

Green Infrastructure Statement

Land at Yew Tree Farm
Pen y Cae
Wrexham
LL14 1UW

Formation of a new agricultural field access and associated works

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1. Policy Background

1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) supports a full planning application for the formation of a new agricultural field access and all associated works at Land at Yew Tree Farm, Pen y Cae, Wrexham, LL14 1UW ("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.

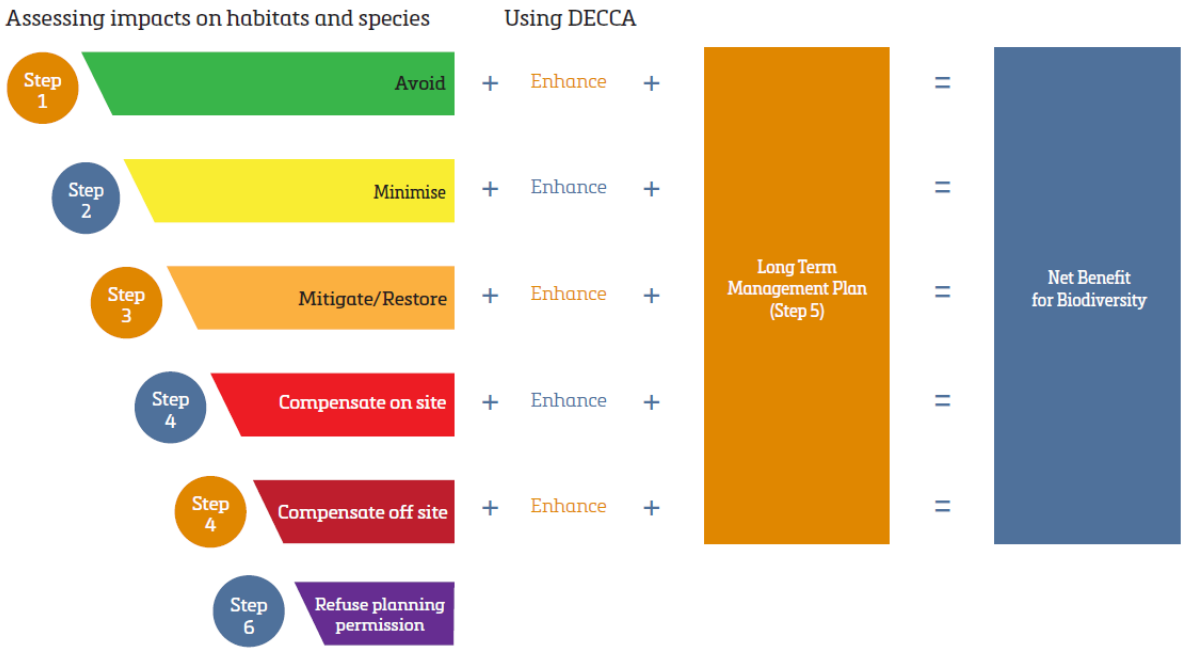


Figure 1: A summary of the step-wise approach taken from Chapter 6 of PPW (Ed. 12, 2024)

2. The Proposed Development

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the formation of a new agricultural field access and associated works. The proposed access will serve the existing agricultural field and is required to facilitate ongoing agricultural operations by the Applicant.

2.2 The proposed entrance will be 5.5m wide and surfaced in tarmac for the first 10m from the carriageway, with a maximum gradient of 1 in 20. The access gate will be set back 10m from Lambpit Street, providing sufficient space for agricultural vehicles to be clear of the highway while the gate is opened or closed.

2.3 Visibility splays of 2.4m by 18m to the north and 2.4m by 43m to the south will be provided, together with 5.5m by 12m forward visibility, as shown on the submitted Access Plan.

2.4 As part of the development the existing hedgerow will be translocated, and a new post and sheep net fence will be erected behind the visibility splays. Surface

water will be drained via an ACO channel across the entrance and directed into a soakaway built into the field.

3. Green Infrastructure Baseline

3.1 The proposed development would impact upon a small section of grass verge, which is considered to be of low ecological value.

3.2 Furthermore, a small section of hedgerow will be removed to accommodate the provision of the new access.

3.3 There is a SSSI located approximately 1.658km from the site location, due to the proposed application being of modest scale and the large separation distance – there will be no adverse effects upon the protected site as a result of the proposal in this case.

3.4 The agricultural field itself is regularly managed land of comparatively limited ecological value. No mature trees, ponds, watercourses or other higher-value habitat features are located within the access' footprint.

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

3.6 The existing roadside hedgerow is to be translocated to the rear of the new visibility splays, and further details concerning this are contained within the Hedgerow Translocation Method Statement which accompanies the application.

