

APPLICATION NUMBER: 25/0248

PROPOSAL: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING VISITOR CENTRE, CONSTRUCTION OF NEW IMPROVED VISITOR CENTRE AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

SITE: Fourteen Locks Canal Centre Rogerstone Newport NP10 9GN

APPLICATION TYPE: Full

Insufficient to object but concerns remain - mainly in relation to whether some of the soft landscape proposals are appropriate for this location and site use

Some changes have been made or more information provided which is welcome. My key remaining queries and concerns relate to proposals shown on Soft landscape layout now rev PO5 by AHR Architects.

SUDs basin planting

- It is not clear if this is planting to the base or slopes (I think the key is incorrectly used) - I assume to the base.
- Bark mulch is proposed which will wash out when the basin fills and potentially discharge into the pond. SuDS are generally planted at a higher density to reduce weed ingress.
- As raised in my comments of May 2025, this is an ideal location for the use of locally native wetland edge plants to the base. Given the location I am not clear why an ornamental option is shown, some species are not only expensive but are either short lived or difficult to establish – refer to proposed list below.

Mix	Name
15	Brunnera macrophylla 'Jack Frost'
15	Carex divulsa - Gret sedge
10	Deschampsia cespitosa - Tufted hairgrass
10	Iris sibirica - Siberian flag
20	Luzula nivea - Snowy woodrush 25-30cm
20	Lychnis chalcedonica - Maltese cross
10	Verbena bonariensis 15-20cm

New tree planting

- Note that is still no certainty on which tree species will be planted where.
- A check is needed on the proposal for sour cherry rather than wild cherry - I think this should be Prunus avium not Cerasus avium.

Wildflower water edge mix

- The whole of the current grassed slopes to the ponds are proposed for Wildflower water edge mix.
- A review is needed as for this to be successful the existing grass cover will need to be removed (which risks soil runoff into the pond), and as these are steep slopes they will be dry rather than damp. There may be some locations where this would work, but professional soft landscape input is needed to ensure the proposal is workable.

Grass - Amenity

- A modified grassland seed mix is proposed 'a simple combination of low growing grasses that produce a short, open 'flower-friendly' sward. This grass mixture used alone has many applications in low maintenance naturalistic landscaping'.
- I query whether this is the right approach given the high footfall in a small area and therefore the pressure the amenity grass areas will be under.

BNG targets

- The plan refers to BNG targets and calculations which are not relevant to applications in Wales.

OUTLINE SOFT LANDSCAPING

Tree, shrub and seeding outline only, final design not exclusive to the plantings listed below. Detailed planting proposals will be developed with the ecologist to ensure BNG targets and calculations can be met.

Maintenance plan

- An outline five year soft landscape maintenance plan is required for the proposed landscape types and could be conditioned.