



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

**Residential Development
At Land off Pontardulais Road, Tycroes**

**On behalf of
Mr. J. McAvoy & Dr. C. Snell**

Our Ref: 1792.a
Date: December 2024
Prepared by: Rhydian Gore

Approved by: Richard Banks

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning has been instructed by Mr. J. McAvoy and Dr. C. Snell to prepare a proportionate Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) to accompany an application seeking outline planning permission for the “*Residential Development*” at Land off Pontardulais Road, Tycroes.
- 1.2 This proportionate GIS has been prepared with full regard to the guidance as set out in Chapter 6 of *Planning Policy Wales* (Edition 12) (February 2024) and in particular the ‘**Stepwise Approach**’ detailed in Paragraph 6.4.21 and Figure 12, which is reproduced below.

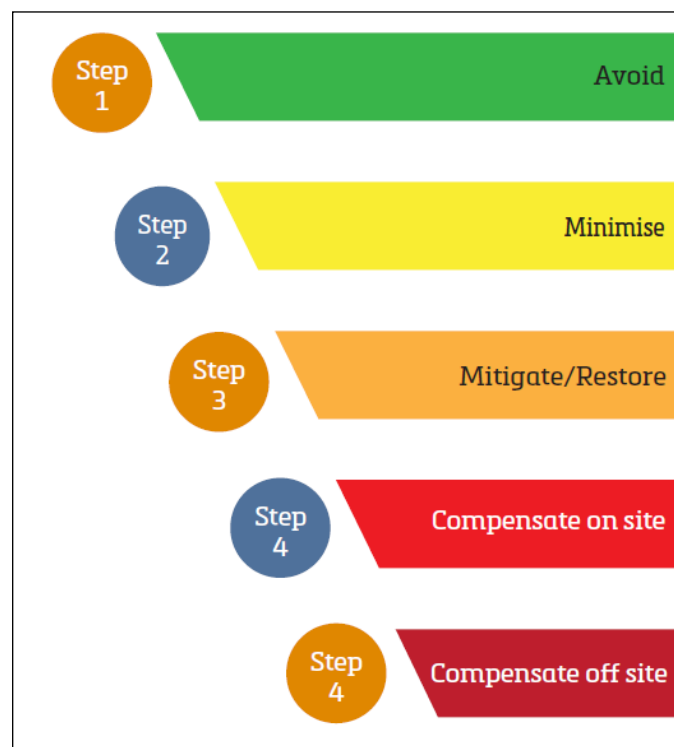


Figure 1 – PPW Stepwise Approach

- 1.3 This GIS has also, where relevant, given due consideration to the guidance and standards as set out in the document *Building with Nature - Standards Framework*, which are summarised as follows:

CORE Standards

- Standard 1** Optimises Multifunctionality and Connectivity
- Standard 2** Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency
- Standard 3** Maximises Environmental Net Gains
- Standard 4** Champions a Context Driven Approach
- Standard 5** Creates Distinctive Places
- Standard 6** Secures Effective Place-keeping

WELLBEING Standards

- Standard 7** Brings Nature Closer to People
- Standard 8** Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

WATER Standards

- Standard 9** Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management
- Standard 10** Brings Water Closer to People

WILDLIFE Standards

- Standard 11** Delivers Wildlife Enhancement
- Standard 12** Underpins Nature's Recovery

2.0 EXISTING SITE

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application site comprises a gently sloping enclosure, which totals some 0.5 hectares (circa 1.23 acres) in overall area. The undeveloped enclosures lie immediately off the northwestern flank of Pontardulais Road (A483) in the village of Tycroes. The site has a road frontage, with the road extending for a considerable distance through the centre of Tycroes and marked by a hedgerow with an existing agricultural gated access. This is shown in greater detail in Photographs 1, 2 and 3 below.



Photograph 1 – Application Site from Existing Access Point Looking North



Photograph 2 – Application Site from Western Perimeter Looking East



**Photograph 3 – Application Site from Northern Perimeter Looking South
Towards Pontardulais Road**

- 2.1.2 Both sides of Pontardulais Road from the northeast of the site are noted for high levels of residential properties, with many orientated to front the adjacent highway. The properties comprise of detached and semi-detached, one and two storey buildings including both traditional and modern design.
- 2.1.3 Each of the perimeters of the site are linear, and comprise of existing hedgerows, which act as a screening measure to adjacent properties and ensure that the site is naturally enclosed. The site slopes gradually from its southern point near Pontardulais Road, to its lowest point at the northern section of the field enclosure.
- 2.1.4 Figure 1 provides a “Google Earth” image of the site, with the above features identified, while Figures 2 illustrates a wider OS Map of the village to highlight the position of the application site in relation to the village centre. Figure 3 below depicts an Ordnance Survey map extract with the application site edged in red.



