

Pioneer 2 HPF, Green Infrastructure Plan

The application site (The Site) measures 6,575m², with the HPF and HTFS comprising 758m² of existing hardstanding and 340m² of bare ground into which the hardstanding will be extended to accommodate the Proposed Development. A narrow strip of semi-natural woodland is also located within the application site where trees may be required to be pruned subject to construction works and vegetation clearance.

The Proposed Development will produce up to 960 kgs of green hydrogen per day, which will be trailered offsite to regional customers. It is estimated that the system will abate approximately 3,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year whilst also reducing tail-pipe emissions from conventional vehicles. The Proposed Development supports both Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's and the Welsh Government's net zero targets.

A Green Infrastructure Plan (Drawing No's. **PRO1000/07/01** (1km radius) & **PRO1000/07/02** (500m radius)) has been prepared to support the planning application and focuses on the enhancements that will be created as part of the Proposed Development but also considers the green linkages within the wider area.

In developing this Green Infrastructure Strategy, consideration was given to the step wise approach when assessing the potential impact of a development on identified habitats and species. The iterative stages of step-wise include avoid, minimise, mitigate, and as a last resort compensate as well as enhance. It should be noted that the application site is located within a heavily industrialised area.

Given the nature of the existing WBE site and the limited size of the Proposed Development, there are no opportunities to allow for public access within or through the Site. The Proposed Development does not preclude any existing green linkages surrounding the existing Biomass Facility.

Protection for statutory and non-statutory sites:

- No statutory ecological designated sites cover the application site or are located within the immediate surrounding area;
- In terms of non-statutory sites, the Junction 38 Wetland Complex SINC is located directly to the north of the application site. Implementation of pollution protection measures will minimise any potential environmental impacts;
- The broadleaf woodland adjacent to the northern boundary of the application site will be securely fenced-off prior to commencement of work to create an ecological buffer that will negate any adverse environmental impacts.

Below are the drawing notes which outline the proposed Green Infrastructure features to be included as part of the Proposed Development.

- One bat box and one bird box will be installed upon the tree T1 within the WBE land ownership which will enhance bird nesting and bat roosting opportunities and allow undisrupted dispersal to local foraging habitats;
- An area of land within the WBE ownership to the north and north-east of the Proposed Development will be enhanced by planting with woodland flower seed mix;
- Existing Wales Coastal Path green link along Heolcae'r Bont Road will be given adequate protection for users during the construction and operational phases.

It is considered that the proposed enhancement features will improve the ecological connectivity of the application site and surrounding area.