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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Craig y Parcau, Bridgend

Green Infrastructure Statement

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Contents

1 Introduction 4
1.1 Project Background 4
1.2 Purpose and Scope 4
1.3 Project Brief 5

2 The site and context 6
2.1 Context 6
2.2 Historic and Cultural Landscape Designations 7
2.3 Existing Green Infrastructure 10

3 Design Considerations 14
3.1 Vision 14
3.2 Site Context and Analysis 14
3.3 Design Interpretation 14

4 The Proposals 17
4.1 The Proposed Development 17
4.2 Landscape Proposals 17
4.3 Planting 19

5 Green Infrastructure Statement 23
5.1 Stepwise Approach 23
5.2 Drainage 24
5.3 Overall 24

6 Conclusion 27
6.1 Resilience of Ecosystems 27
6.2 Green Infrastructure 27
6.3 Conclusion 27

7 Appendix 29
7.1 Legislation and Policy 29
7.2 Relevant Guidance 33

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Documents and Drawings

This Green Infrastructure Statement should be read alongside supporting surveys, reports, and plans submitted with the application, including:

Ecology (Soltys Brewster Ecology)

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (E24129101/ DOC 01)
- Ecology note: Evidence of Step-wise Approach (E24129101/ DOC 02)

Arboriculture (Treescene)

- Tree Survey, 8th July 2025
- Tree Constraints Plan

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

1 Tir Collective is instructed by Bellway Homes Limited to prepare this Green Infrastructure Statement in support of the proposed housing development on Land at Craig y Parcau, Bridgend. The development proposals will be brought forward as a full planning application and comprises the construction of approximately 120 residential properties, with associated landscape proposals, drainage infrastructure, access road and other supporting amenities.

2 The site comprises circa 6.5ha of land south of the A48 at the southwestern edge of Bridgend in Bridgend County Borough. The site consists of two parcels of agricultural land with areas of woodland, mature tree and hedgerow boundaries and a disused residential property. The A48 lies to the north of the site boundary, with the settlement of Bridgend on its north side. The local road New Inn Road lies to the south and the Ogmore River lies to the east, where there is a public right of way. Adjacent to the site to the west there are further agricultural fields and the settlement of Bridgend to the north.

1.2 Purpose and Scope

3 This statement outlines how the proposed development responds to the requirements of Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (PPW12), the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, and relevant national and local guidance relating to Green Infrastructure (GI), including the step-wise approach to biodiversity and ecosystem reliance. It also references key principles of placemaking and sustainable development.

4 The proposals will deliver a coordinated GI strategy that integrates ecological mitigation, SuDS, landscape planting and arboricultral measures. Particular consideration is given to the relationship of the development with Ancient Woodland and designated ecological assets within and close to the site.

5 This statement draws on supporting material including the preliminary ecology surveys and recommendations, arboricultural input and the emerging highways and drainage strategies. The GI strategy will help ensure net benefit for biodiversity, landscape resilience and long-term multifunctionality of the site.

