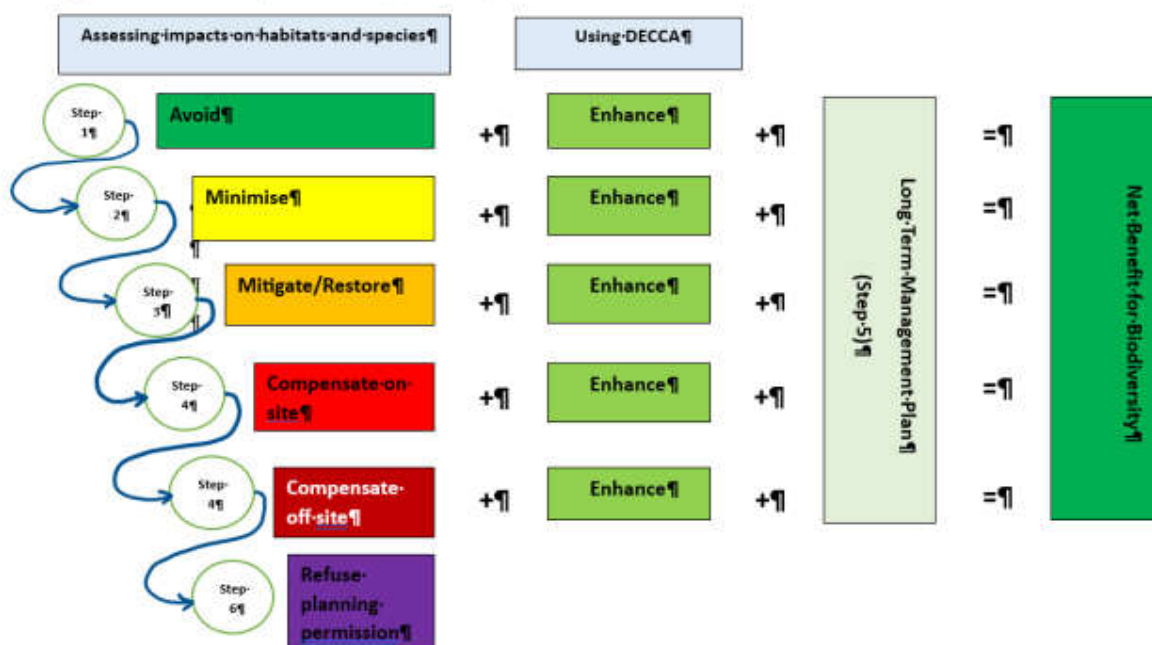
This statement has been produced to accompany an outline planning application for a single dwelling and detached garage in the residential garden of the dwelling known as "The Rise".

Its goal is to address the recently published updated National Planning Policy for Chapter 6 of Planning Policy, which sets out the policy for biodiversity and nature issued on October 11th 2023.

Step-Wise Approach

As part of the updated policy, councils are now required to follow a step-wise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks, and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimised, mitigated, and, as a last resort, compensated for.

Figure 1X: Summary of the Step-Wise Approach



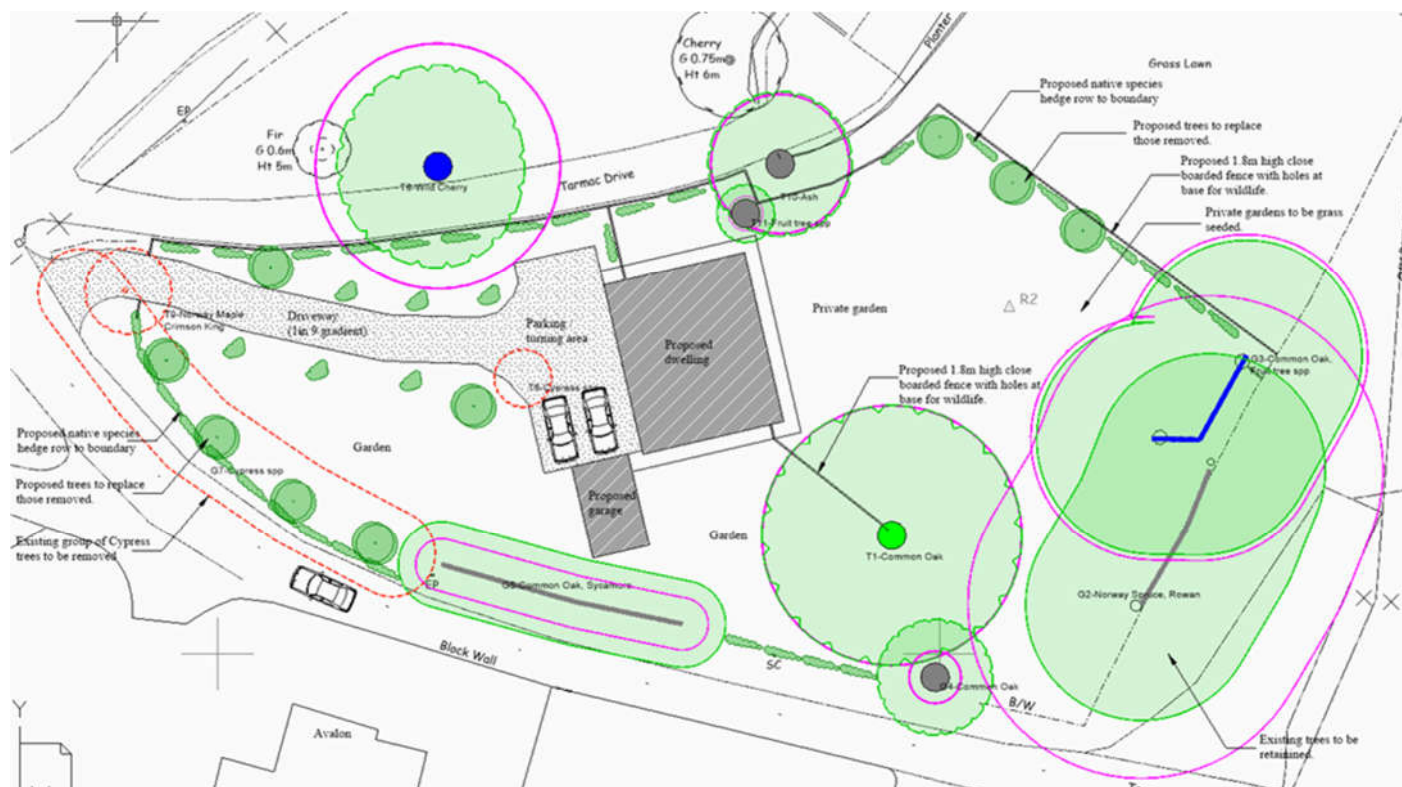
- **Avoid:** The application site is currently covered in low-cut grass for the majority of the site, with several large native trees to the eastern boundary and non-native trees to the southern boundary. It is not within a “Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest, or a National Nature Reserve” or other similarly designated sites, and as such, the Step-Wise approach has been used.
- **Minimise:** The dwelling and garage will be in the grassed garden area, outside of the RPA areas of the mature native trees, to avoid affecting biodiversity.
- **Mitigation:** The non-native trees to the southern boundary will be removed to improve site lines and replaced with new native trees at a ratio of at least 2 new trees for every tree lost.
- **Compensation:** For the loss of grass land, areas of new native hedgerows will be added to the perimeter of the site.

