



Green Infrastructure Statement

Llanwern Village Hall

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01 Introduction

Preface

Robert Limbrick have been instructed to prepare this Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) to support a planning application for a carpark and footpath at Llanwern Village Hall. The GIS shows measures that can be taken to the proposal to support biodiversity.

The GIS should be read in conjunction with the following surveys, report and proposals for the application stated below:

- Celtic Ecology and Conservation Ltd, Technical Note, 30.04.2020.
- Llanwern Community Council Architects drawing - Llanwern Community Centre General Arrangement Ref LCC-CP-01

Due to Welsh Government policy, a Green Infrastructure Statement should now be submitted with all planning applications. The statement will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal.

Site Location

The proposed car park is located on the northern edge of Llanwern Village, approximately 11.5 kilometres east of Newport City Centre. The site lies to the south of the M4 motorway and the A48.

Access to the site will be via Langstone Lane. The site entrance is situated directly opposite a small group of residential dwellings, with recently constructed properties adjacent to the proposed development on one side. The surrounding area is semi-rural in character, comprising agricultural fields and residential properties.

The car park is to provide dedicated car parking and bike storage for visitors to Llanwern Village Hall, which currently has limited parking provision. The proposed location is approximately 100 metres north of the village hall. To ensure safe and inclusive pedestrian access, a new accessible footpath is also proposed. This path will extend south from the car park through an adjacent field, running to the rear of the residential properties that lie between the car park and the village hall.

This proposal aims to alleviate parking pressure within the village, enhance access to community facilities, and provide a safer, more organised parking solution for local events and regular hall users.



Site Location Plan.

02 Planning

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) – February 2024

Policy **6.2.1** describes 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”

Within **6.2.11** it goes on to state that the *“quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development”* and the Green Infrastructure Statement will be *“an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate for the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the step-wise approach has been applied”*

This series of updated policy has a stronger emphasis on taking a proactive approach to green infrastructure and references the **Building with Nature Standards – Delivering High Quality Green Infrastructure in Wales** as an example of good practice to ensure that appropriate considerations have been taken into account.

The green infrastructure statement should 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 of Planning Policy Wales) has been applied. This is the means of demonstrating the steps which have been taken towards securing a net benefit for biodiversity.

The Step Wise Approach

The Step Wise approach has been summarised below:

- 1. Avoid**
- 2. Minimise**
- 3. Mitigate/Restore**
- 4. Compensate**

Avoid

Aim to maintain biodiversity by avoiding loss or damage to biodiversity (i.e. the variety of species and their abundance). Consider whether the development is really needed, whether it could be located elsewhere, sited or designed differently, or incorporate or be replaced in part by a nature based solution.

Minimise

When all options for avoiding loss or damage to biodiversity have been exhausted, development should seek to minimise the initial impact on biodiversity and ecosystems on the site by:

- maintaining the largest possible area of existing habitat supporting biodiversity and functioning ecosystems
- retaining existing features (e.g. trees, hedgerows, ponds), and
- using innovative solutions to avoid damage and maintain existing biodiversity features and ecosystems.

Mitigate

Where after measures to minimise impact, biodiversity and ecosystems could still be damaged, the proposed development should aim to mitigate that damage – ‘like for like’ in the case of priority habitats and species and in every case seek to build ecosystem resilience within the site and where possible the wider area.

Having mitigated loss, a scheme of enhancements should be provided to ensure a net benefit for biodiversity. These could include on-site habitat creation and/or could be part of the development itself using biodiverse nature based solutions such as SUDS, green roofs, woodland expansion, and wetland creation. Improving ecosystem resilience through the DECCA attributes, particularly improving connectivity to the immediate surroundings would be a key contribution to on-site mitigation and enhancement.