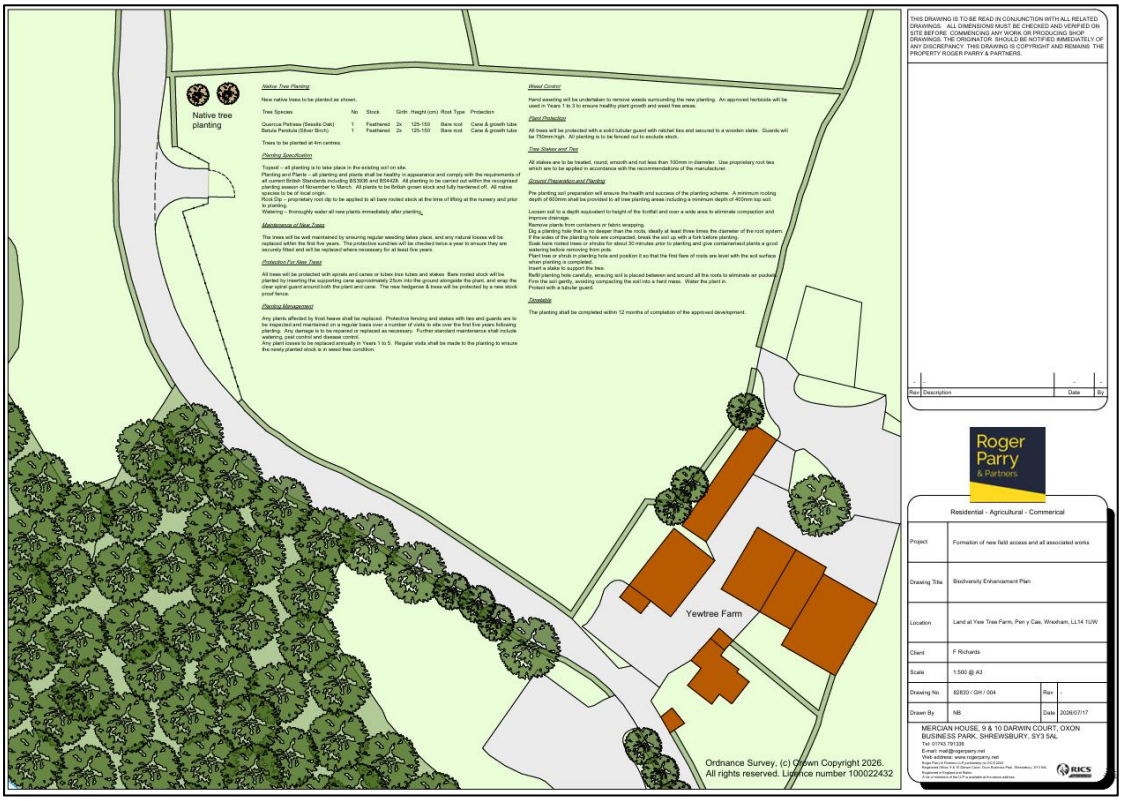
3.7 Given the above, it is considered the application site has a low green infrastructure at present, especially given that the majority of existing hedgerow will be retained through translocation, and no trees are to be removed. The land's current intensive agricultural use and management means the application site is very unlikely to be in use by any protected or priority species.

4. The Green Infrastructure Strategy

4.1 The approach to the design and siting of the proposed access is fully outlined within the accompanying Planning Statement. The access has been designed to limit environmental effects, minimise the loss of existing hedgerow and retain the majority of the established field boundary.

4.2 It is proposed to plant one Sessile Oak and one Silver Birch adjacent to the new access. The trees will provide additional native planting, strengthen the existing field boundary and deliver a proportionate biodiversity enhancement. Their

locations are shown on the submitted Biodiversity Enhancement Plan, an extract of which is provided below:



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 green infrastructure baseline.

4.4 The stepwise approach has been followed through the siting and design of the proposed access. The majority of the existing hedgerow would be retained, thereby minimising habitat loss and maintaining ecological connectivity along the field boundary. The proposed native tree planting would further strengthen the green infrastructure corridor.

4.5 Off-site ecological mitigation would not be required, as the limited effects of the development would be appropriately minimised and addressed through previously described translocation and enhancements.

4.6 The proposed native tree planting would enhance the ecological value and visual appearance of the field boundary, providing additional habitat and potential foraging opportunities for local wildlife. The proposal would therefore deliver an overall net benefit for biodiversity.

4.7 The Applicant will ensure that the proposed sessile oak and silver birch are planted, protected and maintained in accordance with the submitted Biodiversity Enhancement Plan. Any tree that dies, becomes seriously damaged or fails to establish within five years of planting will be replaced.

4.8 Similarly, the Applicant will ensure the hedgerow translocation is carried out in full accordance with the submitted Hedgerow Translocation Method Statement.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The proposal has been designed to minimise its effect on the existing green infrastructure along Lambspit Street. Only the section of hedgerow required to form the access and provide the necessary visibility would be affected, with the remainder retained and the displaced section translocated where practicable. Given the limited nature of these works, no material effects upon biodiversity, ecosystem resilience or protected species are anticipated.

5.2 The proposal therefore accords with the stepwise approach set out in Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales, with effects avoided and minimised through the siting and design of the access. The planting of one sessile oak and one silver birch would provide further native planting, reinforce the field boundary and secure a proportionate net benefit for biodiversity.