

Green Infrastructure Statement

Asbri Reference: 26.129

Planning Portal Reference: PP-14665610

Site Address: Units 1-5 Block A, Boss Park, Stephenson Street, Newport, E: 332489, N: 186179

Proposed Development

Asbri Planning is appointed as planning agent to Starburst (UK) Ltd to submit a planning application for the proposed change of use from Industrial Units (B1/B2/B8) to Gymnastics Centre (D2) and associated works at Units 1-5 Block A, Boss Park, Newport.

Site Description and Surrounding Context

The site comprises the existing Units 1-5 of Block A at Boss Park. The site is located within an established industrial area of the Liswerry ward of Newport, with Reevesland Industrial Estate found nearby to the east. The wider site is bounded to the north by the Lysaght Village residential scheme, to the east by a railway embankment and line, to the south by Stephenson Street, and to the west by both the River Usk and business units at Esperanto Way.

Green Infrastructure Strategy

Paragraph 6.21 of Planning Policy Wales defines green infrastructure as *“the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places. Component elements of green infrastructure can function at different scales and some components, such as trees and woodland, are often universally present and function at all levels. At the landscape scale green infrastructure can comprise entire ecosystems such as wetlands, waterways, peatlands and mountain ranges or be connected networks of mosaic habitats, including grasslands. At a local scale, it might comprise parks, fields, ponds, natural green spaces, public rights of way, allotments, cemeteries and gardens or may be designed or managed features such as sustainable drainage systems. At smaller scales, individual urban interventions such as street trees, hedgerows, roadside verges, and green roofs/walls can all contribute to green infrastructure networks.”*

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016, provides a context for the delivery of multi-functional green infrastructure. Its protection and provision can make a significant contribution to the sustainable management of natural resources, and in particular to protecting, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems in terms of the diversity within and connections between ecosystems and the extent and condition of these ecosystems, so that they are better able to resist, recover from and adapt to pressures. This means that the development of green infrastructure is an important way for local authorities to deliver their Section 6 duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

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.

The DECCA Framework

The DECCA framework is used for evaluating ecosystem resilience based on five attributes and properties specified in the Environment (Wales) Act. These are: Diversity, Extent, Condition, Connectivity and Aspects of ecosystem resilience. A summary of the definitions is described below:

- **Diversity:** maintaining and enhancing diversity at every scale, including genetic, structural, habitat and between-habitat levels. This supports the complexity of ecosystem functions and interactions that deliver services and benefits.
- **Extent:** incorporating measures which maintain and increase the area of semi-natural habitat/features and linkages between habitats. In general, smaller ecosystems have reduced capacity to adapt, recover or resist disturbance.

- **Condition:** The condition of an ecosystem is affected by multiple and complex pressures acting both as short term and longer term types of disturbance. Both direct and wider impacts should be considered, for example avoiding or mitigating pressures such as climate change, pollution, invasive species, land management neglect etc.
- **Connectivity:** This refers to the links between and within habitats, which may take the form of physical corridors, stepping stones in the landscape, or patches of the same or related vegetation types that together create a network that enables the flow or movement of genes, species and natural resources. Developments should take opportunities to develop functional habitat and ecological networks within and between ecosystems, building on existing connectivity.
- **Aspects of ecosystem resilience (adaptability, recovery and resistance):** ecosystem resilience is a product of the above four attributes. Adaptability, recovery and resistance to/from a disturbance are defining features of ecosystem resilience.

Paragraph 6.4.11 of Planning Policy Wales states that “*planning authorities must follow a step-wise approach 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 minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for.*”

Figure 12: Summary of the Step-Wise Approach

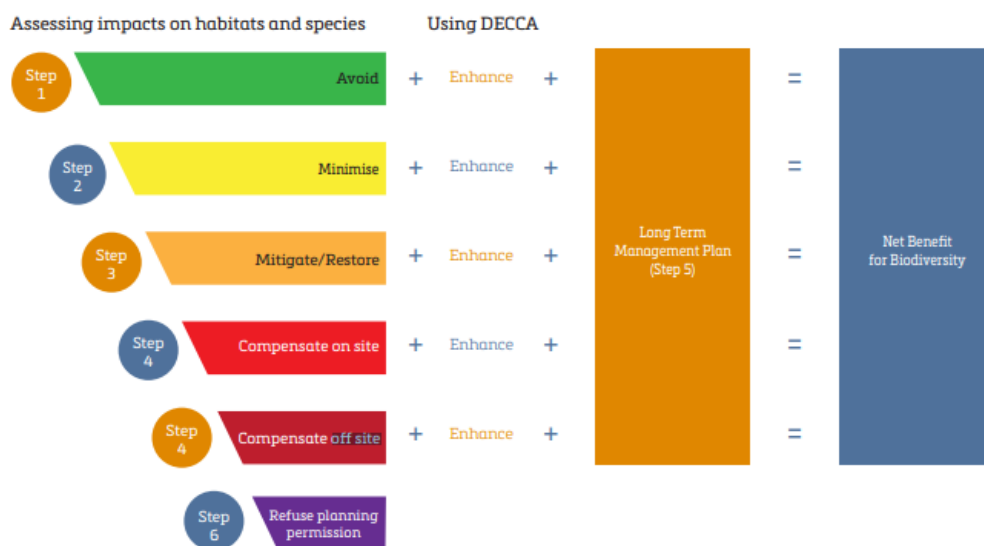


Figure 1: Summary of the Step-Wise Approach

Paragraph 6.2.12 of Planning Policy Wales states that “*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.*”

Development Impacts

As aforementioned, the proposal relates to the change of use of the existing building only. No external alterations are proposed. As such, no trees, hedgerows, vegetation or any other habitats will be removed as part of the development, and a European Protected Species License is not required to undertake the proposed works.

The above demonstrates that the proposals adhere to Step 1 of the Step-Wise Approach as it avoids the unnecessary removal of existing trees, hedgerows and vegetation on site, demonstrating that the baseline position in terms of green infrastructure provision will remain unaltered. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not lead to any negative impacts on existing green infrastructure at the site. There shall be no significant impact on any existing green infrastructure, given that the proposal simply relates to the change of use of the existing building. As such, the proposals adhere to Step 1 of the Step-Wise Approach as it avoids the unnecessary removal of existing trees, hedgerows and vegetation on site, demonstrating that the baseline position in terms of green infrastructure provision will remain unaltered. In accordance with the Step-wise Approach, biodiversity enhancements (comprising the installation of bird and bat boxes) are proposed to provide net benefits for biodiversity.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed development would not cause any detrimental impacts to green infrastructure at the site as the existing green infrastructure will be fully retained. Bird and bat boxes shall be installed to provide net benefits for biodiversity, in accordance with the Step-Wise Approach and DECCA Framework.

Dated: 28th May 2026