
Green Infrastructure Statement

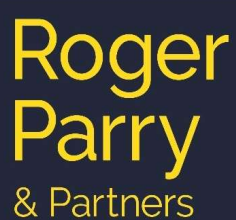
**Ridley Wood Farm
Ridleywood
Wrexham
LL13 9US**

Change of use of existing buildings
from agriculture to commercial use
and all associated works

TSM & TR Lunt

August 2024

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1. Policy Background

1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) supports a full planning application for the change of use of existing buildings from agriculture to commercial use at Ridley Wood Farm, Wrexham.

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.

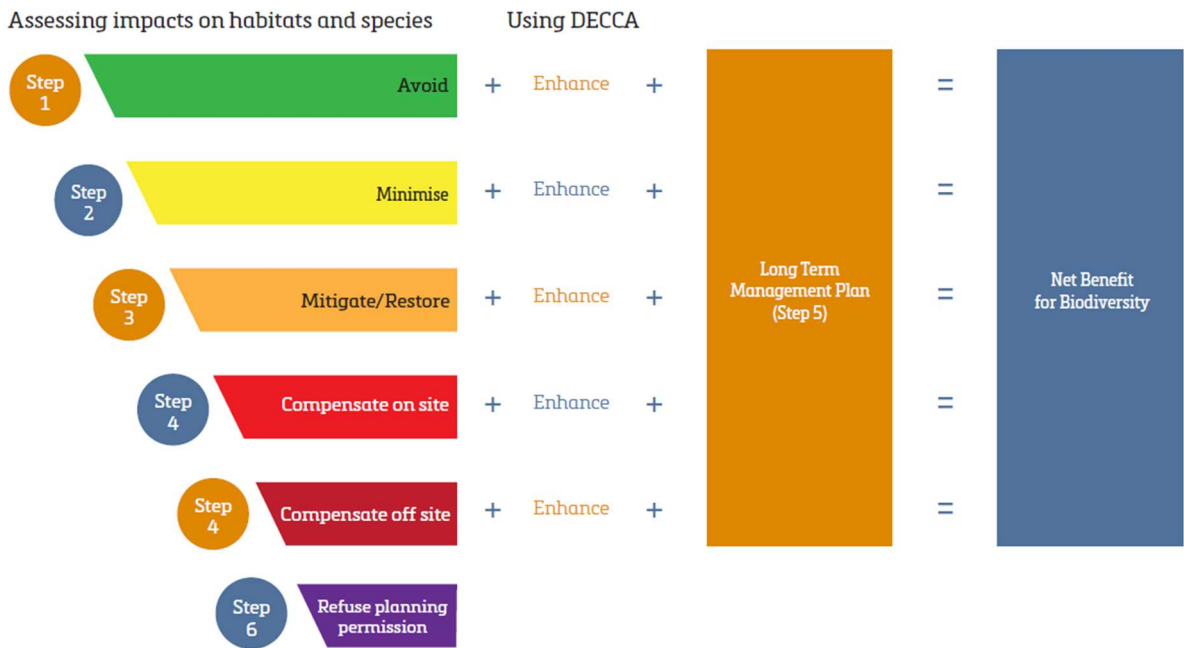


Figure 1: A summary of the step-wise approach taken from Chapter 6 of PPW (Ed. 12, 2024)

2. The Proposed Development

2.1 The proposed development comprises the change of use of existing buildings from agriculture to commercial use at Ridley Wood Farm, Wrexham. All of the buildings are existing and located within the existing farmyard at Ridleywood Farm. The proposal will utilise five of the buildings on the farm which will remain of the same footprint as currently constructed. It is not proposed to change or extend any part of the buildings.

3. Green Infrastructure Baseline

- 3.1 As noted, the application site relates to existing buildings on an existing area of concrete hardstanding located amongst the farmyard complex at Ridley Wood Farm. The site itself is therefore considered to be devoid of any green infrastructure at present.
- 3.2 The proposal would be using the existing agricultural buildings. As established in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, none of the buildings would be suitable for use by roosting bats or nesting birds, and the structures are therefore considered unlikely to host any biodiversity of interest at present.
- 3.3 The application site is not located within or near to any statutory or non-statutory designated ecological sites, and therefore the proposed development does not have any potential to cause an impact upon protected sites.

4. The Green Infrastructure Strategy

- 4.1 The approach to the design of the proposed building is fully outlined within the accompanying Justification 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 four sections of new native hedges will be planted along with 5 new trees to the north of the site. Additionally proposed are wildlife enhancements in the form of two Woodcrete bat boxes, two Woodcrete bird nest boxes and three Woodcrete sparrow boxes; all to be erected on the side of the buildings. The locations of the proposed planting and wildlife boxes are shown on the submitted Biodiversity Enhancement Plan, an extract of which is below:



Figure 2: Location of NBB Measures

- 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 Applicant will ensure the long-term management and maintenance of the proposed boxes to ensure they are kept in a useable condition, along with using the Net Benefit for Biodiversity document to manage the proposed planting.

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.