Figure 1 – Google Earth Image – April 2021



Figure 2 – OS Explorer Map with Application Site Identified

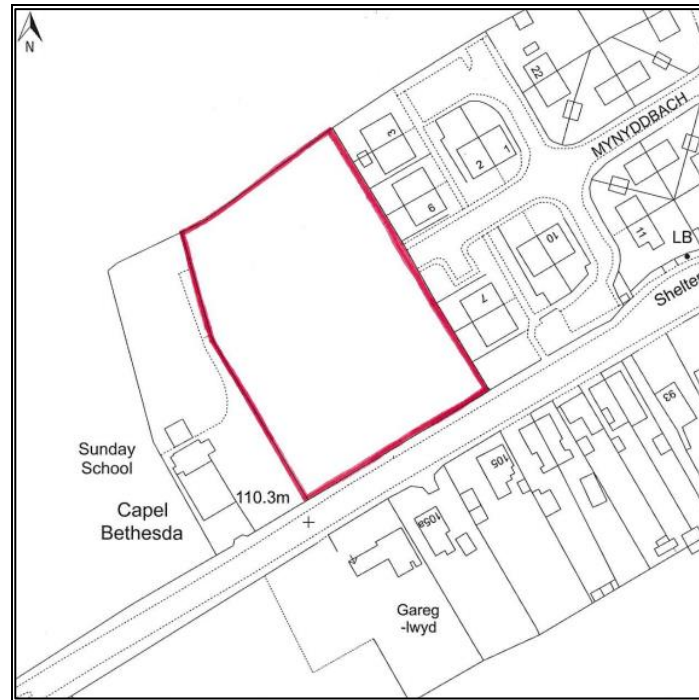


Figure 3 – Location Plan of Application Site

2.2 EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

- 2.2.1 The application site has been the subject of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, with the resultant habitat map reproduced below at Figure 4.



Figure 4 – Habitat Map Reproduced Within PEA

- 2.2.2 The above Habitat Map identifies that the site is bordered with an almost uniform perimeter of hedgerows to the northern, southern, western and eastern perimeters, with open enclosures bordering to the north.
- 2.2.3 Ground flora is dominated by a species **poor** marshy grassland, which is unlikely to meet the criteria for Rhos pasture. Given the adjacent habitat present, which **does not** have the characteristic diversity of rush pasture priority habitat, it is unlikely that the site should be considered more diverse.
- 2.2.4 As a result, the site is currently in a very poor condition and of **low ecological value**, with no evidence that it is managed in way that is conducive to species diversity. The lack of connectivity to other grazing habitat suggests that infrequent topping/mowing is the most likely form of management, possibly coinciding with annual flailing of the hedgerows. Management is clearly intense when undertaken, which has resulted in the aerial photography of the site appearing to show partial clearance of the Site in recent years.
- 2.2.5 The Photographs below show the sub-optimal marshy grassland at the site in its current form.



Photograph 4 – Showing Poor Condition of Site



Photograph 5 – Showing the Site Facing South



Photograph 6 – Showing Poor Condition of the Site



Photograph 7 – Showing Western Perimeter of Site

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1.1 The application site has been surveyed and the prevailing ground contours recorded to inform the future development levels. Figure 5 below provides an extract of that part of the site and the recorded levels of the application site. The allocated field is shown falling in level gradually to its northern perimeter.

