

## **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT:**

**Retention of Dog Walking Field  
Perfect Pets, Pike Road, Penhow, Newport**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) has been prepared to support a retrospective planning application seeking permission to retain the use of land at Perfect Pets, Pike Road, Penhow, Newport as a secure commercial dog walking field associated with the existing dog day care business.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate how green infrastructure (GI) has been considered in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) and to explain how the development avoids harm to existing green infrastructure assets while identifying opportunities for ecological enhancement.
- 1.3 Planning Policy Wales requires planning applications to be supported by a proportionate Green Infrastructure Statement which demonstrates that development has followed a stepwise approach to biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.
- 1.4 This statement should be read alongside the following supporting documents submitted with the planning application:
- Planning Statement and Management Plan
  - Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA)
  - Tree Survey and Arboricultural Assessment
  - Detailed Soft Landscape Proposals
- 1.5 These documents collectively inform the assessment of green infrastructure assets on the site and provide the basis for the proposed enhancement and management measures.

## **2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

- 2.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) describes green infrastructure as ‘the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places’. PPW requires a stronger emphasis on taking a proactive approach to green infrastructure including the requirement of proportionate green infrastructure statements with planning applications.

2.2 The letter to Heads of Planning from the Minister for Climate Change dated 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 states that a green infrastructure statement should demonstrate a stepwise approach has been taken. Figure 1 below provides an overview of the stepwise approach included in the annex to the letter referred to above.

