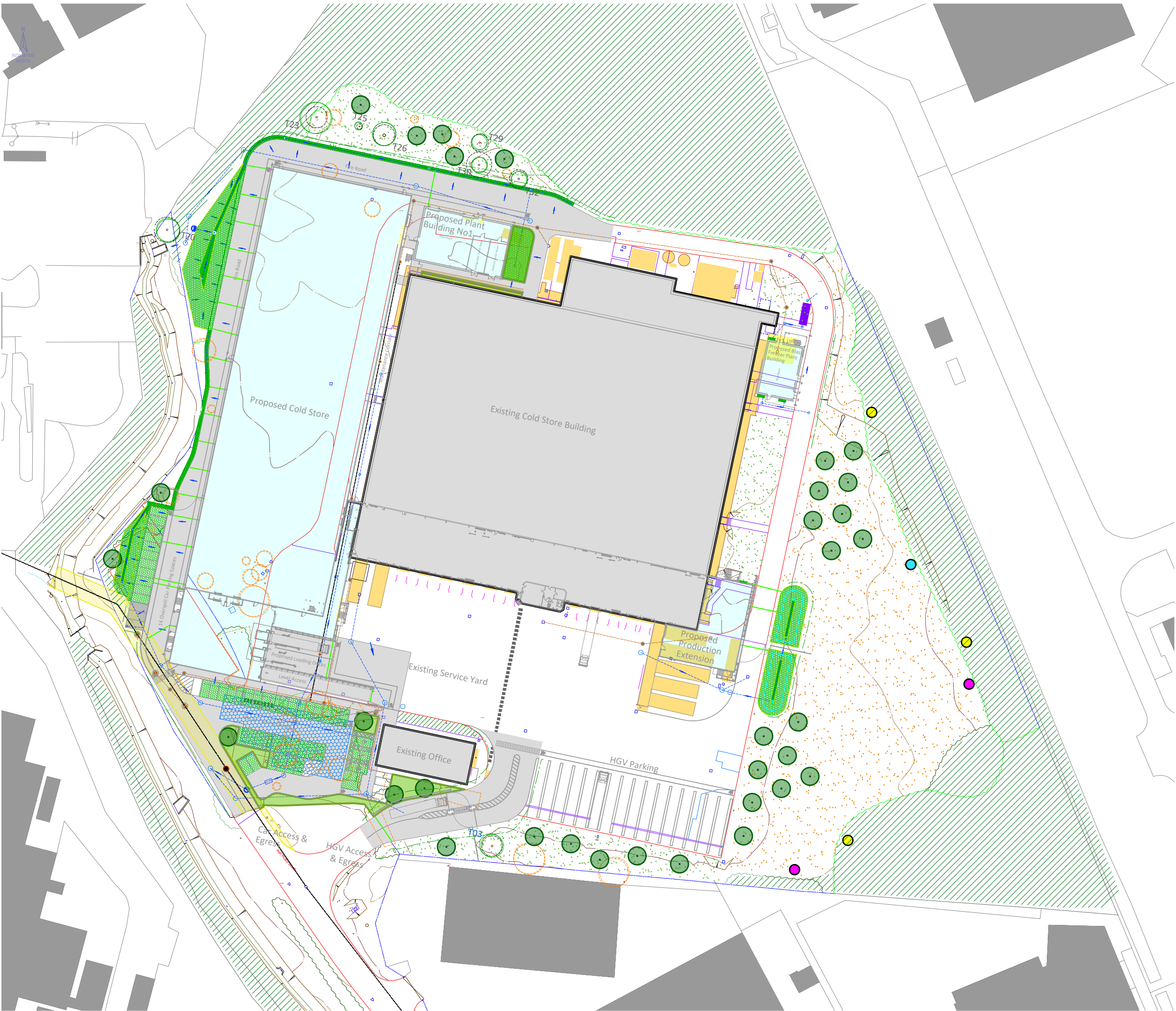




- Existing trees to be retained. Black dash denotes root protection area
- Existing trees to be removed
- Existing vegetation (predominately scrub) to be retained - approximate extent
- Marshy grassland to be retained
- Neutral grassland to be retained
- Proposed tree planting to mitigate for trees lost due to the development and to help increase biodiversity.

