



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

Subject	Dan Y Graig, Pontwalby, Neath		Date	21/03/23
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ASSESSMENT AGAINST POLICY -PLANNING POLICY WALES: STEPWISE APPROACH AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

On the 11th October 2023, ahead of PPW12 being published, the new Chapter 6 came into force with immediate effect. Net benefit must be secured via planning applications using the step-wise approach, including the acknowledgement of off-site compensation measures and the need to consider enhancement and long-term management. Green Infrastructure Statements will be used to demonstrate the step wise approach. The following information will be used in order to show compliance with policy.

Proposed Development: Dan Y Graig, Ponwalby, Neath

Site description: The site is a an area of semi-improved grassland, formerly used as a hay meadow adjacent to Dan Y Graig, Pont Walby, Neath. The habitats within the ownership boundary comprises of woodland that would have been a former hedgerow with trees but overtime has developed into woodland. There is a river on the application sites northern boundary with a disused railway to the south of the ownership boundary with further woodland beyond.

Surrounding Area description: The site is set on the edge of an urban habitat with good connectivity to the landscape via woodland and rivers. The site is accessed from Glan Gwrelych to the west via an existing field access.

Development Impacts: Loss of vegetation (semi-improved grassland). Loss of two trees. Increased site lighting.

Step wise approach

Step 1- Avoidance- Impacts cannot be avoided on existing habitats due to small size of site and due to the need for housing development.

Step 2- Minimise- Impacts have been minimised by retaining some semi-improved grassland vegetation and retaining the boundaries of the site in their entirety.

Step 3- Mitigate/Restore- Mitigation will be via appropriate safeguarding method statements to ensure no harm to protected species and the retention of the majority of some grassland and the site boundaries. Cautious working will be undertaken when clearing the site to prevent killing or injury to hedgehogs. Any site lighting will conform to the following guidance to prevent any indirect impacts on foraging bats <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/> .

Step 4- Compensation on site- The existing grassland will be overseeded with yellow rattle in order to increase species diversity. These habitats will be cut twice per year, using hand tools once in March/April and again no earlier than 15th July in order to mimic hay meadow management and improve the site for reptiles and other species groups. A hibernaculum will be added to the site to improve the site for reptiles. Six native species, as of local provenance as possible will be included within the design to compensate for the loss of the two trees scheduled for removal. Species chosen are two *Sorbus aucuparia*, two *Prunus padus* and two *Corylus avellana*. Please see Figure 1 below for location of specimens.

Biodiversity Enhancements Proposed

Any proposed lawned areas will be seeded with EL1 – Flowering Lawn Mixture, this contains slow growing grasses with a selection of wildflowers that respond well to regular short mowing (<https://wildseed.co.uk/mixtures/view/56>).

A hibernaculum for reptiles will be included within the final design. The following sparrow terrace or similar will be integrated into the each of the new properties <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-house-sparrow-nest-box> . The boxes will be mounted on the western or northern elevations of the buildings. The boxes will be mounted no less than 3.5m from the ground level.

The following bat block:

https://www.nhbs.com/batblock?bkfno=246596&ca_id=1495&adlocale=uk&gclid=CjwKCAiAnO2MBhApEiwA8q0HYTrIltmUdfXSmZQgvmupqeYj1cFwdN5KLrnJOB2F_rfrsEINTpQV1BoCx1EQAvD_BwE or similar will be integrated into the eastern elevation of the new properties. The boxes will be mounted no less than 3.5m from the ground level.

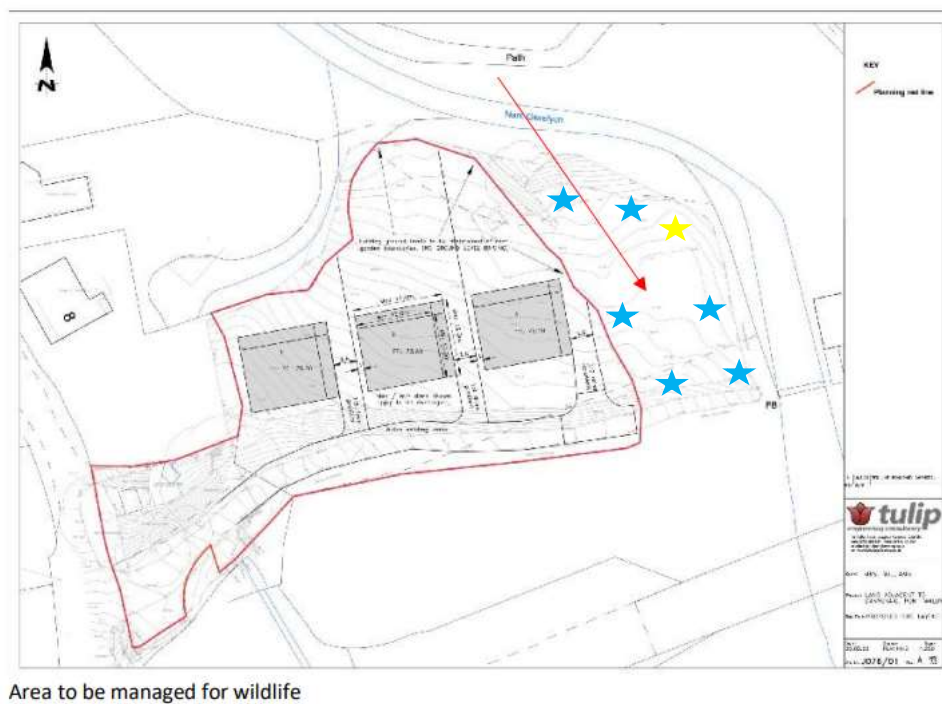


Figure 1: Area to be managed for wildlife (hibernaculum starred yellow; trees starred blue)

The proposed scheme acknowledges the requirement to achieve a Net Benefit for Biodiversity and from the beginning this has been built into the planning of the project. The applicant aims to deliver biodiversity enhancements at the local scale by offering the enhancements stated above on the site. The site will be subject to enhancements along with long term appropriate management.

As result of the ecological measures within this report, it is expected that there will be a demonstrable net benefit for biodiversity. The vegetated habitats to be impacted have been identified as being of relatively low value, with impacts adequately mitigated on-site and net gain being achieved within the site and adjacent land within the clients ownership. All habitats will be retained/created/enhanced on site, as well as and will be subject to a long management for the foreseeable future.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you,

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