Green Infrastructure

It should be noted that the application is an outline application with full details of compliance with the updated policy agreed upon as part of the reserved matters application. However, the proposed scheme will provide several green infrastructure enhancement opportunities, as outlined in the sections below.

The green and blue elements included in the scheme include:

- Wildlife-friendly planting.
- Native species hedges form wildlife and green corridors through the site.
- A landscape management scheme and aftercare specification to promote wildlife habitat creation.
- SuDS for parking and pedestrian paving.
- A rain garden formed by the creation of a planted, species-rich filter trench.
- A water attenuation scheme to collect and store clean water in a managed system.
- inclusion of wildlife-friendly features.



Indicative landscaping / Green Infrastructure plan

The removal of the large cypress trees to the southern boundary next to the road and their replacement with native trees and hedgerows will help create a safe, pedestrian-friendly area with better natural surveillance.

Wildlife Friendly Planting

While a landscaping scheme has not been prepared to accompany this outline application, there is sufficient land available to allow the planting of a wide range of shrubs and herbaceous plants. This includes plant species that have been selected for their wildlife-friendly value in terms of food sources throughout the seasons.

The planting proposals also include the provision of several new trees to mitigate against the loss of the existing ones.

The existing mature trees along the eastern boundary will be retained in the scheme and managed to reduce any potential nuisance.

Native Species Hedge

Native hedgerows form an important habitat for the purposes of conserving biodiversity and are beneficial to a wide range of biodiversity, including insects, nesting birds, small mammals, lichens, and fungi.

The scheme includes new native species of linear hedgerows along the boundaries, which will be an important habitat by providing refuges, breeding, and feeding sites. Linear habitats also act as wildlife corridors by connecting other habitats of high biodiversity value.

Landscape Management

All of the proposed landscaping (part of a reserved matters application) will fall within the curtilage of the dwelling, and it will be up to the homeowner to take appropriate aftercare to ensure that any created habitats, buffer strips, and landscape planting become established and retained going forward.

The main objectives for landscape management will include:

- The conservation, protection, and enhancement of all retained natural features, including protected habitats and existing trees.
- The establishment, through exemplary horticultural and contractual practices, of a high-quality and functional landscape with wildlife biodiversity enhancements.
- To ensure that plant biosecurity principles, including biodiversity, are embedded in both the implementation and management of all new landscaping.

Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDS)

As part of the reserved matters planning applications, a detailed scheme will be provided by a specialist and will include a system to filter surface water from the paving permeable sub-base, which then migrates into the drainage crate, rain garden, water attenuation, and other drainage features.

Rain Garden

As part of the surface water attenuation scheme there is an opportunity to create a water attenuation filter rain garden. This will have the dual benefit of water storage on site and the opportunity to create an additional biodiverse niche habitat through the planting of a specific range of moisture tolerant plant species such as Carex (Sedge), Foeniculum (Fennel), Cornus (Dogwood) and Lythrum (Loosestrife).

Water Attenuation

Surface water attenuation on site will be included within the SuDS design, which will be composed of:

- A shallow attenuation system to manage flows during higher rainfall events.
- Water collected from highway areas is conveyed into a filter trench (rain garden) for cleaning and management.
- Surplus water is collected in a perforated pipe and conveyed to the filter trench.
- Surplus water in adoptable areas is collected in kerb drains and conveyed to a filter trench (rain garden).

Wildlife Friendly Features

The proposed boundary fencing will include gaps to enable species such as hedgehogs to continue to move across the site. This will be in the form of a small 130x130 mm square gap created in the base of the garden boundary fences, sufficient to allow hedgehogs to pass through but too small for the majority of domestic pets. Gaps will be provided at approximately 3-metre intervals.

Other features that will likely be included as part of the ecological enhancement will include bird and bat boxes.

Summary

Given the green infrastructure design and long-term management proposals, it is considered that the proposed scheme complies fully with the updated chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales, which sets out the policy for biodiversity and nature.