Green Infrastructure Statement

Gamford House, Gamford Lane, Rossett, Wrexham, LL12 0EW

April 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This Green Infrastructure (GI) Statement has been prepared in support of the proposed development at Gamford House, Gamford Lane, Rossett. The Statement has been produced in accordance with Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024) and demonstrates how the proposals will maintain and enhance biodiversity, secure Net Biodiversity Benefit, and protect existing green infrastructure assets throughout construction and into the operational phase of the development.

1.2 The Statement should be read alongside the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, February 2026), which forms part of this application.

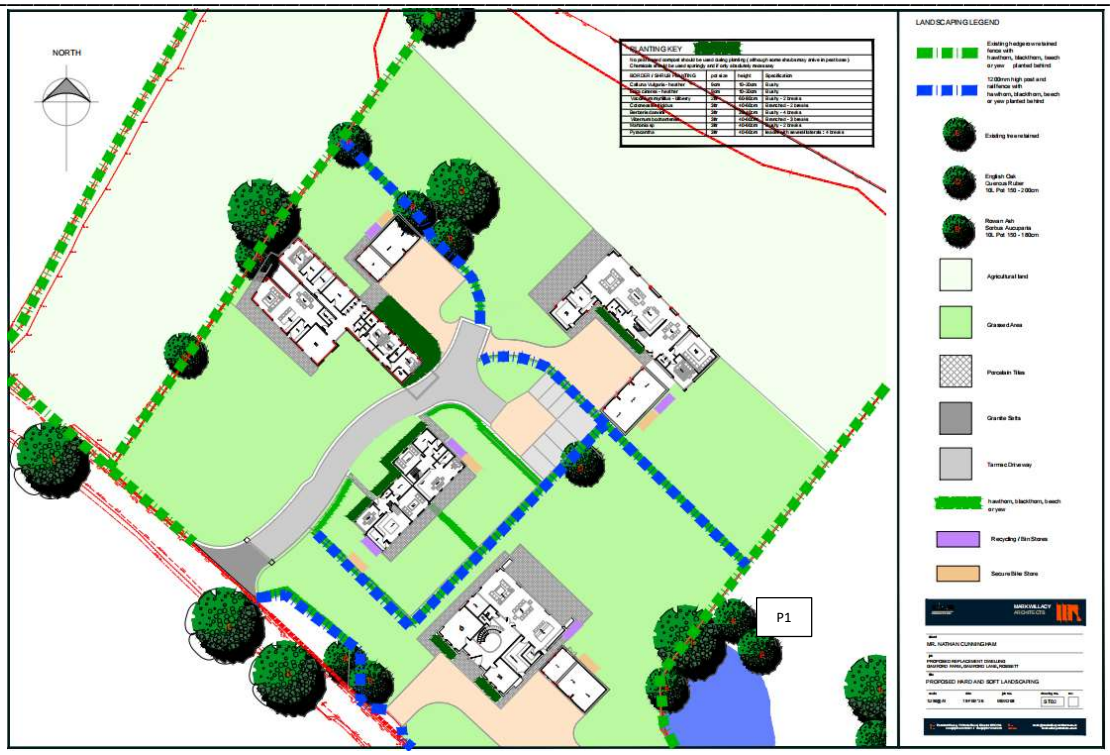
2. **Policy Context**

2.1 While the statutory requirement for a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain under the Environment Act 2021 applies in England, Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024) requires all development in Wales to demonstrate Net Biodiversity Benefit through a proportionate, site-led approach.

2.2 To ensure transparency and robustness, the proposed development at Gamford House has been assessed using the principles and structure of the Defra Biodiversity Metric, adapted appropriately for the Welsh planning context. This approach provides a clear, auditable framework to demonstrate biodiversity outcomes without relying on mandatory percentage targets.

3. Site Context and Existing Green Infrastructure

3.1 The site extends to approximately 1.25 hectares and comprises a former residential dwelling (Building B1), a series of workshops and farm buildings, hardstanding, unmanaged grassland, scrub, scattered trees, native hedgerow and a pond within the ownership boundary. The site lies close to the settlement boundary of Rossett. The site is in a location under consideration for a Green Barrier designation, but Green Barrier and Special Landscape Area designations were removed from this location as part of the evidence for the preparation of the Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP was formally Withdrawn on 20th March 2026. The site is not constrained by other planning designations protecting minerals and aggregates, highway safety, flood risk, archaeology, heritage or agricultural land classification.