Compensate

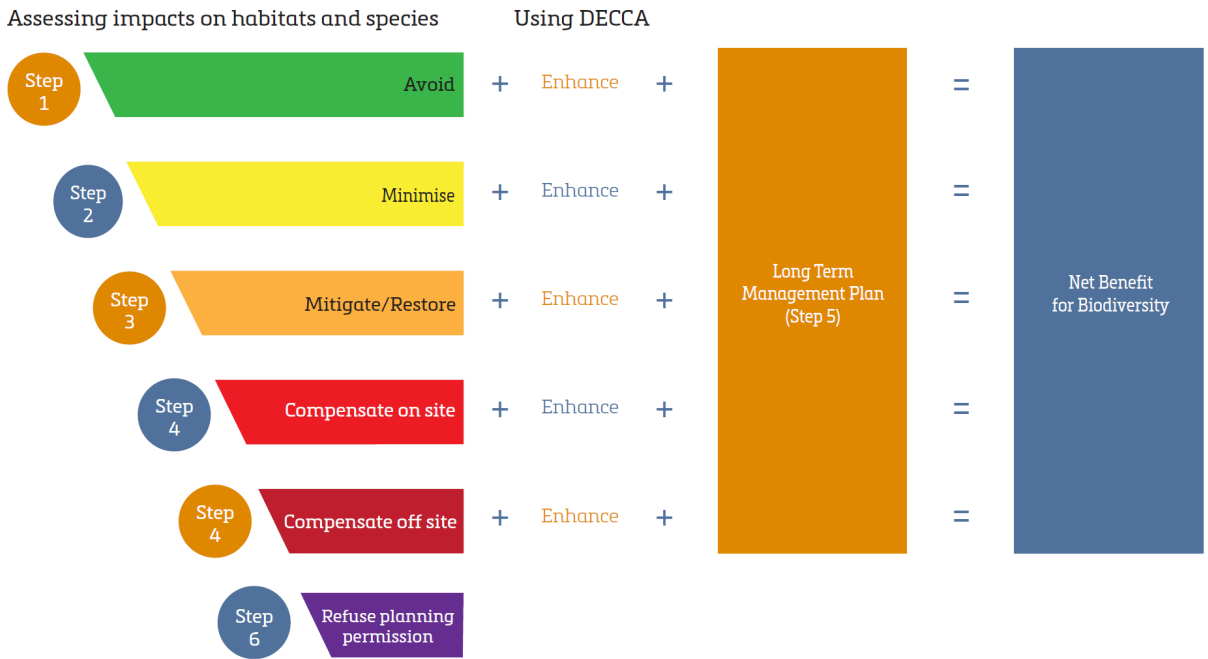
When all other options have been exhausted, and where modifications, alternative sites, conditions or obligations are not sufficient to secure biodiversity outcomes, off site compensation for unavoidable damage must be sought.

Compensation measures should be guided by place-based evidence and the priorities as set out in SoNaRR, the Area Statement and/or Green Infrastructure Assessment and must be secured and established far enough in advance before the loss of biodiversity on site.

Appropriate compensation measures or tools could include:

- biodiversity enhancements with demonstrable ecological relationship to the site,
- translocation and restoration of site features, habitats and species, and/or
- contribution to an approved levy scheme or habitat bank.

Compensation should be at least ‘like for like’ in terms of type, quality and extent and be context appropriate.



Summary of the Step Wise Approach – Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, Page 148

Building with Nature – Delivering High Quality Green Infrastructure in Wales

Building with Nature sets out a framework of best practice and revolves around six Core Standards which provide the foundation for distinguishing green infrastructure from a more conventional approach to the design and delivery of open and green space. They are as listed below:

- Standard 1: Optimises Multifunctionality and Connectivity
- Standard 2: Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency
- Standard 3: Maximises Environmental Net Gains
- Standard 4: Champions a Context Driven Approach
- Standard 5: Creates Distinctive Places
- Standard 6: Secures Effective Place-keeping

Local Planning Policy

Newport City Local Development plan 2011 – 2026, adopted January 2015

The following relevant policies within the LDP have been identified;

SP5 – Countryside

The Council recognises the importance of protecting the countryside both for its own sake and because it provides a vital landscape setting for the urban area and transport corridors

GP4 – General Development Principles – Highways and Accessibility

Provide appropriate access for pedestrians cyclists and public transport in accordance with national guidance. Make adequate provision for car parking and cycle storage.