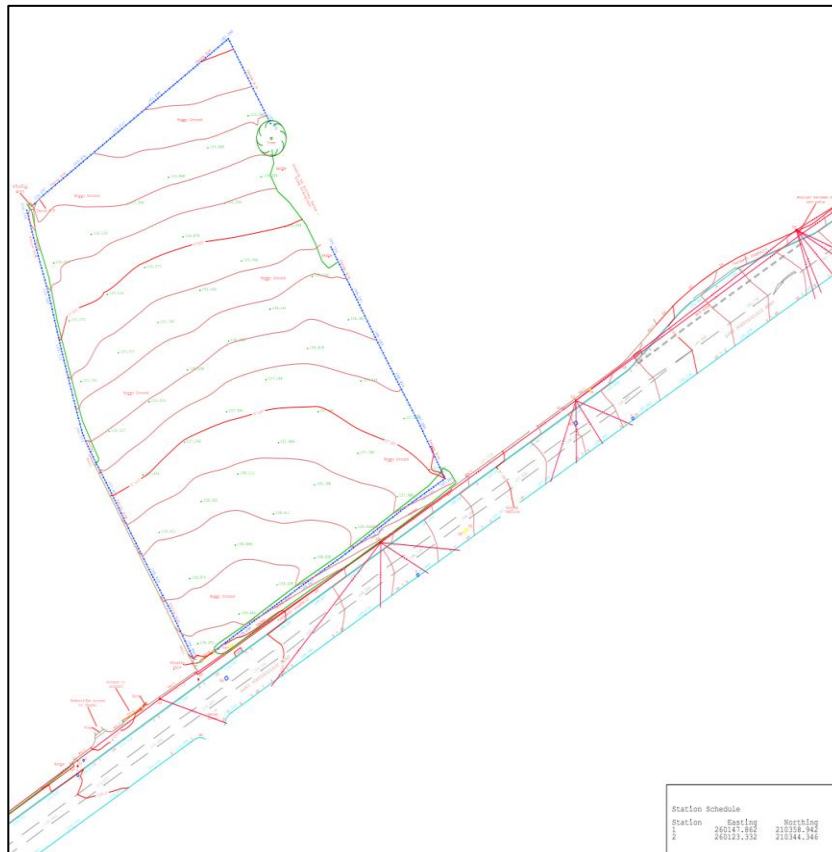


Figure 5 – Topographic Survey of Site

- 3.1.2 The proposals have sought to utilise the gentle contours of the site to form a cul-de-sac formation over the field enclosure. A single point of access is proposed off the A483. The new estate road will head straight through the site, before two shared driveways to access 10 dwellings, before continuing to serve the remaining 5 dwellings, east and terminating in a turning head. An indicative total of 15 semi-detached and linked dwellinghouses are proposed off both flanks of the new estate road.

- 3.1.3 The lower part of the field, parallel with the northern perimeter will be afforded attenuation features to cater for surface water disposal in accord with SAB legislation. The proposal will retain all existing hedgerows, whilst incorporating new native planting in the form of double staggered native hedgerows and native tree planting throughout the site.
- 3.1.4 The proposed site layout as shown below at Figure 6 has been formulated with these areas of surface water attenuation and boundary retention in consideration.



Figure 6 – Proposed Indicative Site Layout Plan

- 3.1.5 The development will offer a mix of dwelling types, being made up of predominantly two & three-bedroom semi-detached and linked dwellings off a new centralised access.
- 3.1.6 The proposals illustrate new dwellings respectful of neighbouring residential properties, and in particular the existing detached bungalows which are located adjoining the eastern boundary of the application site. New dwellings are shown to provide an adequate separation distance to the aforementioned properties, but with healthy rear garden space upon each, which equally complements the extent of rear gardens at those neighbouring properties. The proposals ensure that the existing privacy standards of those neighbouring occupants will be safeguarded through careful boundary treatments that will provide the adequate screening measures.

- 3.1.7 The entire area of marshy grassland within the site will be lost to the development, however the habitat is **not** considered to be of high ecological value and is in a poor condition as per the accompanying PEA.
- 3.1.8 The PEA found that, if viewed as part of this wider area of marshy grassland, the loss of 0.5Ha from a total of 3Ha within the field enclosure (with further habitat in the wider area) accounts for a loss of 17% of the habitat. Whilst no habitat loss is ideal, the site offers limited connectivity in the landscape being on its own and surrounded on three sides by other buildings/road.

3.2 PROPOSED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

- 3.2.1 The scheme will provide extensive landscaping and ecological enhancement, being part of promoting biodiversity as part of a future detailed applications for planning permission and SAB Consent. The above site layout plan, both point to the retention of all existing perimeter vegetation, which in turn with ensure that **ecological connectivity around the site is retained**.
- 3.2.2 Furthermore, new planting is proposed, not just within the residential site itself in the form of new hedgerows and individual tree sapling planting, but also extensively within the large surface water attenuation zones to be created to the northern perimeter of the site. It is firmly considered that significant ecological enhancements will be created through introducing habitat to allow bird, amphibians and invertebrates to flourish within this created wetland zone.

