BERSHAM IRON WORKS

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

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Garth Road
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL572RT
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Report Ref: EE.5177.AB.25
Date: /10/2025

1. INTRODUCTION

This Green Infrastructure Statement has been produced by Enfys Ecology for Groundwork North Wales and provides a brief statement associated with a proposal to construct a new timber shelter, access track and associated services.

Green infrastructure (GI) is defined in Planning Policy for Wales (PPW) Edition 12[1] as "*the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places*". Development proposals should take GI into consideration in order to avoid negative impacts on habitats and species, and seek ways to maintain and enhance biodiversity. Impacts on habitats and species should be treated in a step-wise manner (PPW 12, paragraph 6.4.15), by seeking to:

- **Avoid** damage to biodiversity in its widest sense by maintaining the largest possible area of existing habitat supporting biodiversity and functioning ecosystems, particularly Section 7 habitats and species where present, through careful development design and consideration of long-term maintenance and management and ensuring that retained habitats continue to be well connected to adjacent habitats to provide connectivity for key species.
- **Mitigate** or **restore** by identifying measures to address the specific negative effects by repairing damaged habitats and disturbed species. The measures should seek to restore in excess of like for like, accounting for disturbance and time lags for the recovery of habitat and species, and in every case, mitigation or restoration measures should seek to build ecosystem resilience within the site and where possible the wider area.
- As a last resort off-site **compensation** for unavoidable damage must be provided. This must be of significant magnitude to fully compensate for any loss.
- 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).

The Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) 2013 – 2028 and Local Planning Guidance Notes provide relevant information associated with biodiversity and green infrastructure in Wrexham Borough County Council area:

- WCBC LDP 2013-2028 Policy SP5: Planning Obligations
- WCBC LDP 2013-2028 Policy SP12: Design Principles & Masterplanning Framework
- WCBC LDP 2013-2028 Policy SP14: Natural Environment
- WCBC LDP 2013-2028 Policy SP19: Green Infrastructure
- WCBC LDP 2013-2028 Policy NE1: International and National Nature Conservation Designations

[1] See: https://www.gov.wales/planning-policy-wales

- WCBC LDP 2013-2028 Policy NE2: Local Designations for Nature Conservation and Geological Importance
- WCBC LDP 2013-2028 Policy NE3: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
- WCBC LPG Note No 7 – Landscape and Development.
- WCBC LPG Note No 17 - Trees and Development.
- WCBC LPG Note No 26 - Landscape and Industrial Developments.
- WCBC LPG Note No 29 – Wrexham Industrial Estate Employment Development and Nature Conservation.
- WCBC LPG Note No 32 – Biodiversity and Development.
- WCBC LPG Note No 35 – Great Crested Newt Mitigation Requirements Johnstown Newt Site SAC and the Wider Countryside.

2. Site Details

2.1 The development site is currently a hard-surfaced track and hardstanding areas leading to an improved field with short grass. The proposal is for a 4 x 10m timber classroom shelter to be constructed on the eastern side of the field with and access track to link with existing hardstanding on the western side. Mains water and electric supply will be created within the existing and proposed track area.

2.2 The reports / drawings reviewed in the production of this Green Infrastructure Statement are detailed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Project Information Sources

Information	Organisation	Reference and Date
Proposed site plan	Bhb architects	4269 – 50 – B 16/4/25
Mechanical services overview	Bhb architects	25817/M/05 23/6/25
Proposed plan of classroom and eco-WC	Bhb architects	4269 – 51 – C 16/4/25
Sketch layout	Bhb architects	SK05
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	Enfys Ecology	EE.5177.AB.25 Bersham PEA 6.10.25

3. SITE BASELINE AND CONNECTIVITY

3.1 The existing site contained open green space but the connectivity was broken by hardstanding areas, see Figure 3.1, below. There was good connectivity to the nearby woodland to the south and west, and to agricultural fields to the north and east. The woodland formed part of the Clywedog river valley which is a long stretch of riverside woodland which runs from the north west to south east and is 60m to the south of the access track on the south-western corner of the site. A channel also runs adjacent to this corner of the site.

3.2 Connectivity to the south was somewhat limited by the road to the south, however this is a quiet, minor road, and beyond this lay more wooded areas and fields.

3.3 Existing mains water is located on the western access track.

3.4 As can be seen in Figure 3.2, the dual carriageway to the east was a major barrier to connectivity eastwards.

3.5 In summary the site contained some green infrastructure and was mainly surrounded by further green infrastructure. The main barrier to connectivity was 250m to the east.