Site Layout and Landscaping Plan

3.2 The above plan illustrates the site's key green infrastructure assets, including:

- A native hedgerow along the southern and eastern boundaries (Section 7 habitat of principal importance under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016)
- A pond (P1) within the ownership boundary with confirmed breeding Great Crested Newts
- Areas of other neutral grassland, scrub and scattered trees providing foraging and commuting habitat for wildlife
- Connectivity to the wider rural landscape via hedge-lined fields

4. Ecological Baseline Summary

4.1 The PEA/PRA identifies the site as supporting habitats of local ecological value, with particular importance placed on:

- Bats (historic and recent roosting records within buildings)
- Great Crested Newts (confirmed breeding ponds within 100m)
- Breeding birds (including swallow nests)
- Reptiles (likely presence at low population levels)
- Hedgehog, badger and other common protected species

4.2 The development is therefore capable of supporting biodiversity, but also requires careful mitigation and enhancement to ensure no net loss and to deliver positive outcomes. Further Bat Surveys have been commissioned by the applicant to take place in June/July 2026, when activity is at its peak.

5. Proposed Development and GI Design Principles

The proposed scheme comprises:

Demolition of the existing dwelling, retention and conversion of selected barns, construction of a replacement dwelling and associated residential curtilage.

Accommodation Schedule:

1no. 7P5B detached house with 3 car parking spaces (building 10)
1no. 5P4B detached house with 3 car parking spaces (buildings 4 and 5)
1no. 5P4B detached house with 3 car parking spaces (replacement of building 1)
1no. 5P4B semi-detached house with 3 car parking spaces each (building 15)
1no. 4P3B semi-detached house with 3 car parking spaces each (building 19)

The scheme has been designed to:

- Retain key green infrastructure features, including hedgerows, mature trees and the on-site pond
- Avoid direct impacts to priority habitats where possible
- Integrate ecological mitigation and enhancement within the site layout rather than relying on off-site compensation



6. Avoidance and Protection Measures

6.1 To ensure transparency and robustness, the proposed development at Gamford House has been assessed using the principles and structure of the Defra Biodiversity Metric, adapted appropriately for the Welsh planning context. This approach provides a clear, auditable framework to demonstrate biodiversity outcomes without relying on mandatory percentage targets. The following measures will be implemented to protect existing green infrastructure:

6.2 Retained Habitats

- The native hedgerow and on-site pond will be fully retained and protected
- There are no trees on the site, and therefore, none to be retained.
- A minimum 5m buffer will be maintained around the pond to protect aquatic and terrestrial habitats

6.3 Construction Controls

- Ecological toolbox talks for contractors
- Pre-commencement checks for protected species where required
- Temporary fencing to prevent encroachment into retained habitats
- Sensitive storage of materials and pollution prevention measures

6.4 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures to be delivered as part of the development include:

- Completion of required **bat** emergence and re-entry surveys prior to any works to affected buildings
- Implementation of a low-impact lighting strategy to protect bat commuting routes and dark corridors
- Preparation and implementation of a **Great Crested Newt** Mitigation Strategy and European Protected Species Licence following planning consent
- A **Reptile** Mitigation Plan setting out appropriate working methods
- Timing restrictions for vegetation and building removal to protect nesting birds

7. Biodiversity Enhancements

To meet the requirements of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024)The development will deliver a range of measurable biodiversity enhancements, including:

7.1 Habitat Creation

- Creation of species-rich grassland using native wildflower seed mixes within communal areas
- Planting of native trees and shrubs (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel) to strengthen habitat connectivity
- Retention and enhancement of scrub margins

These habitats increase habitat distinctiveness, improve condition compared to baseline unmanaged grassland and provide longer-term biodiversity value once established.

7.2 Species-Specific Enhancements

- Installation of bat roost features within retained or new buildings (subject to survey outcomes)
- Provision of bird nesting boxes (minimum of 10 units, including swift and sparrow boxes)

- Installation of bee bricks within new buildings
- Creation of log piles and hibernacula for reptiles and amphibians
- Hedgehog-friendly boundary treatments to allow movement through the site

These measures increase ecological functionality, resilience and species richness across the site.

Using a metric-based lens:

- The majority of habitats to be lost are of low to medium distinctiveness
- Habitats of high distinctiveness and strategic value (hedgerow and pond) are retained in full
- Ecological value is currently fragmented and unmanaged

This establishes a baseline where meaningful on-site enhancement can deliver a measurable uplift in biodiversity units. The scheme delivers biodiversity gains through habitat creation, enhancement and condition uplift, which are consistent with the Defra metric's three core mechanisms for achieving net gain.