GP5 – General Development Principles – Natural Environment

Proposals are designed and managed to protect and encourage biodiversity and ecological connectivity including the incorporation of new features on or off the site.

The policy states a high standard landscape scheme is expected to complement development sites. Landscape schemes should use native species and should be designed as an integral part of the development rather than as a later addition or after thought to be fitted in and around it, and should respect and complement the character of the local landscape and the features within it. Landscape schemes should seek to create new habitats, promote biodiversity and facilitate opportunities for ecological connectivity. Effective measures should be taken to protect existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows that have been identified as worthy of retention.

CE3 – Environmental Spaces and Corridors

In and adjoining the Urban and Village areas, and in areas identified for comprehensive development, sites having existing importance for their visual qualities, as wildlife habitats or for recreational or amenity purposes will be safeguarded as ‘environmental spaces and corridors’.

Existing Green Infrastructure – Wider Context

Natural Resources Wales – Green Infrastructure

This map highlights the key areas of different types of green infrastructure in the area surrounding the site.

This provides a baseline understanding of the site's proximity to other key local green infrastructure features, and how it could be potentially enhanced to improve its role in the wider network.

It can be seen that there are no notable GI elements highlighted within, or in close proximity to the site.

Approx 0.38km South West of the proposed site is an ancient semi natural woodland.

