

Green Infrastructure Statement

Hillside Farm
Willington
Malpas
SY14 7LY

Construction of a Replacement Milking Parlour Building and all associated works

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1. Policy Background

1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) supports a full planning application for the construction of a replacement agricultural building to be used as a milking parlour (and all associated works) at Hillside Farm, Willington, Malpas, SY14 7LY.

1.2 This GIS aims to respond to the requirements of Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024). This states:

"6.2.11 The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design. With careful planning and design, informed by an appropriate level of assessment, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places, help to overcome the potential for conflicting objectives, and contribute to health and well-being outcomes.

6.2.12 A green infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications. This will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. In the case of minor development this will be a short description and should not be an onerous requirement for applicants. The green infrastructure statement will be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the step-wise approach (Paragraph 6.4.15) has been applied.

6.2.13 There are multiple ways of incorporating green infrastructure, depending on the needs and opportunities a site presents, and the green infrastructure assessment should be referred to, as appropriate, in order to ascertain local priorities. Landscaping, green roofs, grass verges, sustainable drainage and gardens are examples of individual design measures that can have wider cumulative benefits, particularly in relation to biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems as well as in securing the other desired environmental qualities of places. Wider landscape measures, such as the creation of species rich meadows, woodlands and the improvement of linkages between areas of biodiversity value should be considered for larger scale development. In most cases the green infrastructure statement should highlight any baseline data considered and surveys and assessments undertaken, including but not limited to, habitats and species surveys, arboricultural surveys and assessments, sustainable drainage statements, landscape and ecological management plans, open space assessments and green space provision and active travel links".

1.3 The 'step-wise approach', as outlined below, demonstrates the sequential approach that has been adopted as part of the proposed development 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. In addition, enhancement has been secured by delivering a net biodiversity benefit on-site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.

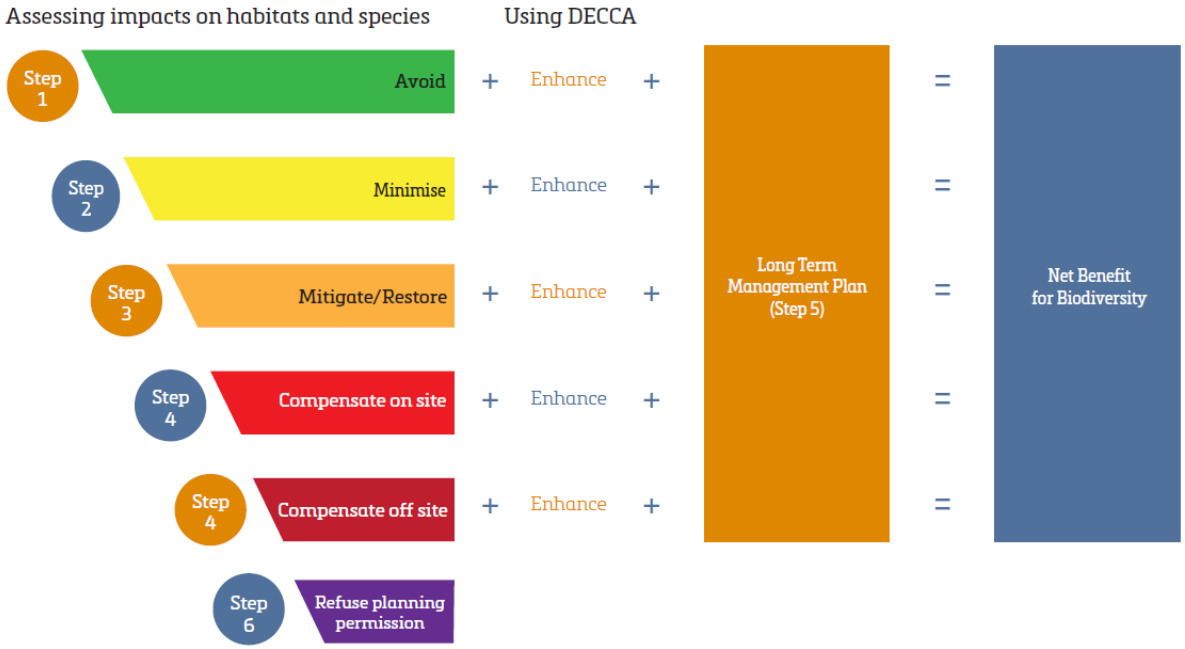


Figure 1: A summary of the step-wise approach taken from Chapter 6 of PPW (Ed. 12, 2024)

2. The Proposed Development

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing redundant building on-site and the construction of a replacement building in its place, to provide a modern milking parlour.

2.2 As noted, the existing mid-20th Century building, to be demolished, currently lies redundant owing to its age, design and condition, and is not fit for purpose as part of modern agriculture. It was originally used as a milking parlour, however upon the construction of a new milking parlour on the farm several decades ago, its use transferred to more of a general-purpose agricultural building; often being used as a sheep shed. In recent years, the building has become redundant on the farm; often being used to store rubbish – with the building no longer being an efficient use of the land.