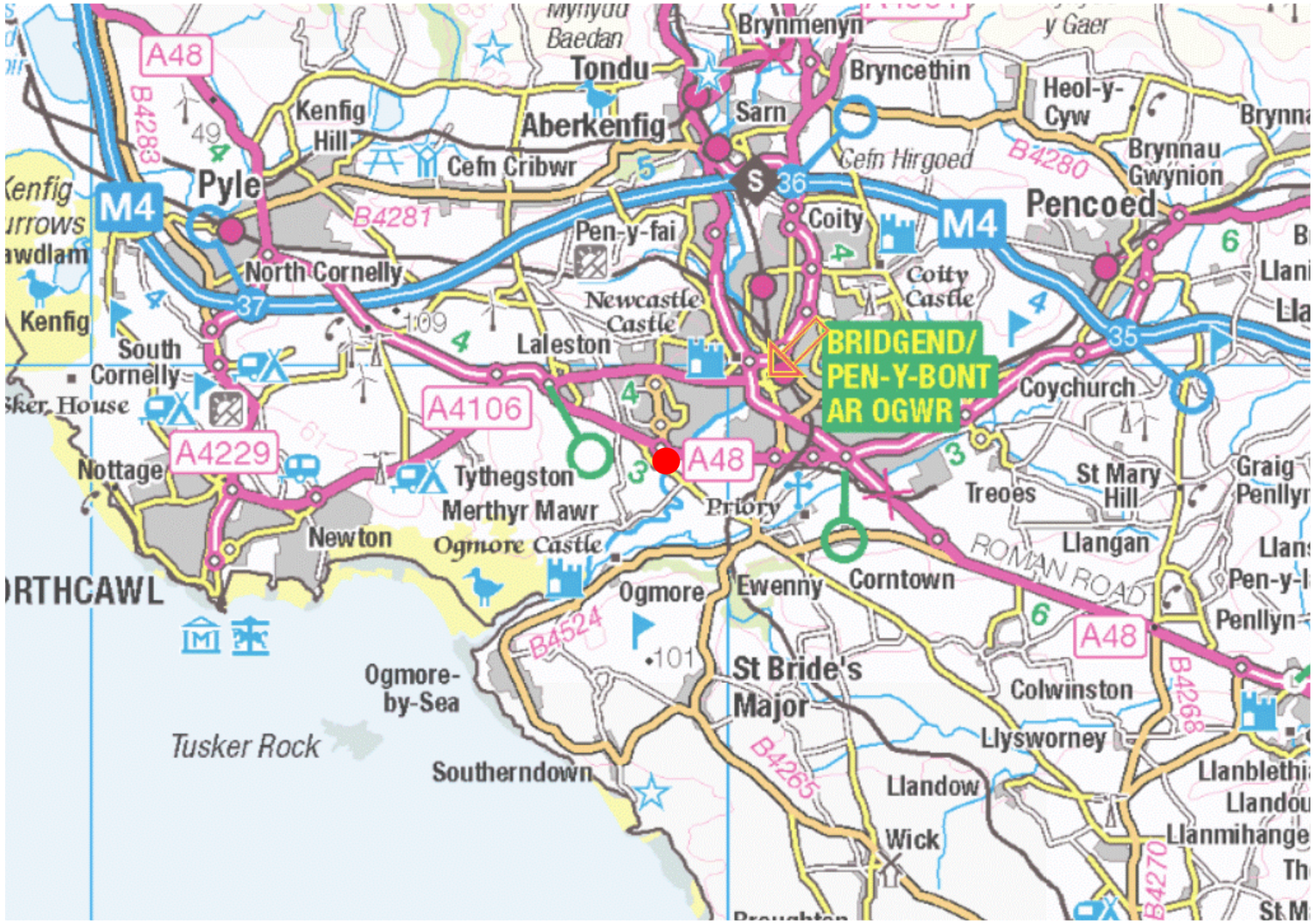


Figure 1: Site location 1:100k (by Streetmap.co.uk)

1.3 Project Brief

6 The proposed scheme seeks full planning permission for housing, on land allocated for proposed development as part of the Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP).

7 The proposals include:

- Demolition of buildings and structures
- The clearance of material and stripping of land
- Minimal removal of some sections of hedgerow, trees and vegetation
- The construction of residential units, access road and car parking and other associated infrastructure within two development parcels - the eastern area and western area
- The construction of a road crossing through Ancient Woodland within the site to allow access into the western development parcel
- Landscape and ecological enhancement, including new attenuation features, rain gardens, creation of new and strengthened hedgerow, woodland, tree and grassland areas

Figure 2: The site with redline boundary

2 The site and context

2.1 Context

8 The site is located on pastoral agricultural land, immediately to the south of the existing urban area of Bridgend. The wider farmland landscape slopes broadly towards the River Ogmore, with the site located in a part of the river floodplain. The agricultural landscape is broadly a farmed hinterland between the settlement of Bridgend and the coastline, containing a number of farmsteads, well-crossed by fooapths and divided by mature field boundaries and a number of small areas of woodland. There are some views out from the wider landscape toward Bridgend to the north and east over the River Ogmore. The fieldscape landscape is of historic value as a complex, mixed fieldscape of medieval/ post-medieval date with defining hedgerows that are generally in good condition. The site itself is relatively well enclosed by boundary vegetation and divided by woodland.

9 There are a number of vehicular routes close to the site, The A48 borders the site to the north and is defined by a belt of trees. The roundabout junction of the A48 with the B4622 is located at the central northern site boundary, where there is a gated entrance into the site. The B4622 runs north from the roundabout into the existing residential areas of Bridgend.

10 The local road New Inn Road abuts the south boundary of the site, bounded by a line of trees with post-and-wire fencing and a stone wall in places. At the south corner of the site there is a gated access. Woodland separates the site from the River Ogmore, 20m to the east at its closest point. A public right of way follows the west bank of the river, running alongside the north part of the eastern site boundary.

11 The landform of the site broadly slopes toward the river, with the highest point located roughly at the west boundary of the site and the lowest point at the eastern boundary.

12 The site is composed mostly of two fields of improved and semi-improved grassland manage for grazing, with some semi-mature broadleaved and mixed woodland (including Ancient Woodland), scattered mature trees and mature hedgerow. There are two derelict buildings on the site, accessed via an access track connecting with the A48 roundabout at the north site boundary. There is a further access track and tarmac area in the south part of the site, which links with New Inn Road.

