

Client:	Llanwern Community Council		
Subject:	Development proposal – car parking and footpath access to the village hall	Date:	22.02.2026
Ref:		Issue	1
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Introduction

A planning application was made to Newport City Council by Llanwern Community Council to build a car park for users of the village hall and connecting footpath to provide access from the car park to the rear of the hall to avoid users walking on a busy narrow road without a pavement.

An ecological assessment was undertaken by Celtic Ecology and Conservation Ltd in April 2020. Due to delays the project has not progressed and therefore the validity of that assessment has expired.

As Celtic Ecology and Conservation Ltd has ceased trading, Llanwern Community Council approached Ecovigour Ltd to provide an update assessment.

This Technical Note therefore provides that update. A site visit was undertaken on 9.01.2026.

Site Description

Taken from Celtic Ecology and Conservation Ltd (2020). (Plate numbers refer to that report).

The site is located on land adjacent to Station Road in Llanwern to the east of Newport in south Wales (NGR ST 36808829; Figure 1).



Figure 1 – proposed development site location (image courtesy of Google Earth)

Photographs are at Appendix A.

The site is characterised by improved grassland (Plate 1) dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*) cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) common bent, (*Agrostis capillaris*), meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*) cuckoo flower (*Cardamine pratensis*) and dandelions with frequent broadleaved and curled dock (*Rumex obtusifolius* and *R. crispus*).

The edges of the site (Plate 2) comprise bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) scrub with ruderal species such as common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) vetch (*Vicia cracca*) cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) and bugle (*Ajuga reptans*).

The site's roadside northern boundary comprises a hedge (Plates 3) to the south west of the existing entrance field gate comprised of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), and elder (*Sambucus nigra*) with occasional hazel (*Corylus avellana*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*) and a metal fence to the north east (Plate 4); the fence is becoming overgrown with bindweed and

The route from the proposed car park to the village hall (Plate 5) runs through the improved grassland and is bordered on the northern side by rank grassland of the same species as listed above with bramble scrub against domestic garden hedges and fences.

Development proposals

It is proposed to construct a loose stone and dust car park to service the village hall. To connect the car park to the hall, a path will be required along the edge of an improved grassland field. It is anticipated that there will be no change to the existing roadside access.

Since the original planning application (ref: 21/0223) in 2021, the plans have been amended slightly to improve the design; these changes are now subject of a non-material amendment (ref: 24/1028). The old and new designs are shown at Figures 2 & 3.

