

Green Infrastructure Statement

Proposed Development: Installation of 4 x 15m Lighting Masts

Site Address: Seven Sisters RFC, Dulais Road, Seven Sisters, Neath, Neath Port Talbot, SA10 9EL

Applicant: Seven Sisters RFC

Date: 30-03-2026

1. Introduction

This Green Infrastructure (GI) Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the installation of four 15-metre-high lighting masts at Seven Sisters Rugby Football Club, Dulais Road, Seven Sisters.

The statement demonstrates how the proposed development accords with:

- **Planning Policy Wales (PPW, Edition 11)**
- **Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5: Nature Conservation and Planning**
- **TAN 12: Design**
- **Future Wales: The National Plan 2040**
- **Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (LDP)** policies relating to green infrastructure and biodiversity

Green infrastructure is defined as a multifunctional network of natural and semi-natural features, including green spaces, vegetation, and ecological corridors.

2. Site Description

The application site comprises an established **rugby football club and playing fields**, located within the settlement of Seven Sisters.

Surrounding Context

- Predominantly residential areas to the north and east
- Open land and valley landscape to the south and west
- The site lies within the Dulais Valley setting, characterised by a mix of urban and semi-rural land uses

Existing Green Infrastructure Features

- **Managed grass playing pitches** (low ecological value but important open green space)
- **Perimeter vegetation**, including hedgerows and scattered trees
- Connectivity to wider green corridors within the surrounding valley landscape

There are no statutory ecological designations (e.g. SSSI, SAC, SPA) within the application site boundary.

3. Assessment of Impacts on Green Infrastructure

3.1 Construction Phase

Construction will be limited to the installation of four lighting columns and associated foundations.

Potential impacts:

- Localised ground disturbance at mast bases
- Temporary disturbance from construction activities

Mitigation:

- Works confined to small, defined areas
- No removal of significant vegetation anticipated
- Protection of retained vegetation during works

3.2 Operational Phase

Lighting and Ecological Considerations

The primary green infrastructure consideration relates to artificial lighting and its potential effects on nocturnal wildlife.

Potential impacts:

- Light spill affecting boundary vegetation

Mitigation measures:

- Use of **directional, downward-facing luminaires**
- Installation of **lighting shields/cowls** to minimise light spill

- Lighting focused solely on the playing surface
 - Avoidance of illumination of boundary vegetation where practicable
 - Potential use of **timers or restricted operating hours**
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3.3 Habitat and Vegetation Impact

- The development footprint is minimal and confined to existing playing surfaces
 - No significant loss of habitat is anticipated
 - Existing trees and hedgerows will be retained and protected
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4. Green Infrastructure Integration

The proposal integrates with existing green infrastructure by:

- Retaining all key vegetation features
- Minimising land take
- Avoiding disruption to existing ecological corridors

The open character and function of the site as a community green space will be maintained.

5. Enhancement Opportunities

In accordance with Planning Policy Wales, opportunities to enhance green infrastructure have been identified:

- **Native planting** along site boundaries where feasible
- Installation of **bat boxes and bird boxes** on retained trees or adjacent structures
- Enhanced management of peripheral grassland to improve biodiversity value

These measures will contribute to achieving a **biodiversity net benefit**.

6. Ecosystem Resilience

The proposal supports the objectives of the **Environment (Wales) Act 2016** by:

- Minimising habitat fragmentation
 - Reducing disturbance through sensitive lighting design
 - Supporting biodiversity enhancements
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7. Planning Policy Context (Local)

The development accords with relevant **Neath Port Talbot LDP** policies, including:

- **Policy SP15 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity**
- **Policy EN6 – Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites**
- **Policy BE1 – Design**

The proposal supports sustainable development while safeguarding green infrastructure.

8. Conclusion

The proposed installation of four 15m lighting masts at Seven Sisters RFC:

- Will have a **minimal physical and ecological impact**
- Retains existing green infrastructure features
- Incorporates **appropriate mitigation for lighting impacts**
- Provides opportunities for **biodiversity enhancement**

The development is therefore considered **acceptable in green infrastructure terms** and compliant with national and local planning policy in Wales.