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Client Name:	**Davies**
Site Address:	**Land at Duke's View** **Hanmer** **Whitchurch** **SY13 3DS**
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Table of Contents

1 PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT 1
2 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL VALUE 1
3 BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS 2
3.1 Artificial Enhancements 2
3.2 Natural Enhancements 3

1 Purpose of the Document

Ben Jones Ecology was commissioned by Ms J Davies to produce information to satisfy condition 6 of the planning permission P/2024/1617, granted in January 2025. The development is for the change of land use from agricultural to equestrian via the construction of an all-weather manège at Duke's View, Hanmer.

This document has these principal aims:

- To provide details of ecological and biodiversity enhancements proposed as part of the development to ensure a Net Benefit for Biodiversity is achieved

Net Benefit for Biodiversity is a continual theme throughout Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12th edition, whereby "*All development must deliver a net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience from the baseline state (proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed)*."

This document has been prepared by Ben Jones BSc (hons) MSc MCIEEM, an ecologist with over 10 years' experience conducting ecological appraisals.

Methodology

The statement has been produced in line with requirements outlined in PPW and based on preliminary ecological assessment and Green Infrastructure Statement, both produced in November 2024 by Ben Jones Ecology (PEA BJ24-206.2 and GIS BJ24-206.2 respectively).

The site is a continually grazed equine pasture with extremely short sward and very low species diversity. This is a habitat of very low ecological value, so this document has been prepared in a proportionate manner.

2 Baseline Ecological Value

The site visit conducted in November 2024 identifies the site as pasture grassland of no botanical interest.

The site is within the vicinity of several ponds and mature trees lining the access driveway. These are features of high ecological and connective value in the vicinity.

3 Biodiversity Enhancements

3.1 Artificial Enhancements

The PEA identifies opportunities to enhance roosting value for bats and nesting value for bats by erecting artificial boxes for both species groups on nearby mature trees to the north, or on buildings to the south. The following information is taken directly from the PEA report.

3.1.1 Bats

It is recommended that provision be made for roosting opportunities for bats with the erection of at least one woodcrete bat box in the nearby trees on or nearby buildings. These will be erected at a height of 3-4 m and in a southerly, westerly or easterly facing direction.



Figure 3.1. Example woodcrete bat box: Schwegler 1FF & Beaumaris Bat Box Midi

3.1.2 Birds

It is recommended that a range of woodcrete boxes are erected around the site to provide an enhancement for passerine birds, and a selection of the following would be appropriate.

a. Sparrow Terraces should be erected under the eaves of a building at a minimum height of 3m, in a westerly, northerly or easterly aspect.

b. 26/32mm hole nest boxes (e.g. Schwegler 1b) should be installed at a minimum height of 3m in a westerly, northerly or easterly aspect.



Figure 3.2. Bird boxes

3.2 Natural Enhancements

The Green Infrastructure Statement identifies that the loss of a relatively small footprint of low value grassland is of no significant consequence to local wildlife, and the connective infrastructure around the site will not be hampered by the works. It also states that the client is keen to plant new trees on currently unvegetated parts of the site boundary to provide an enhancement ecological link between habitats in the vicinity.



Figure 3.3. Approximate proposed strip of new trees shown by red dashed line

The PEA states that newly planted trees will be native species, locally sourced where possible (i.e. within a 50-mile radius), and from the list below.

Table 3.1. Trees proposed for enhancement

Common Name	*Latin Name*
English Oak	*Quercus robur*
Sessile Oak	*Quercus petrea*
Lime	*Tilia cordata*
Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*
Silver Birch	*Betula pendula*

Shaded or boggy areas are to be avoided for planting locations. The area outlined in the plan above was appropriate for planting at the time of survey in 2024. Weeds and grass will be removed within 1m of the planting plots top begin with to minimise competition and risk of damage while mowing.

Where any new soil will be imported to site, it will be to BS3882:2015 Specification for topsoil. It will be free from subsoil, litter, roots of weeds (especially invasives) and other debris that may be injurious to plant growth. Soil will be handled in accordance with the Good Practice Guidelines for Handling Soils. It will only be handled at the driest time of year in order to prevent compaction.

Tree Protection

Wild animals such as deer, rabbits and hare can cause damage to newly planted trees. Tree guards are required to protect the trees. Rabbit fencing (wire mesh) should be fixed around the base of the tree and should extend up to 2m high to protect the trees from deer. Grasses and other plants within the guards will be managed by hand, particularly whilst the trees are young and being established and if there is evidence of swamping.

Failure Replacements

Within the first three years, any plants that are seen to be failing will be replaced to the cost of the developer. This will include, for example, removal of the failing plants, re-digging and preparation of a tree pit, acquisition of fresh topsoil to the same standard as outlined above and subsequent planting of a new plant.

If trees need replacing the replacement tree should not be planted in the exact position of the old one unless more than 10 to 20 years has passed since the old tree was removed. This is due to risk of the ground being impoverished or infected with disease by the remaining roots being retained in the ground. Trees will be planted 1m from the original planting pit if replanted within 10 years.

Dead trees will be removed mechanically using a tractor to remove the roots, or taken down by chain saw in sections,

New trees will be planted in spring (March) or autumn (November) to replace those lost.

- The planting pit will be dug sufficiently to accommodate the root system of the tree without the roosts being curled.
- The hole will be lightly forked to loosen any compaction.
- Compost will be incorporated into the hole
- The tree root will be treated with mycorrhizal fungi to assist with root growth.
- The pit will be back filled with compost and soil
- The tree will be staked and protected with a guard
- A 1m area around the tree will be mulched with straw or composted green waste to reduce weed competition and maintain moisture.

Ongoing Management

Eventually mistletoe is likely to grow on the trees and whilst this can be excellent for biodiversity it can reduce the health of a tree. If mistletoe becomes a problem, it will be managed in November or December by cutting as close to the bark of the tree as possible without damaging the bark.

Table 3.2. Monitoring requirement

Habitat	Monitoring Activity	Key Indicator	Targets	Frequency	Time of Year
Bat Boxes & Bird Boxes	Examine from ground level	Check for damage Check for blockage	• Undamaged • Unblocked (i.e. by wasps nest)	Annual	Winter
Newly planted trees	Examine the trees from ground level	Check for failing plants. Check for other vegetation under the canopy Check status of tree guards	• No failing plants • No damage to tree guards and subsequent bark damage • Tree canopy is oversailing vegetation beneath • Microhabitats for invertebrates available	Annual	Summer