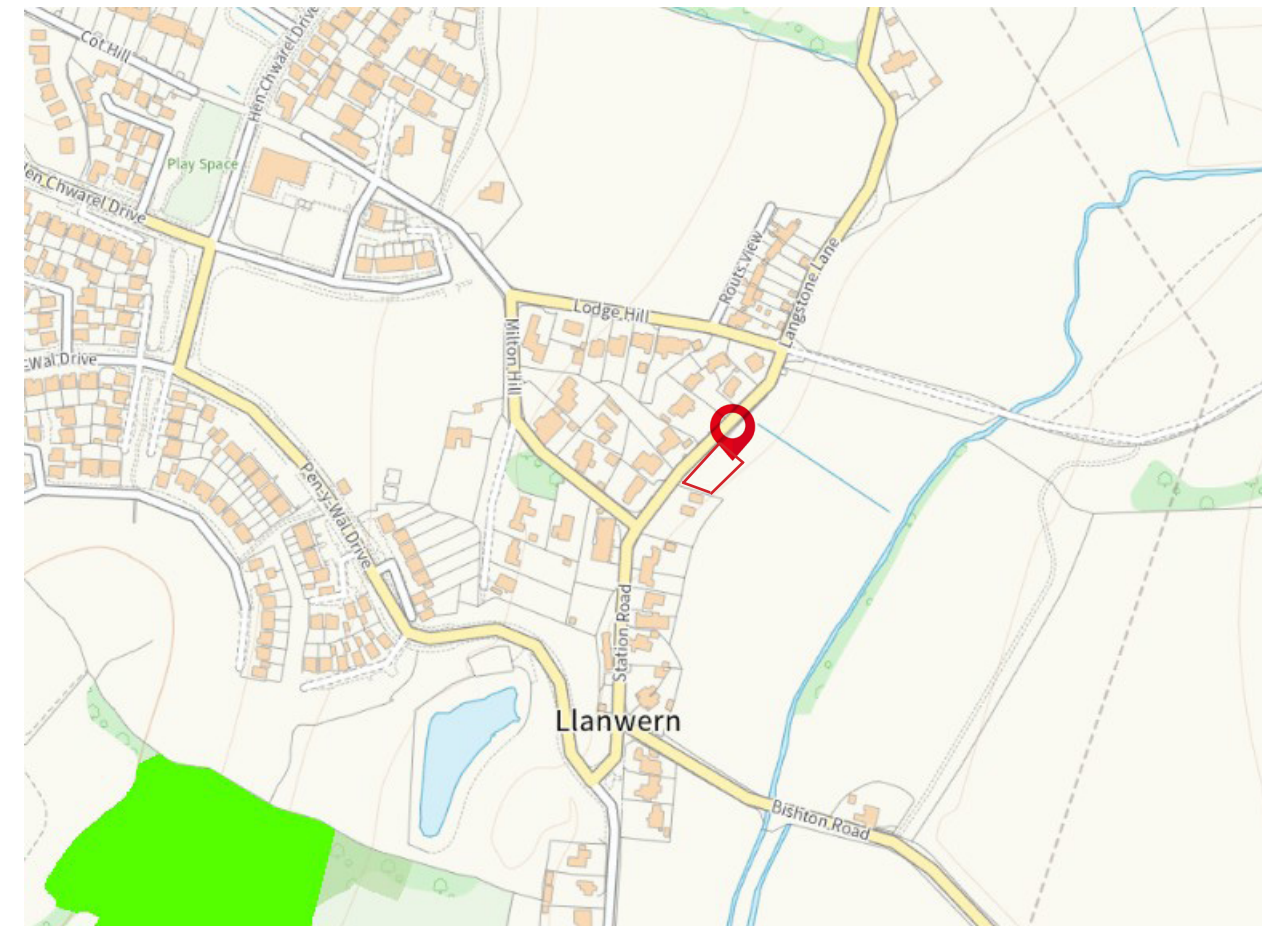
Forestry

Ancient Woodland Inventory 2021

- Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
- Restored Ancient Woodland Site
- Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site
- Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category

National Forest Inventory 2020

- Assumed woodland
- Broadleaved
- Cloud or shadow
- Conifer
- Coppice
- Coppice with standards
- Felled
- Ground prep
- Low density
- Mixed mainly broadleaved
- Mixed mainly conifer
- Shrub
- Young trees
- Failed
- Windblow
- Uncertain
- Agriculture land
- Bare area
- Grassland
- Power line
- Quarry
- River
- Road



Extract from Natural Resource Wales Interactive Map

03 The Site

Existing Site



Legend

- ① Grassland
- ② Parcel of land for development
- ③ Site entrance via Langstone Lane
- ④ Village Hall

Key

- Protected site – Monks Ditch
- Ditch
- Hedgerows
- Grassland
- Site boundary

The site, approximately 0.3 hectares in size, comprises a broadly rectangular parcel of land, along with a narrow connecting strip that runs adjacent to the rear boundaries of neighbouring properties. This strip is to provide a pedestrian link between the proposed car parking area and the village hall.

The site is located approximately 100 metres to the northeast of the village hall. The main parcel of land lies adjacent to properties on Langstone Lane. Vehicular access to the site is available directly from the adjoining main road.

The site currently consists of predominantly flat grassland, with some existing scrub vegetation along the field edge near the neighbouring properties. A native hedge runs along the boundary between the field and the adjacent road.



Grassland on the site (looking north to entrance gate)



Edges of new neighbouring properties



Northern hedge



Northern boundary fence

Note – Images taken from Celtic Ecology and Conservation Ltd Technical Note

Existing Site – Ecology

Celtic Ecology and Conservation Ltd describes the site as having the following habitat types:

Grassland – The site is 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*).

Site edges – The edges of the site 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 route from the proposed car park to the village hall 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.

Hedgerows – The site’s roadside northern boundary comprises a hedge 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; the fence is becoming overgrown with bindweed.

Protected sites – To the east of the site is a drainage ditch running through the field. Approximately 100m to the south east of the site is a Monks ditch and approximately 300m away, south west, is Dockwell wood, a semi natural woodland. The nature of the work there is no likelihood of any adverse impact.

Protected species – There are no identified concerns within the site.

04 The Proposals

05 Conclusion

Conclusion

The proposed green infrastructure enhancements form a key part of the overall site strategy and align with the objectives set out in Newport's Local Development Plan and Planning Policy Wales; Edition 12. The planting of a native hedge around the car parking area will deliver both visual mitigation and ecological benefits, supporting habitat creation and connectivity across the site.

In addition, the enhancement of the south western grassed area through the introduction of native wildflowers and fruit-bearing trees, will provide valuable foraging opportunities for pollinators and wildlife. These measures will deliver measurable environmental gains in line with biodiversity objectives.