New Hedgrow Planting

- 3.2.3 As mentioned previously, the existing specimens within the site boundaries will be retained in full, and further enhanced with native species (not varietals), to contribute towards a final mix of approximately:
- 15% Holly *Ilex aquifolium*
 - 15% Hazel *Corylus avellanara*
 - 15% Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*
 - 15% Goat willow *Salix caprea*
 - 10% Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*
 - 10% Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*

- 10% Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*
- 5% Elder *Sambucus nigra*
- 5% Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*

3.2.4 All hedgerows will be of staggered double row planting.

Bulb Planting

3.2.5 The PEA found that *“the base of all new hedgerows beyond the domestic curtilages (the existing western and northern Site boundaries, and the attenuation basin side of the hedgerow of the northernmost properties), are unlikely to be subject to heavy human use in the winter and early spring months”*. As a result native woodland plants are likely to be *“free from significant trampling and will provide an early nectar source”*.

3.2.6 Swathes will be planted along the base of all the identified hedgerows, as well as plants that have visually attractive and easily recognisable flowers. The following species will be planted:

- Wood anemone *Anemone nemorsa*
- Winter Aconite *Eranthis hyemalis*
- Wild Daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*
- Snowdrop *Galanthus nivalis*
- Ramsons *Allium ursinum*
- Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*.

Attenuation Basin

3.2.7 The attenuation basin and surrounding grassland will be sown with a River Floodplain/Water Meadow (MG8 Grassland).

3.2.8 The PEA found that this will be suitable for *“intermittent flooding of the basins and the species composition is likely to vary over time depending on the dryness levels”*. Given the basins are not expected to hold water for any period of time it is not appropriate to plant it with species reliant on wet conditions.

3.2.9 This species rich grassland is also able to act as seed source for the off-site grassland to the north.

New Tree Planting

3.2.10 As per the Site Layout Plan, it is proposed that at least three new standard trees of large, locally native species would be included within the new/infill hedgerow planting.

3.2.11 The medium sized native trees will be included within the larger plots of the development and within the attenuation basin area, with suitable species being:

- *Rowan*
- *Silver Birch*
- *Wild Cherry*
- *Elder*
- *Crabapple*

Bird Box Provision

3.2.12 It is also proposed that two bird boxes would be provided per dwelling, with integrated models to be used where possible, that will ensure provision for the full lifespan of the development. Each building will include:

- One woodcrete bird box with 32mm entrance holes such as *1MR Schwegler Avianex* or *Vivara Pro WoodStone 32mm Nest Box* for various species; and
- One house sparrow nest box such as the *CJ Wildlife WoodStone Build-in House Sparrow Nest*.

Bat Box Provision

3.2.13 It is also propose that one bat box will be built into an external wall of each new dwelling. This will be located just below the apex on a gable wall, away from light spill originating from windows.

3.2.14 A suitable model would be a larger cavity bat box such as the *Schwegler Bat Tube 1FR* or *1WI*.

Wildlife Hotels

3.2.15 Finally, it is proposed that '*Wildlife Hotels*', in the form of Insect and Hedgehog Hotels will be located around the site, at appropriate locations in order to encourage biodiversity.