Figure 3: Site context (by Google Earth)

Figure 4: Historic OS map 1830s-1880s

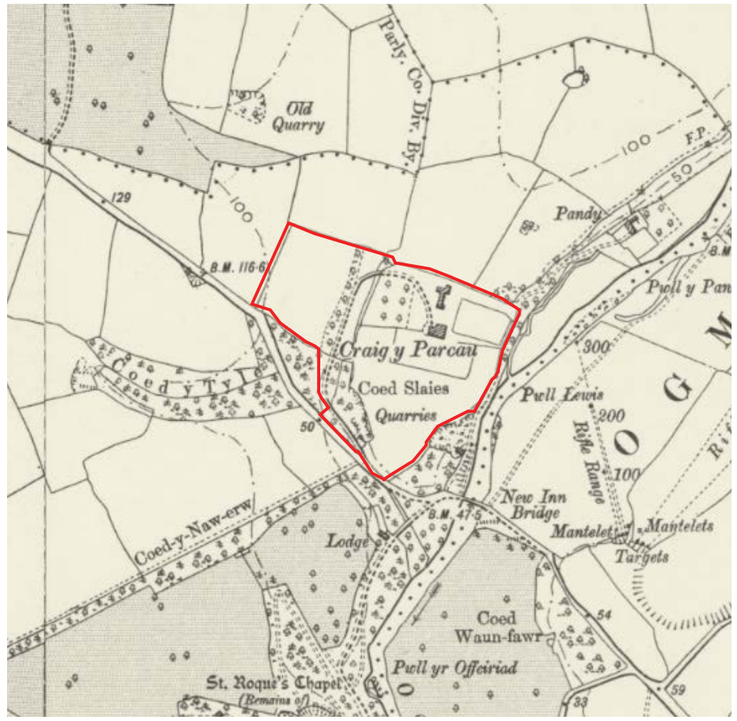


Figure 5: Historic OS map 1888-1915

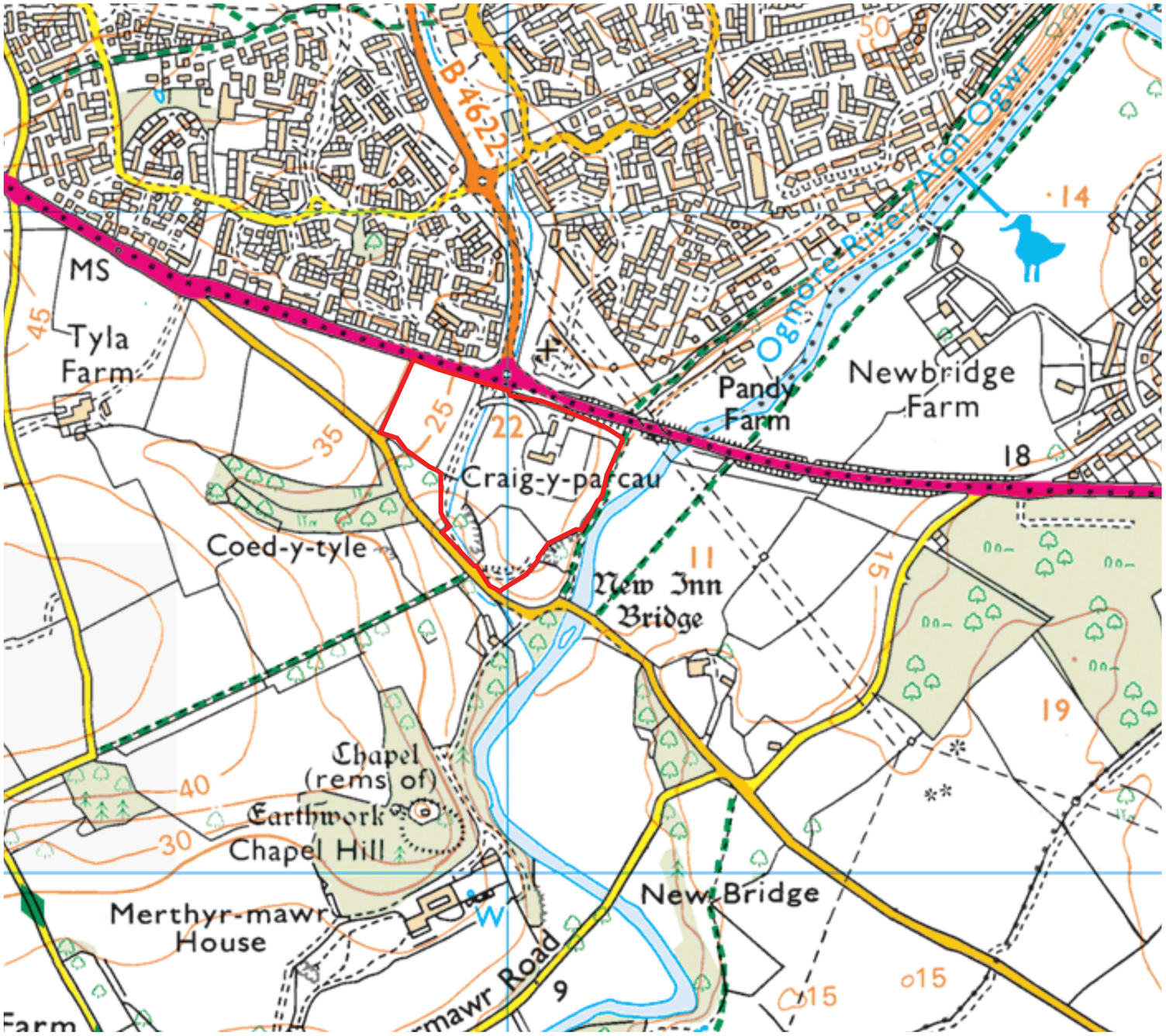


Figure 6: Current OS map (by Streetmap.co.uk)

2.2 Historic and Cultural Landscape Designations

13 The wider landscape is of historic value as a complex, mixed fieldscape of medieval/ post-medieval date. There are several historic and cultural designations relevant to the site. The Merthyr Mawr, Kenfig & Margam Burrows Registered Landsape of Outstanding Historic Interest extends into a small part of the southern edge of the site and covers the extensive coastal area to the southwest. Closeby to the south of the site lies Merthyr Mawr House registered park and garden, which is open to the public. Within the boundary of the registered park and garden there is a Scheduled Monument at Chapel Hill Camp, where there are the remains of an earthwork enclosure. The bridge that crosses the River Ogmore close to the east site boundary is also designated as a Scheduled Monument. There are two listed buildings/ structures close to the site to the south. There are no listed structures within the site.