FIG. 3.1 LOCAL SITE CONTEXT



FIG. 3.2 WIDER CONTEXT AROUND SITE (BLUE STAR)

4. DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS FROM THE WORK

4.1 No statutory designated sites are likely to be affected by the work.

4.2 Big Wood Wildlife Site for Wrexham is the woodland immediately adjacent to the access track leading from south to north on the west of the site. The proposed working area will not affect this woodland and temporary fencing will be in place to protect this and other woodland areas adjacent to the working area.

4.3 Habitats directly impacted by the work are common and not of significant biodiversity value.

4.4 There will be a small but relatively minor reduction in connectivity caused by the extension to the existing track but the track is narrow and on an improved field with existing hardstanding areas so the impact on connectivity is not considered significant.

4.5 There is no public right of way within the areas surveyed.

5. Summary of Green Infrastructure Proposals

5.1 As set out in PPW 11, paragraph 6.4.21, the impacts on habitats and species from a proposed development should be treated in a step-wise manner. Table 4.1 summarises how the proposal at Bersham has adopted these step-wise principles and details the Green Infrastructure contribution of the proposed scheme. The Green Infrastructure contribution proposed is considered to be proportionate to the proposed development.

Table 4.1: Summary of Green Infrastructure Proposals for Bersham

Step-Wise Stages	Summary of Project Proposals
Avoidance	• The development will avoid impacts to more valuable habitats by being constructed almost entirely on hardstanding and improved/poor semi-improved grassland of limited ecological value • The working area will not extend to the adjacent woodland and protection fencing will be in place where any work is to be carried out. • No work will be carried out in the longer grass and planted tree area to the south of the proposed new track and temporary fencing will be in place • No external lighting will be in place beyond the construction period • No construction lighting will be directed onto woodland areas • A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be produced and adhered to which will minimise the risk of pollution of watercourses to the south of the site
Mitigation or Restoration	• Mitigation measures for great crested newts will be in place (see Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Enfys Ecology, EE.5177.AB.25, 6.10.25) • No scrub or trees will be removed during the bird nesting period (March to September inclusive) unless a nesting bird survey has been carried out 24 hours prior to the work. If active birds are found, no work to that area will be carried out until the chicks have fledged.
Compensation	• A bird box will be erected at a location agreed with the local county ecologist
Enhancement	• A minimum of 2 locally-native trees or shrubs will be planted (see Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Enfys Ecology, EE.5177.AB.25, 6.10.25). Species and locations will be agreed with the local county ecologist. • A bat box will be erected at a location agreed with the local county ecologist

6. Statement

6.1 The proposed development at Bersham will provide employment for local tradespeople during the construction works and support environmental projects for the local community in the long term. The scheme has been designed taking a step-wise approach to impacts on habitats and species, and ecological enhancement will be provided through planting of native trees and shrubs.

6.2 The works are likely to affect a small area of habitats of low ecological value. Taking into account the mitigation measures, there is likely to be no impact on valuable biodiversity habitats, protected species or sites. There will be a small loss of very common grassland habitat which will be compensated for. The enhancement measures will result in a net improvement to the biodiversity of the site.

6.3 Overall the loss of green infrastructure will be limited and connectivity will not be greatly affected.

6.3 The site is under thirty minutes' walk from Colliery Garage train station and is accessible by bicycle.

6.4 Planning Policy Wales identifies the importance of "*paying due regard to the potential for continued long term maintenance and management of retained areas to benefit biodiversity*" (PPW12, paragraph 6.4.15). It is recommended that a plan identifying the proposed maintenance and management of habitats and species features (in addition to other Green Infrastructure components as required) be produced at an appropriate stage.

7. References

Denbighshire County Council. (no date). 'Supplementary Planning Guidance for lighting in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'. Available: https://www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Planning-for-the-night-sky_accessible-version.pdf

Wrexham County Borough Council. (2023). 'Wrexham County Borough Local Development Plan 2013 - 2028'. Available: https://wrexham-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/adopted_wrexham_local_development_plan

Wrexham County Borough Council. (2003a). 'Local Planning Guidance Note No 7 - Landscape and Development'. Available: https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/service/development-plans-and-other-planning-policy/local-planning-guidance-notes

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Wrexham County Borough Council. (2018). 'Local Planning Guidance Note No 35 – Great Crested Newt Mitigation Requirements Johnstown Newt Site SAC and the Wider Countryside'. Available from Wrexham County Borough Council planning department.

REPORT REF:				
EE.5177.AB. Bersham Green Infrastructure Statement 2025				
CLIENT	Groundwork North Wales			
DATE	AUTHOR	APPROVED	VERSION	COMMENTS
17.10.2025	Anne Butler	Tim Yardley	V1	

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