

Green Infrastructure Statement

Halton Farm
Halton
Chirk
Wrexham
LL14 5BG

Erection of an agricultural building and extension of 2no existing silage clamps with all associated works

IG Evans & Son

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1. Policy Background

1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) supports a full planning application for the proposed erection of an agricultural building for straights storage and the retrospective extension of 2no. existing silage clamps with all associated works at Halton Farm, Halton, Chirk, Wrexham, LL14 5BG ("the Application Site").

1.2 The proposed agricultural developments will provide a purpose-built, modern, agricultural building for the storage of straights, and the extension of two existing silage clamps at the existing farm complex for use by the established agricultural enterprise operating from the site – IG Evans & Son.

1.3 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".

1.4 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.

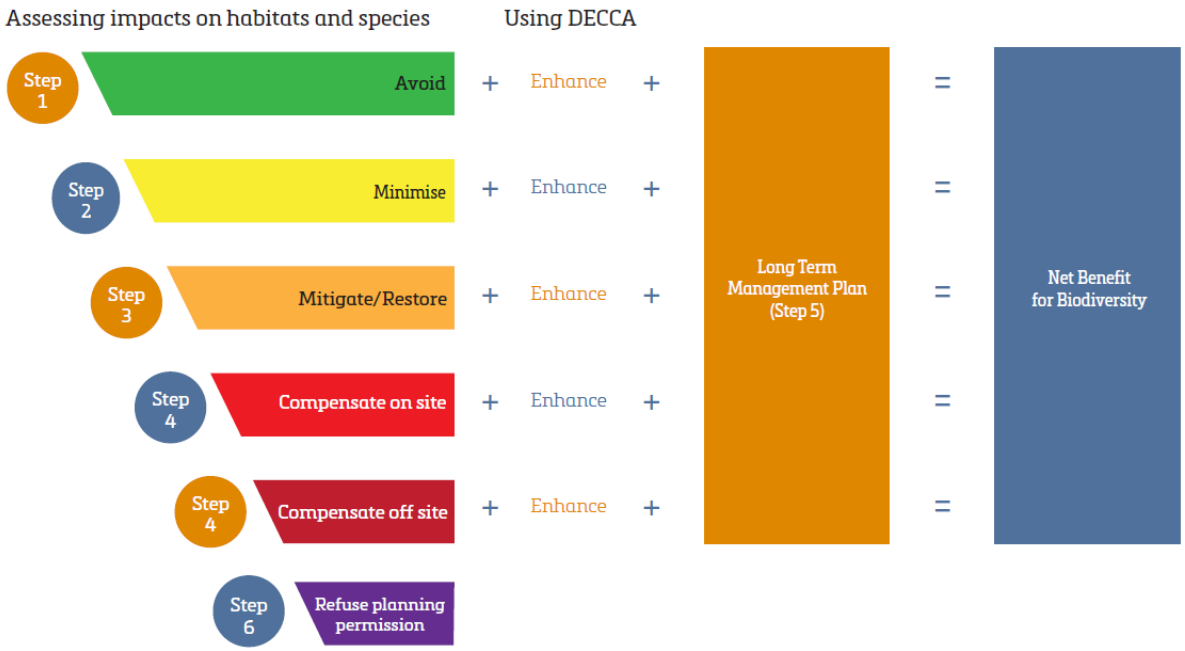


Figure 1: A summary of the step-wise approach taken from Chapter 6 of PPW (Ed. 12, 2024)

2. The Proposed Development

2.1 The planning application seeks full planning permission for the erection of an agricultural building to be used as a straights store, and the retrospective extension of two existing silage clamps, together with all associated works.

2.2 The floor area of the proposed storage building is approximately 383m2 and measures approximately 18m in length and 12.2m in width. The height of the building is approximately 7.95m at its greatest extent.

2.3 The building will not be used to house livestock, but will instead be used as a store for 'straights' on the farm. At present, the farm benefits from insufficient covered

straights storage, meaning a percentage of feed is spoiled and rendered un-useable. The proposed building is purpose-designed for straights storage – with sufficient height internally to allow a tipping trailer to deposit straights into the store easily and safely. The proposed building will be sited in close proximity to the existing range of agricultural buildings on-site at Halton Farm – helping to maximise efficiency and ensuring the proposal will not cause any adverse landscape or visual impact.

2.4 The proposed building will maintain the design form of the existing buildings on-site. The proposed agricultural building will feature lower concrete walls with box profile cladding above. The roof will be finished with fibre cement sheeting. All external materials will match those of the surrounding built form.

2.5 The extension to 'silage clamp A' comprises an additional 12 metres in length, maintaining an existing width of 10 metres and a height of 3 metres. The clamp is to remain 'open' with no roof.

2.6 The extension to 'silage clamp B' comprises an additional 12 metres in length, maintaining an existing width of 14 metres and a height of 3 metres. This clamp is also to remain 'open' with no roof.

2.7 The silage clamps have been constructed to comply with SSAFO Regulations and The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations (2021). They have impermeable bases that extend beyond the silage clamp walls. They have been constructed with mass concrete walls and bases; complying with British Standard EN 1992-11:2004+A1:2014.

2.8 The silage clamps are constructed with concrete slabs that direct effluent into a drainage channel, which feeds into an underground effluent tank. Additional external drainage channels are also provided around the perimeter of each clamp.

2.9 Silage clamp A is served by a new 31,000 litre underground effluent tank whilst silage clamp B is served by a 32,000 litre underground effluent tank. Both are sized appropriately in accordance with The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations (2021) and are capable of lasting at least 20 years without maintenance.

3. Green Infrastructure Baseline

3.1 The site of the proposed new agricultural building currently comprises an area of improved agricultural grassland used for grazing purposes and crop production on the farm. Given its much improved state, it is of low ecological value and provides a low green infrastructure baseline.

3.2 The site of the silage clamps was previously laid to concrete hardstanding, and as such offered no green infrastructure of note.

3.3 The development will not result in the loss or destruction of any existing on-site trees or hedgerows.

3.4 Therefore, it is considered the application site is devoid of any notable green infrastructure at present.

3.5 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 in this case.

4. The Green Infrastructure Strategy

4.1 The approach to the design of the proposed development 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 bat boxes and one Woodcrete bird box be erected on the exterior of the proposed storage building, as is shown on Drawing No: 81719 / GH / 004 submitted as part of the application.

4.3 Given the fact the application site is devoid of any notable green infrastructure at present, the proposed NBB measures as outlined above, would provide a significant NBB effect over and above the site's green infrastructure baseline.

4.4 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.

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

4.6 The proposal would also achieve an overall net benefit for biodiversity on the holding over and above the existing green infrastructure baseline.

4.7 The Applicant will ensure the long-term management and maintenance of the proposed bird and bat boxes to ensure they are kept in a useable condition.

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.