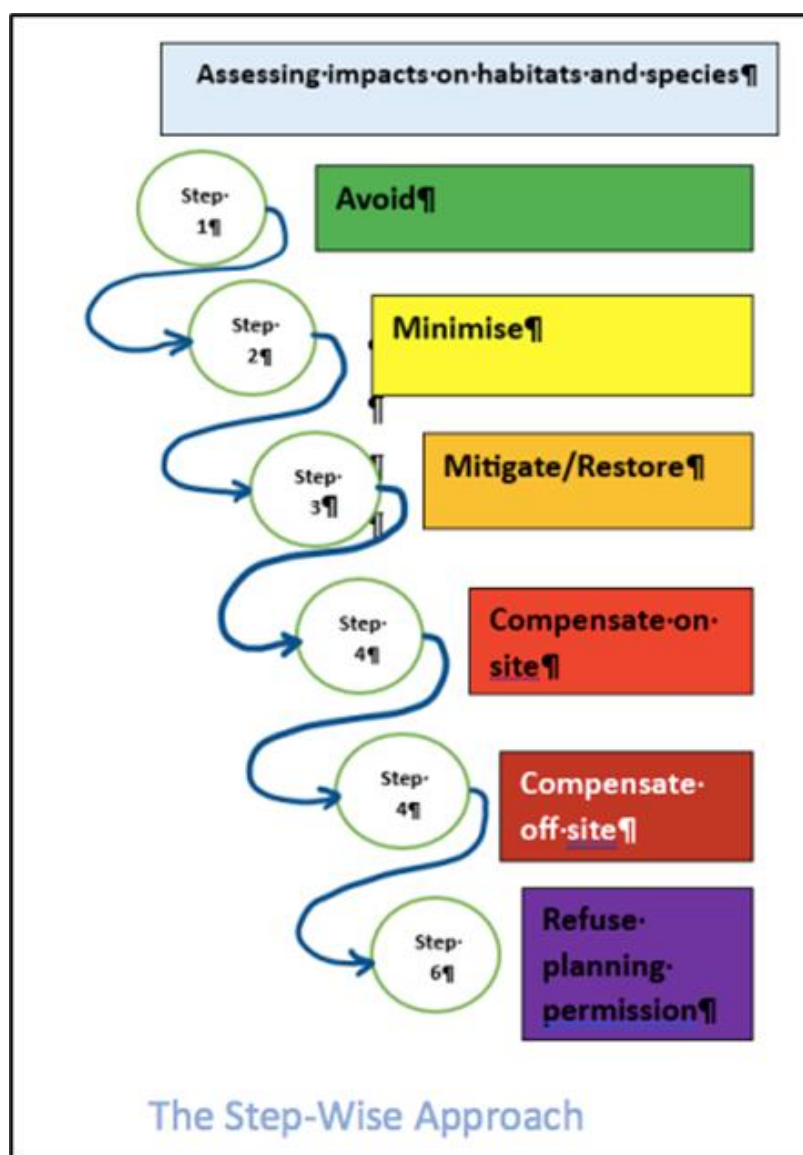


Figure 1: Extract of Stepwise Approach flow chart from the Letter to Heads of Planning (11/10/2023)

2.3 Paragraphs 6.4.3–6.4.12 of PPW require planning authorities and developers to ensure development delivers a net benefit for biodiversity, while following a stepwise approach to the protection of ecological assets.

- 2.4 The stepwise approach requires proposals to prioritise:
- Avoidance of impacts on biodiversity
  - Minimisation of impacts where avoidance is not possible
  - Mitigation and restoration of affected habitats
  - Compensation only as a last resort
- 2.5 Development proposals should also contribute to resilient ecological networks by protecting and enhancing landscape features such as woodland, hedgerows and other habitat corridors.
- 2.6 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 further requires public authorities to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience when exercising their functions.
- 2.7 This Green Infrastructure Statement demonstrates how the proposal complies with these policy requirements.

### **3.0 APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 3.1 The application site comprises a field parcel located to the north of the Rock & Fountain public house and to the east of Perfect Pet Services. The site is located off Pike Road and short distance from the junction with the A48, which is major strategic route. It comprises well-maintained grassland and is currently being used as a secure commercial dog walking field, without the benefit of planning permission.
- 3.2 The site is bounded to the west, north and east by mature woodland aside from a section of boundary in the north-east corner of the site. The southern boundary contains no mature green infrastructure assets of note. The site is relatively flat and gently rises from south to north.
- 3.3 Whilst there is no recent planning history relevant to the application site, the applicant operates the existing business adjacent to the site at Perfect Pet Services

which is primarily a dog day care centre. The applicant did recently submit a pre-application enquiry in relation to the use, and the issues raised in the response from the Local Planning Authority are addressed in the planning statement that accompanies the planning application as well as in the supporting survey work that has been submitted with the planning application.

#### **4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the retention of a commercial dog walking field at Perfect Pets, Pike Road, Penhow, which operates as an extension to the existing dog day care business on the adjoining site and is also available for private booking by members of the public. The use involves the managed exercise of dogs within a secure enclosed field and represents a material change of use requiring planning permission. Operational development associated with the use comprises the installation of secure 1.8-metre-high galvanised metal mesh boundary fencing to ensure dogs remain safely contained within the field, together with a small area of hardstanding providing customer parking for up to four vehicles.

#### **5.0 IDENTIFIED ON-SITE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS**

- 5.1 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Tree Survey have been undertaken to identify green infrastructure assets present on the site. These surveys provide an understanding of the ecological value of the site and inform the design and management of the dog walking field.

##### Grassland Habitat

- 5.2 The site itself comprises improved grassland, which is maintained as a short sward due to the ongoing use of the field. While improved grassland is generally considered to be of relatively low ecological value, it contributes to the open rural character of the landscape and provides a permeable green space within the wider habitat network.

##### Trees and Woodland

- 5.3 Woodland groups are located along the northern and western boundaries of the site

and form a significant green infrastructure asset within the local landscape.

5.4 These woodland groups contain species including:

- Ash
- Willow
- Hazel
- Oak
- Black Poplar

5.5 A tree survey undertaken in January 2026 assessed trees and woodland groups on and around the site in accordance with BS5837:2012. The survey categorised woodland groups as Category A, B and C, indicating moderate to high retention value and confirming their importance to the local landscape structure. These trees and woodland areas are retained as part of the development and are located primarily outside the operational area of the dog walking field.