Proposed tree species within the marshy grassland to the east to include *Alnus glutinosa* (common alder), *Betula pubescens* (downy birch), and *Salix alba* (white willow).

Proposed tree species within the semi-improved neutral grassland at the north, south and west to include *Prunus avium* (wild cherry), *Betula pendula* (silver birch), *Sorbus aucuparia* (rowan), and *Malus sylvestris* (crabapple).

- Proposed planting areas including the rain garden to the north for amenity and biodiversity value.

Proposed plant species around the new car park in the south to include:

Choisya ternata (Mexican orange blossom), *Prunus laurocerasus* 'Zabeliana' (cherry laurel 'Zabeliana'), *Lonicera nitida* 'Maygreen' (shrubby honeysuckle), *Pachysandra terminalis* (Japanese spurge), and *Cistus x corbariensis* (hybrid rock rose).

Proposed plant species at the rain garden to the north to include:

Cornus alba 'Sibirica' (westonbirt dogwood), *Hydrangea* 'Preziosa' (Hydrangea), *Hypericum calycinum* (rose of Sharon), and *Geranium* 'Johnson's Blue' (Cransebill).

- Swales to be seeded with a suitable species-rich grass mix such as Emorsgate EM8 'Meadow Mixture for Wetlands'.
- Indicative location for a pond to be created within existing marshy grassland. Placement and creation of the pond to be completed following further survey work for great crested newts.
- Indicative location of proposed crevice bat rocket box, on a 5m pole. Placement to be located at the border of the scrub and marshy grassland and not too close to trees
- Indicative location of proposed bird box, to be installed along the eastern boundary on mature trees.

Building with Nature (BwN): Standards Framework

BwN describes "individual Standards that collectively form a definition of **high-quality green infrastructure.**" There are 6 Core Standards, 2 Wellbeing Standards, 2 Water Standards and 2 Wildlife Standards as below. This GI Plan/Statement signposts the standards:

- CORE Standards
- Standard 1 - Optimises Multifunctionality and Connectivity
- Standard 2 - Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency
- Standard 3 - Maximises Environmental Net Gains
- Standard 4 - Champions a Context Driven Approach
- Standard 5 - Creates Distinctive Places
- Standard 6 - Secured Effective Place-keeping

- WELLBEING Standards
- Standard 7 - Brings Nature Closer to People
- Standard 8 - Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

- WATER Standard
- Standard 9 - Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management
- Standard 10 - Brings Water Closer to People

- WILDLIFE Standards
- Standard 11 - Delivers Wildlife Enhancement
- Standard 12 - Underpins Nature's Recovery

Developments should seek to retain existing habitats within the proposal and avoid the loss of vegetation where possible. If this is not possible, developments should seek to mitigate for the loss of habitats and/or provide enhancement measures to provide net benefits for biodiversity.

The wider development seeks to implement, enhance and manage new habitats within the Landscape Character Areas. Within the site, new planting includes trees, shrubs herbaceous plants, and grass seeding

- New tree planting** will be proposed within the site. [BwN 1, 2, 3, 7, 11,12]
- Ground cover planting** at the rain garden to the north and around the car park area will provide visual interest, and increase biodiversity. [BwN 1, 2, 3, 7, 11]

Introduction

This **Green Infrastructure Plan/Statement** relates to a proposed extension building, new access, and parking at the Norish chilled food distribution centre, Wrexham industrial estate, North Wales. The site currently comprises "semi-improved neutral grassland, marshy grassland, standalone water, dense scrub (including willow carr), mixed woodland, hardstanding and buildings" (Ref: Just Mammals Limited).

Refer also to the Landscape Strategy by Tir Collective Landscape Architects, the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Just Mammals Limited, and the Arboricultural Report by Martin Boardman & Associates.

Policy Context

Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

PPW aims to contribute towards the delivery of sustainable development, embedding the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. PPW ingrains Placemaking Wales Charter and how sustainable development can be achieved through implementing placemaking.