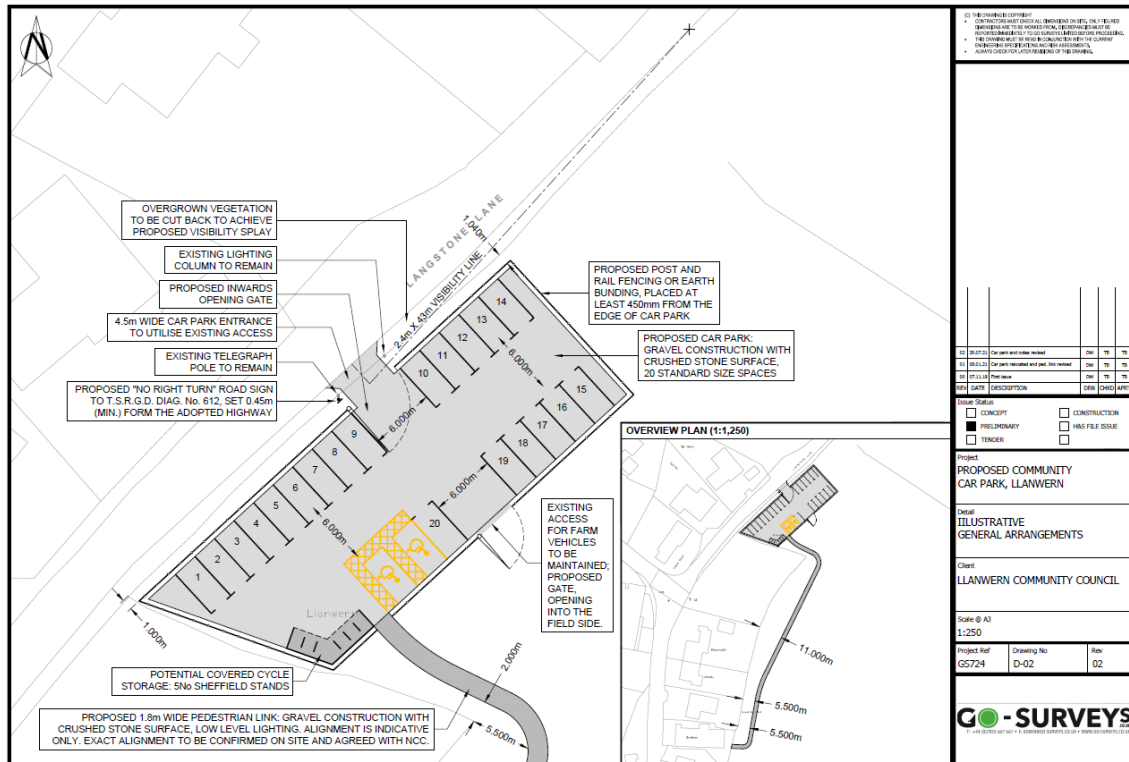


Figure 2 – original layout

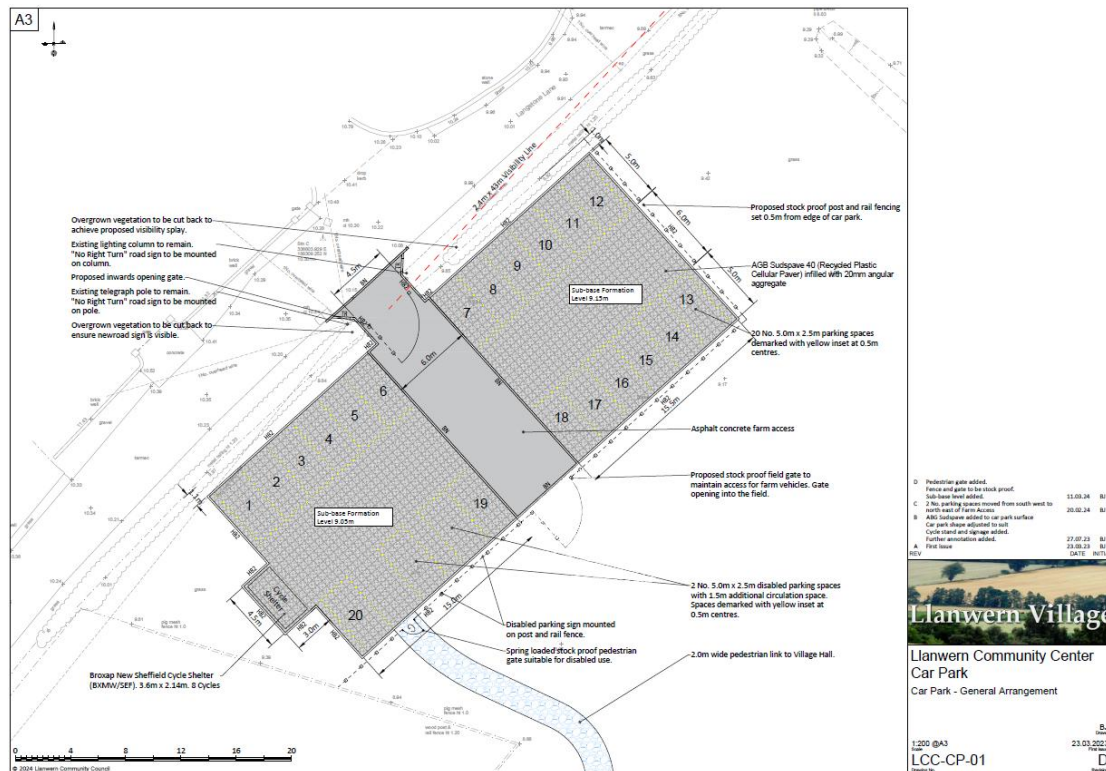


Figure 3 Revised layout

Methodology

The initial report was viewed and the site visited (09.01.2026).

Due to the scale of the development, and nature of the site an update biological records data search was not requested.

Results

The site was found to be exactly as was described in the original 2020 Celtic Ecology report: agriculturally improved grassland with bramble dominated scrub between the proposed footpath location and adjacent housing.

Examination of aerial photography indicates that the use of the site has not changed, with its use remaining as cutting grass with aftermath grazing.

The nature of the roadside boundaries has not changed.

There were no botanical species of importance or conservation interest identified within the area to be affected by the development proposals.