7.3 Habitat Enhancement (Condition Uplift)

Significant gains are achieved through enhancement rather than replacement:

- Native hedgerow retained and buffered, increasing its functional value
- Pond safeguarded with terrestrial buffer, benefiting amphibians and invertebrates
- Grassland areas moved from poor/moderate to good condition through active management

In metric terms, condition uplift alone generates biodiversity units, even where habitat types remain broadly similar. The scheme delivers biodiversity gains through habitat creation, enhancement and condition uplift, which are consistent with the Defra metric's three core mechanisms for achieving net gain.

7.4 Species-Level Enhancements (Stacked Gains)

While not directly counted as habitat units in the metric, species-specific measures reinforce net gain outcomes:

- Integrated bat roost features
- Bird nesting provision (minimum 10 units)
- Bee bricks and invertebrate features
- Reptile and amphibian hibernacula
- Hedgehog connectivity gaps

These measures increase ecological functionality, resilience and species richness across the site.

7.5 Spatial Risk and Delivery Certainty

In line with best-practice BNG principles:

- All biodiversity gains are delivered on-site

- No reliance is placed on off-site units or biodiversity credits
- Habitats are deliverable within the red line boundary
- Management and establishment are controllable by the landowner

This minimises temporal and spatial risk, ensuring biodiversity gains are certain, early and enduring.

8. Predicted Habitat Losses (Metric Framing)

The development will result in the loss of:

- Areas of unmanaged neutral grassland
- Localised scrub
- Small numbers of scattered trees
- Areas of sparsely vegetated land and hardstanding

From a metric perspective, these losses are: Low–moderate distinctiveness; Low condition; Limited strategic significance due to availability of similar habitat in the surrounding landscape. Accordingly, the biodiversity unit loss is modest and readily offset on-site.

9.Long-Term Management and Securing Net Benefit

All created and enhanced habitats will be:

- Maintained through an agreed management regime
- Protected via planning condition where necessary
- Designed to mature and improve in biodiversity value over time

All green infrastructure features will be subject to long-term management to ensure continued biodiversity value. This will include:

- Seasonal management of species-rich grassland
- Ongoing protection of hedgerows and trees
- Maintenance of pond buffers and associated terrestrial habitat
- Replacement planting where required

Management responsibilities will rest with the site owner or a nominated management body and will be secured via planning condition where appropriate. This ensures that biodiversity gains are not short-term, but increase in value beyond the point of occupation, consistent with the trajectory expected under metric-based assessment.

9.1 Lighting and Dark Corridors

A bat-sensitive lighting strategy will be implemented to:

- Retain dark corridors along hedgerows and near the pond
- Avoid upward and horizontal light spill
- Use warm colour temperature lighting with controlled lux levels
- Ensure lighting is only provided where operationally necessary

10. Conclusion

10.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement demonstrates that the proposed development at Gamford House, comprising demolition of the existing dwelling, retention and conversion of selected barns, construction of a replacement dwelling:

- Protects and enhances existing green infrastructure
- Delivers **Net Biodiversity Benefit** in accordance with Planning Policy Wales
- Integrates mitigation and enhancement within the site design
- Provides long-term ecological value beyond the construction phase

10.2 BNG Conclusion

When assessed using a BNG metric-aligned framework, the proposed development:

- Avoids loss of high-value habitats
- Replaces low-value habitats with higher-distinctiveness alternatives
- Improves habitat condition across retained areas
- Delivers all biodiversity gains on-site
- Secures long-term management

10.3 Taken together, the scheme is predicted to deliver a clear net biodiversity gain and fully complies with the requirements of Planning Policy Wales for Net Biodiversity Benefit.

10.4 The proposals are therefore considered compliant with national and local planning policy relating to biodiversity and green infrastructure. This Green Infrastructure Assessment has been used to identify suitable locations for securing off-site compensation. The Green Infrastructure Assessment provides a spatial guide to opportunities already identified for securing a net benefit for biodiversity. The assessment helps to determine whether locations for habitat compensation should be placed close to the development site, or whether new habitat or additional management located further away from the site would best support biodiversity and ecosystem resilience at a wider scale.

10.5 Where compensation for specific species is being sought, the focus is on maintaining or enhancing the population of the species within its natural range. This approach will identify locations for providing species-specific compensation further away from the site.

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