

Green Infrastructure Statement

Land at Garreg Llwyd
Froncysyllte
Wrexham
LL20 7RY

Outline application for the erection of a rural enterprise dwelling with all associated works (all matters reserved)

EW & M Jones

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1. Policy Background

1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) supports an outline planning application for the construction of a Rural Enterprise Dwelling, detached garage and all associated works at Land at Garreg Llwyd, Froncysyllte, Wrexham, LL20 7RY ("the Application Site").

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.

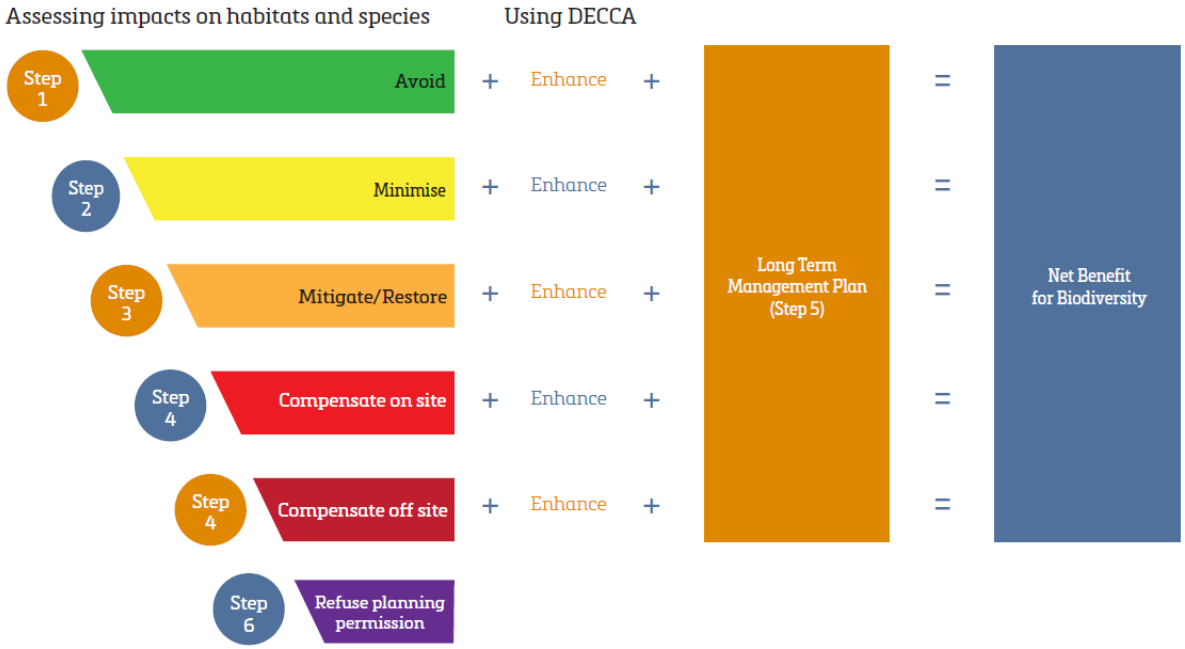


Figure 1: A summary of the step-wise approach taken from Chapter 6 of PPW (Ed. 12, 2024)

2. The Proposed Development

2.1 The application seeks Outline planning permission (with all matters reserved for future consideration) for the construction of a rural enterprise dwelling on the site, together with a detached garage, formation of a driveway, installation of a private package treatment plant and all associated works.

2.2 The dwelling is proposed on an area of agricultural grazing land to the north of the existing farmhouse, and to the north-east of the main complex of agricultural buildings and yards. The proposed dwelling will be accessed via the farm's existing vehicular access off the public highway, Blaenau Road.

2.3 The dwelling will be surrounded by an area of new private garden, to be enclosed by a new native species hedgerow. Several new native species trees will also be planted within the garden area, to provide both landscape screening and ecological benefits.

2.4 The dwelling will be served by a new private package treatment plant, discharging into a drainage field to the south of the site. The existing farmhouse will also connect to the new system, replacing the existing septic tank and providing an enhanced method of foul drainage.

2.5 The proposed dwelling will have a maximum gross internal floor area of 130 sq. metres, which is considered to be a modestly-scaled property given the context of the site. Upper and lower scale parameters for the dwelling are included on Drawing No: 75223 / 01 REV B, as follows:

Height: 6 – 10.5m

Width: 6 – 16m

Length: 6 – 16m.

2.6 The proposal will be occupied by the Gareth Jones and his family, and will provide permanent, suitable, accommodation on the farm to allow the farm to be managed fully, and to allow unexpected situations which arise on the farm to be dealt with outside of 'normal working hours'.

2.7 The proposed siting of the dwelling aims to strike a good balance between meeting the functional needs of the rural enterprise and being within close proximity of the main farm complex at Garreg Llwyd; providing good levels of amenity for its occupants while being sited within close proximity to the livestock buildings onsite.

2.8 As noted, the application is submitted in Outline (with all matters reserved for future consideration) and as such matters concerning the final access, siting, design, scale and external appearance of the proposed development would be subject to future consideration as part of a separate reserved matters application.

2.9 Drawing No: 75223 / 01 REV B, submitted in support of the application, details an indicative proposed site layout for the development.

3. Green Infrastructure Baseline

3.1 The application site comprises an area of improved agricultural grazing land which is considered to be of overall low ecological value.

3.2 Indeed, the application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) undertaken by Arbor Vitae (and an addendum report), which confirms that the proposed development will result in the loss of a small amount of improved grassland. The habitat type is of little ecological significance and the proposal will not have a major ecological impact.

3.3 The submitted ecological reports also confirm the site is unlikely to be in use by any protected or priority species.

3.4 Whilst the site is bordered by several mature trees and hedgerows, it is confirmed these are all to be retained as part of the proposed development.

3.5 Given the above and the findings of the submitted PEA reports, it is concluded the site has an overall low green infrastructure baseline, with no significant or important on-site habitats.

3.6 In addition, 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 and siting of the proposed dwelling and associated development has fully taken into account potential environmental and green infrastructure impacts. Every effort has been taken during the design process to minimise and avoid impacts upon existing green infrastructure on the site.

4.2 Drawing No: 75223 / GH / 100 sets out the proposed measures to achieve a net-benefit for biodiversity on the site; comprising of:

- Planting of 3x native species trees;
- Planting of new native species hedgerow around site perimeter;
- Erection of 1x Woodcrete bat box in existing mature tree on-site.

4.3 The above measures will provide a substantial net benefit for biodiversity (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 As the application is submitted in Outline form (with matters relating to landscaping and layout being reserved for future consideration), it is considered a condition could be attached to the granting of Outline planning permission to

secure the submission of a detailed NBB Scheme as part of a future reserved matters application if this was considered necessary.

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.