No evidence of protected species was observed.

No invasive non-native species were observed.

Site photographs (January 2026)

Plate 1 - proposed car park area (looking north towards Station Road)



Plate 2 - proposed car park area (looking south west)



Plate 3 - proposed footpath route (looking south east)



Plate 4 - proposed footpath route (looking north west & access to the village hall)



Plate 5 – grassland to the south of the development location (looking north towards the development location)



Evaluation and Recommendations

The site is as described in the original report and has not changed. Therefore the findings from that report still stand.

The site and the habitats that will be affected are of a generally low ecological value with the species present being common and widespread. It is considered that the site is of a low ecological value at a local (site) level.

The proposals are limited in scale and extent and will retain the habitats of highest value i.e. scrub vegetation. Additionally, the works will be very short in duration. It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impacts as a result of the operational phase of the project. Monks Ditch, 80m to the south east of the site (at its closest point) will not be affected in any way by the proposals.

Nesting birds using the scrub vegetation may be disturbed by development activities and therefore working in accordance with a Method Statement will be required (Appendix A).

Reptiles and amphibians may be killed or injured as a result of the development and therefore working in accordance with a Method Statement (Appendix A) will be required to prevent any potential harm to these groups.

Enhancements

It has been advised that a native species hedge will be planted around the car park and plant a number of fruit trees to the south west of the car park, both measures to fulfil the requirements of net benefit for biodiversity policies. (Locations at Figure 4). Please note the locations of the tree planting and numbers of trees are indicative only at this time.



Green Infrastructure Strategy

Figure 4 – location of biodiversity enhancements (after Roberts Limbrick 2025)

Appendix A – Precautionary Method Statement

The presence of UK protected species (breeding birds (adjacent to the site), amphibians and reptiles) should be assumed. Therefore, the following measures will be implemented:

1. All clearance will be supervised by a suitably experienced ecologist until such time as the ecologist states that direct supervision is not necessary.
2. Vegetation will be cleared from directly affected areas only e.g. areas to be built on, used for storage, be part of the construction site or which will form part of the landscaping scheme.
3. There will be no clearance works undertaken during the breeding bird season (generally considered to be March – September) unless the area has been inspected by a suitably experienced ecologist no more than 24 hours prior to commencement with no evidence of breeding birds found.
4. Should evidence of breeding birds, in particularly nests, be recorded, no clearance may be undertaken within 5m of any nest site until such time as the nest is vacated naturally. The supervising ecologist may decide that any nests found require further protection.
5. Once cleared, the vegetation will be maintained as close to bare ground as possible either by spraying or ongoing repeated cutting using brush cutters with knife blades to ensure that there is no potential for reptiles to utilise the site after the initial clearance. Reptile fencing will not be required as long as the bare ground / short vegetation habitat is maintained. After clearance, should the vegetation be allowed to regrow above 75mm high, it will be cut and raked as described above.
6. All arisings will be raked off and spread (creating habitat piles) on unaffected land or removed from site for disposal.
7. The orientation of the cutting will be designed to push reptiles into adjoining unaffected areas once the areas for clearance have been identified without having to undertake a full translocation exercise. In this instance, cutting will start from the northern end of the site and progress in a southerly direction.
8. Vegetation will be cut in three phases. The first phase will reduce the vegetation height to 75mm; the second will reduce it to ≈ 30 mm; the third phase will reduce the height to as close to ground level as possible. There will be a time delay of 48 hours between the first and second cuts.
9. After clearance, should the vegetation be allowed to regrow above 150mm high, it will be cut and raked as short as possible, ≤ 30 mm wherever possible.

10. Clearance may take place outwith the reptile active season, as no suitable hibernation habitat will be affected.
11. If reptiles and / or amphibians are observed within the clearance area at any time during the works, a decision on how to deal with them will be made on site in light of the conditions on site at the time and the state of the animals themselves. There are three options for dealing with them:
 - It may be possible to leave the animals alone to find their own way into cover, depending on where they are seen, what they are doing and their apparent activity levels; or
 - Capture, remove from site and take into temporary captivity until such time as they can be released adjacent to the cleared area (a vivarium has been prepared in case it is required); or
 - Should conditions allow, capture and translocate the animals to a safe area immediately adjacent to the site.
12. Other protected species, if present, can be identified and harm avoided by following this method statement.
13. All vegetation and site clearance will be supervised by a suitably experienced ecologist.