#### Hedgerows and Boundary Vegetation

5.6 Boundary vegetation around the site contributes to habitat connectivity and provides ecological corridors linking the surrounding woodland areas. These features are retained as part of the development and contribute to the visual containment of the site within the wider rural landscape.

## **6.0 IDENTIFIED LOCALISED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS**

6.1 The wider landscape surrounding the site contains a strong network of green infrastructure features including woodland, agricultural fields and hedgerow boundaries. These features collectively support ecological connectivity and provide habitat for a range of species.

6.2 The ecological assessment identified potential for protected species including bats, amphibians, reptiles and birds within the surrounding landscape. However, the maintained grassland within the dog field provides limited suitable habitat for these

species due to the short grass sward and ongoing disturbance.

- 6.3 The surrounding woodland and trees provide the primary ecological habitat within the area and these features are retained as part of the proposal. The retention of the dog walking field therefore maintains the open character of the site while ensuring the surrounding green infrastructure network remains intact.

## **7.0 IMPACT ON GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

- 7.1 The proposal relates to the retention of an existing dog walking field, rather than the introduction of significant new built development.
- 7.2 Operational development associated with the use includes:
- Secure perimeter fencing
  - A small customer parking area
  - Access gates
- 7.3 The majority of the site remains as open grassland and no buildings or permanent structures are proposed. The layout of the field ensures that the key green infrastructure assets, particularly woodland and mature trees along the site boundaries, are retained and protected.
- 7.4 The ecological assessment concluded that the retention of the dog walking field is unlikely to result in significant impacts on protected species or habitats, given the limited ecological value of the maintained grassland and the retention of surrounding vegetation. The proposal therefore accords with the stepwise approach required by Planning Policy Wales.

### **Stepwise Approach**

- 7.5 Avoidance
- Retention of existing woodland, trees and boundary vegetation
  - Retention of the grassland habitat within the field
- 7.6 Minimisation
- Limiting operational development within the site
  - Ensuring new infrastructure is minimal and located away from key ecological features
- 7.7 Mitigation
- Protection of retained trees in accordance with BS5837 guidance

- Ongoing site management to protect ecological features

## **8.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

8.1 Although the proposal primarily seeks to retain an existing use, opportunities exist to enhance the biodiversity value of the site. A detailed landscaping scheme accompanies the planning application which includes the planting of native trees and hedgerows.

8.2 Proposed native tree planting includes species such as:

- Oak (*Quercus robur*)
- Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)

8.3 Proposed hedgerow planting includes a mix of native species such as:

- Hazel
- Hawthorn
- Holly
- Blackthorn
- Field Maple
- Elder

8.4 Areas of wildflower habitat are also proposed to increase floral diversity and provide resources for pollinators.

8.5 Additional ecological enhancement measures recommended within the ecological assessment include:

- Installation of bird boxes
- Installation of bat boxes
- Creation of a reptile hibernaculum

8.6 These measures will strengthen habitat connectivity, increase biodiversity value and

contribute to the resilience of the wider ecological network.

## **9.0 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING**

9.1 The continued management of the dog walking field will support the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure within the site.

9.2 Management measures will include:

- Retention and protection of existing woodland and trees
- Maintenance of grassland areas
- Establishment and management of new planting
- Ongoing monitoring of ecological enhancement measures

9.3 The landscaping scheme includes planting specifications and management measures to ensure successful establishment of new vegetation.

## **10.0 CONCLUSION**

10.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement demonstrates that the retention of the dog walking field at Perfect Pets has been designed and managed to protect existing green infrastructure assets.

10.2 The site retains key ecological features including woodland, trees and boundary vegetation, ensuring the continued function of the local green infrastructure network.

10.3 The proposal follows the stepwise approach outlined in Planning Policy Wales by:

- Avoiding impacts on key ecological features
- Minimising development within the site
- Providing opportunities for biodiversity enhancement

10.4 The implementation of the proposed landscaping and ecological enhancement measures will deliver a net benefit for biodiversity, in accordance with Planning Policy Wales and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.