

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT.

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JOB No. 1014
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Background.

On 11th October 2023, the Welsh Government issued an updated National Planning Policy for chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales.

The updated policy guidance recognises the value of green infrastructure within built environment. In order to facilitate a quality-built environment enhanced by integrated green infrastructure, all planning applications must now include a Green Infrastructure Statement.

6.2.6 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 stepwise approach (Paragraph 6.4.21) has been applied”.

PROPOSAL

Removal of existing rear flat roof and erecting a new floor above with a new balcony.

THE SITE

60 RIDGEWAY, NEWPORT, NP20 5AG.

PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT

It is accepted that Future Wales now requires ecological enhancement, however, it is submitted that any ecological enhancement must be proportional to the development proposed.

Given the scale of the proposal, it is considered that the provision of a bird boxes within the site will provide adequate ecological enhancement. For details of the location of the birdbox please refer to drawing number 23 210.

For actual details of the bird and box set, please refer figure 1 below.



Figure 1.
Schwegler No.1B General Purpose Nest Box.

BOX SPECIFICATIONS

Boxes to attract garden birds and woodland breeding species such as tits, nuthatch, redstart and pied flycatcher can be placed in gardens, orchards, woodlands and a wide variety of other habitats. The species of birds attracted to the box will depend upon the size of the entrance hole.

Boxes should be fixed two to five metres up a tree or wall, out of reach of predators such as domestic cats. Unless there are trees or buildings, which give permanent shelter, it is best facing between north and east.

Nest Box Examples:

Schwegler No. 1B General Purpose Nest Box available at www.arkwildlife.co.uk. - This box is suitable for various garden and woodland birds, created with different sized entrance holes to avoid competition between species (e.g. 2m) can be free hanging to deter predators.

Entrance Hole Examples:

26mm will attract the following species: Blue, Marsh, Coal and Crested Tit, possible Wren. All other species are prevented from using the nest box due to this smaller entrance hole.

32mm will attract the following species: Great, Blue, Marsh, Coal and Crested Tit, Redstart, Nuthatch, Pied Flycatcher, Tree and House Sparrows.

Oval will attract the following species: Redstart; also used by species that nest in the diameter 32mm boxes. However, because more light enters the brood chamber, it is preferred by Redstarts.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence to disturb breeding birds and therefore annual cleaning cannot be undertaken between the months of March and September inclusive. Bird nest boxes should be cleaned in October to prevent the build up of nest parasites in the boxes whilst avoiding the risk of disturbing birds using the boxes as a roost site during the cold winter months. All nesting material and other debris should be removed from the box. Ideally, it should then be scrubbed clean with boiling water to kill any parasites (avoid using any chemicals). Once the box is clean, it should be left to dry out thoroughly. Bird boxes should be left up over winter as they can provide useful roosting sites for birds in bad weather.

Site lighting and dark corridors

Measures will be taken to minimise light pollution to reduce any impact on nocturnal fauna such as bats and moths. Any lighting within the rear garden will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT 2018). Appropriate ground facing, energy-saving lighting will be used, on timers. There will be no light spillage into landscape areas so that trees and hedgerows on site will not be affected, that's allowing dark corridors to be maintained for Nocturnal wildlife.

Implementation

Bird Boxes – Within one month of completion of works.

Landscaping

As confirmed by photo on front cover and photo below, the proposed extension will have no loss of any permanent landscaping.



Front side



Rear side

Additional Plants:

In compliance with the latest updated National Planning Policy for chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales.

Additional plants are to be located within the rear garden area to enhance the Green Infrastructure. Examples of these are Pussy Willow, Lavender, Abelia, Mahonia, Hawthorn, Honeysuckle, Ivy.

GIA Assessment

Below sets out the stepwise approach in assessing impacts of a development on habitats and the species:

- **Assessment** - The proposal is a modest extension. The extension avoids damage to any biodiversity and as such accords with the stepwise approach set out in the published advice.
- **Enhancement** – Bird box to be provided and additional landscaping will be provided strictly in compliance with Garden Designer's design and specification.
- **Long Term Maintenance** – An implementation programme is required along with a planting and aftercare methodology.
- **Net Benefits** – Yes.

Conclusion

Applying the step-by-step approach, the assessment indicates that:

- The development avoids any damage to biodiversity
- The proposal provides an ecological enhancement proportionate to the scale of the development.
- The proposed ecological enhancement will be maintenance free.
- There is a net benefit to biodiversity as a result of the development.