Section 6 sets out **green infrastructure** and how it can be integrated into developments, which should be **protected and enhanced** due to the **multi-functional** roles. **A proactive approach to green infrastructure and biodiversity** should be adopted to **help reverse the decline in biodiversity and increase the resilience of ecosystems**.

Following consultation between 09 March and 31 May 2023, chapter 6 was updated on 11 October 2023 in advance of version 12 of PPW being published. The changes to chapter 6 address the need to keep up momentum on fulfilling Wales' our COP15 obligations and the Biodiversity Deep Dive recommendations.

The main changes to chapter 6 of PPW are as follows:

- Green Infrastructure:** there is stronger emphasis on a proactive approach to green infrastructure and the submission of proportionate green infrastructure statements with planning applications and signposting Building with Nature standards.
- Net Benefit for Biodiversity and the Step-wise Approach:** detail is provided on securing net benefit for biodiversity through the application of the step-wise approach. The use of the green infrastructure statement as a means of demonstrating the stepwise approach is made explicit.
- Protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest:** strengthened approach to the protection of SSSIs.

- Trees and Woodlands:** there is closer alignment with the stepwise approach and promotion of tree planting as part of development.

The stepwise approach to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity

The stepwise approach for this Green Infrastructure Plan/Statement is an eight-step process, inspired by Swansea Council's Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance. It is a useful SPG which demonstrates a stepwise approach to development, not just for within Swansea but for developments in other jurisdictions including Wrexham. It comprises the following which are referred to in this GI plan/statement:

- Step A: Identify and Assess** existing or potential important habitats or species and ecological connectivity corridors.
- Step B: Avoid** loss of any existing or potential important habitats or species, or fragmentation of ecological connectivity.
- Step C: Respond and Design** - Identify and assess existing or potential important habitats or species and ecological connectivity corridors.
- Step D: Mitigate** for any unavoidable harm or loss to important habitats or species or the fragmentation of ecological connectivity.
- Step E: Compensate** - Address the residual effects of a proposal after avoidance and mitigation have been considered and provide appropriate compensation.
- Step F: Enhance** - Explore all opportunities to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal.
- Step G: Manage** - Submit and implement long term management plan of agreed and appropriate mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.
- Step H: Monitor** - Submit and implement a monitoring plan to ensure that the development and associated mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures deliver the attributes or resilience post-construction.

Landscape Strategy

The landscape strategy is based on retaining where possible existing habitats which immediately surround the existing and proposed buildings and the parking/access area in the south. The existing habitats comprise semi-improved neutral grassland, marshy grassland, and scattered trees as identified by Just Mammals' Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Further detailed assessment of individual trees and groups of trees/vegetation have been identified within the Arboricultural Report by Martin Boardman

& Associates. Wider site habitats which include scrub and woodland will be retained, but any encroachment into these areas will be minimal.

Several existing trees and blocks of vegetation will need to be removed to accommodate the development, but others will need to be removed due to arboricultural reasons, regardless of development plans.

The tree planting will be provided where possible due to site constraints but they will help contribute towards amenity and biodiversity values. Species selection will be suitable for location such as those which can tolerate damp conditions. Tree species will also be native.

Ornamental shrubs will be provided around the new parking area for visual interest, and species selection will include a combination of flowering evergreen and deciduous plants. The drainage strategy includes swales, but there will be a rain garden to the north. The rain garden will be planted with shrub species to provide year-round interest.

Green Infrastructure

The elements that are considered to form the existing green infrastructure of the site and surrounding context are:

- Mixed woodland, dense scrub and standing water
- Individual trees
- Neutral and Marshy grasslands
- Other habitats of ecological value

The green infrastructure elements are described below, identifying and assessing existing or important habitat or species and ecological connectivity corridors which have been informed by desktop studies and specialists' reports.

Mixed woodland, dense scrub, and standing water

The mixed woodland and dense scrub make an important contribution to landscape character. They are also important green infrastructure elements for their biodiversity and habitat value.