2.3 The proposed development comprises the complete demolition of the existing building and its replacement with a new steel-portal framed agricultural building broadly the same footprint, to house the farm's new milking parlour.

2.4 The proposed building would be attached to the existing buildings to the east, and will have a lean-to roof.

2.5 It will measure 29.5m in length and 10m in width; having a similar footprint to the existing building. It will have an eaves height of 3.8m above ground level.

2.6 The proposed building will be finished externally with concrete lower walls and with 'slate blue' box profile cladding above. The roof will be finished with grey fibre cement sheeting. The north-eastern (end) elevation will remain open-sided to facilitate access, and on the south-eastern elevation the building will be 'open' to the existing adjacent buildings.

2.7 Clean rainwater from the roof will be directed to a new clean water tank on the building's exterior whilst dirty water drainage will be directed to the farm's existing slurry reception pit. This would ensure clean and dirty waters would not interact or mix. The slurry storage capacity calculations submitted as part of planning application reference: P/2025/0086 have taken into account the proposed new milking parlour.

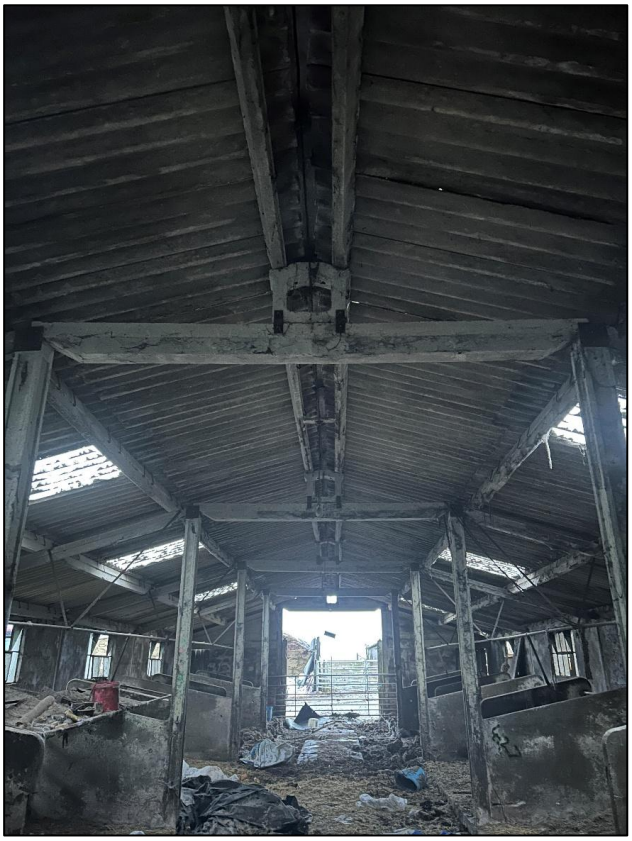
2.8 Importantly, stock numbers on the holding will not change as a consequence of the proposed development. Instead, the development is primarily proposed in order to provide enhanced standards of animal welfare on the farm, to align the farming operations with the requirements of NRW and the Welsh Government, and to improve the overall functionality of the farming business.

3. Green Infrastructure Baseline

3.1 The application site currently comprises a mid-20th Century redundant agricultural building. Photos of the existing building (to be demolished) are provided below:







3.2 Given the design, age and construction of the existing building, together with its siting at the centre of the farm complex, it is considered there is a low likelihood of protected species being present on-site.

3.3 Further, there are no statutory or non-statutory ecological sites located within the vicinity of the application site.

3.4 Given the above, the application site is considered to have a low green infrastructure baseline at present.

4. The Green Infrastructure Strategy

4.1 The approach to the design of the proposed building is fully outlined within the accompanying Planning Statement. The submitted design has been arrived at following thought being given to the environmental effects of the proposed development.

4.2 It is proposed that two Woodcrete bird nest boxes and one Woodcrete bat box be erected on the exterior of the proposed building. These measures would ensure that a net-benefit for biodiversity would be provided on the site over and above the application site's green infrastructure baseline.

4.3 The step-wise approach has been followed as impacts upon habitats and species would be avoided through the siting and design of the proposal. The development would also not prejudice connectivity between nearby habitat for protected species and wider biodiversity.

4.4 Off-site ecological mitigation will not be required as there will not be any impacts upon protected species on the site.

4.5 The proposal would also achieve an overall net benefit for biodiversity on the holding over and above the baseline.

5. Conclusion

5.1 It is clear the proposed development would not cause any impacts upon existing green infrastructure, biodiversity, ecosystem resilience or protected species. The proposal has fully followed the step-wise approach as prescribed by Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales, and the development would provide a net benefit for biodiversity which is commensurate to the scale of the proposals.