3.2.16 Examples of the Bird Boxes, Bat Boxes and Wildlife Hotels are to be found in the overleaf.

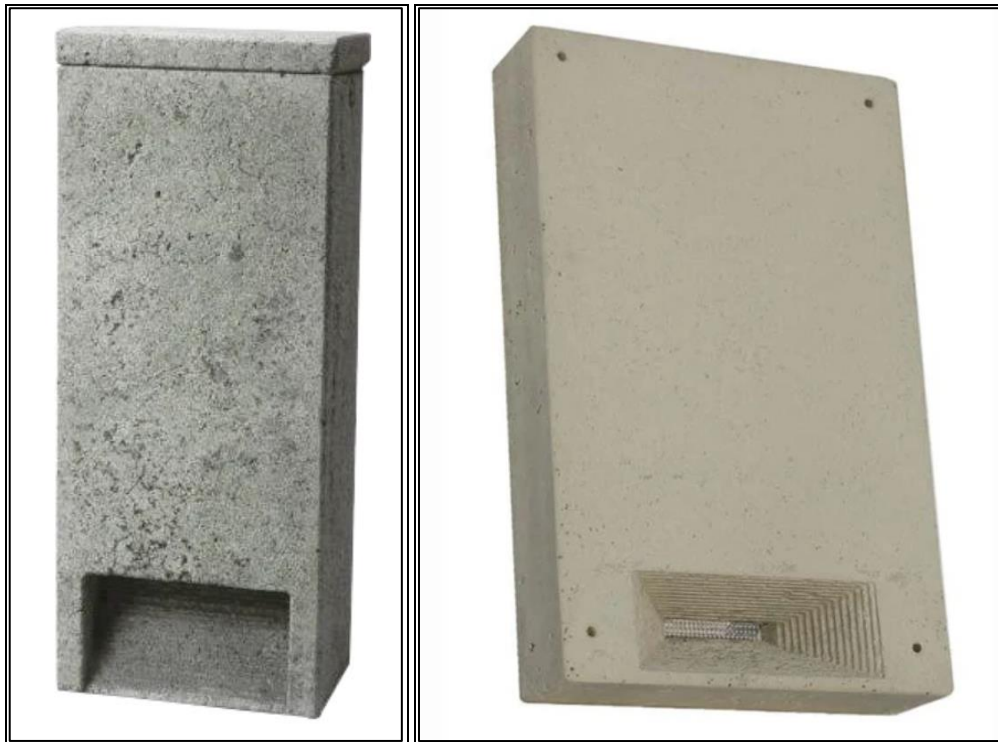


Figure 7 – Schwegler Bat Tube 1FR or 1WI.

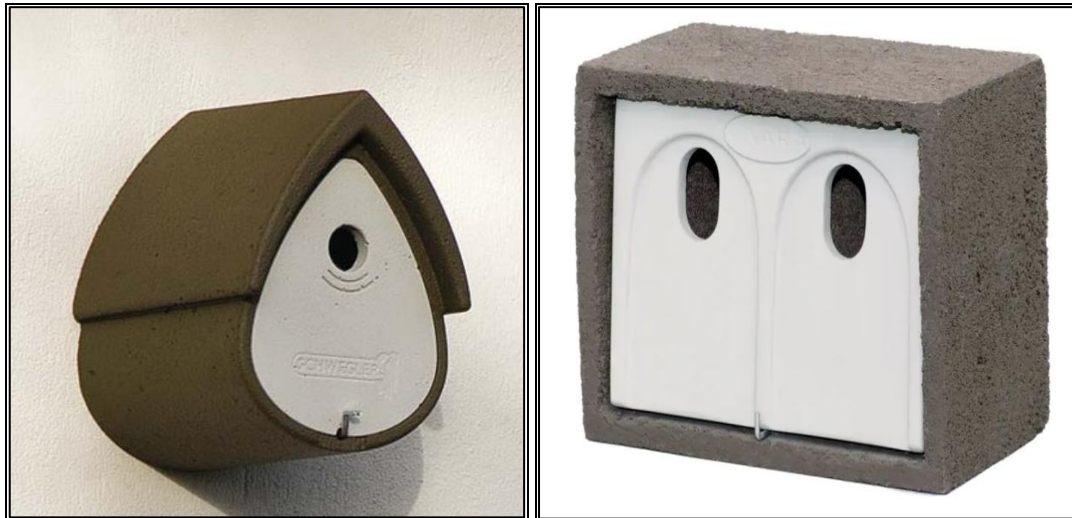


Figure 8 – 1MR Schwegler Avianex and CJ Wildlife WoodStone Build-in House Sparrow Nest

Insect Box/hotel



Insect box externally mounted



Free-standing Insect Hotel

Figure 9 – Insect Box and Hotel



Figure 10 – Hedgehog Homes

4.0 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement provides an illustration of the current Green Infrastructure present on the application site, those features to be retained as part of the proposed development, as well as the extensive proposed new biodiversity enhancements to be included as part of it.
- 4.2 As detailed herein, the current Green Infrastructure assets of the site are highlighted, with the perimeter vegetation to be retained in full, and the sub-optimal marshy grassland to be lost to the development. Further native planting is proposed in the form of tree and hedgerow planting around the site, with attenuation basins then located at the northern section of the site.
- 4.3 Bird boxes, bat boxes, hedgehog hotels and insect hotels are also included as part of the development proposals to increase the biodiversity level of the site.
- 4.4 In response to the above required balance, the loss of any existing Green Infrastructure has been **minimised** wherever possible, with such losses being **mitigated** and **compensated** through the provision of on-site additional Green Infrastructure assets.