The mixed woodland is "confined to a small area on a north-east facing slope in the northern area of the site." (Ref: Just Mammals). The proposals at the site will not affect the mixed woodland area. It will all be retained - **Step A and Step B.**

The dense scrub is "located around the periphery of the site. It varies in density, ranging between relatively open at the base to complete and impenetrable thicket." (Ref: Just Mammals). **Step A.**

Some minor areas will be affected by the development proposals, but the majority of the scrub will be retained. The landscape scheme does not propose replacement scrub planting because the vast majority will not be

affected by the development. **Step C.**

The scrub area includes species such as bramble, blackthorn, hawthorn, field rose and dogwood which should naturally regenerate in areas where there will be disturbance due to the development. Opportunities for mitigation scrub planting could be created within the neutral grassland area to the north if necessary. **Step D.**

There are "two distinct areas of standing water or ponds... in the south-east... water levels appear to be relatively low, although it is apparent that water is present all year-round due to the presence of certain floral species." (Ref: Just Mammals). **Step A.** The proposed development will not affect the existing ponds. **Step B.**

Individual trees

An Arboricultural Report has been prepared by Martin Boardman & Associates. The tree categorisation within the report forms a source of data for Stepwise approach, **Step A.** The tree survey has identified what trees will need to be removed to facilitate the development and what trees will need to be removed due to arboricultural reasons.

Trees to be removed to facilitate the development low category trees (C category). There are no TPOs on the site.

To address tree loss at the site, the green infrastructure proposals include **Step D, Step E** and **Step F.** Mitigation for tree loss is provided through planting 33 new native species trees.

Neutral and Marshy Grasslands

Neutral grassland is "present surrounding the majority of the existing buildings on site. it appears to be regularly managed and is of a uniform height." (Ref: Just Mammals). In addition "a collection of circa **20 bee orchid (Ophrys apifera) rosettes** was identified at the southern edge of the site." **Step A.**

The neutral grassland will be predominantly affected due to the extension building in the west, the creation of a new car park and access road in the south, and smaller building extensions in the east. The bee orchid rosettes will also be affected by the creation of the parking area.

Mitigation for the Orchids as noted in Just Mammal's report include encouraging bee orchids to "colonise along the northern edge of the scrub habitat through scarifying an area of soil to mimic the level of soil disturbance favoured by bee orchids, as well as enriching the existing soil with lime to create a more calcareous character..." and "Hand-broadcasting seeds of a 'cover crop' species..." such as "...Emorsgate EM6." **Steps C, D and E.**

The marshy grassland in the east will be partially affected due to the creation of a swale and mitigation tree planting, although the creation of these features will help increase biodiversity, contribute towards managing rainwater runoff, and mitigate for existing vegetation being removed.

Other habitats of ecological value

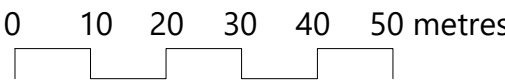
The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) prepared by Just Mammals Limited provides a point of reference for mitigation and biodiversity enhancements. **Step A.**

The PEA provides mitigation recommendations for orchids (see previous paragraphs), reptiles, great crested newt, otter and badger, nesting birds and bats.

The mitigation summary provided by the PEA outlines:

- Orchids** - as per the previous paragraphs.
- Reptiles** - additional surveys to be undertaken to ascertain the presence / likely absence of reptiles.
- Great crested newt** - additional surveys to be undertaken to ascertain the presence / likely absence of great crested newt.
- Otter and badger** - precautionary measures to be undertaken during the construction phase.
- Nesting birds** - demolition works to be undertaken outside the bird nesting season and installation of three bird boxes to be provided on mature trees along the eastern boundary.
- Additional enhancement measures: Bats** - installation of two crevice bat rocket boxes, each on a 5m pole, located at the border of scrub and marshy grassland along the eastern boundary.
- Additional enhancement measures** - pond creation in the north east corner.

All recommendations within the PEA have been reflected and included within the green infrastructure proposal for the site, reflecting **Step D, Step E** and **Step F.**



Scale 1:1,000 @ A1