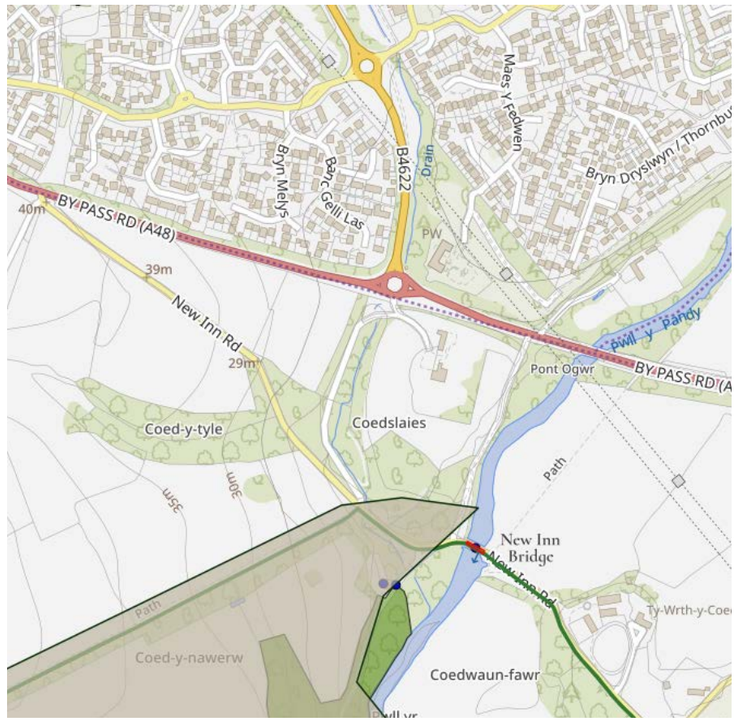


Figure 7: Historic assets (by Cadw)

Trees and Hedgerows

01

02

03

04

01 - View from northeast corner of western site field, looking southwest

02 -View from western boundary of the site looking east

03 - View from northwest corner of the eastern site field, looking south toward central woodland

04 - View from eastern part of the eastern site field, looking north

2.3 Existing Green Infrastructure

14 Desktop studies and field surveys have been undertaken to identify and confirm the green infrastructure features present on the site and within its immediate surroundings. The site comprises a range of habitats of ecological value, including woodland and mature hedgerows which are capable of supporting a range of protected/ priority listed species.

15 The elements that are considered to form the existing Green Infrastructure

- Habitats of ecological value
- Trees and hedgerow

16 These green infrastructure elements are described below, providing an overview of the existing conditions and identifying those features of particular ecological and arboricultural importance prior to application of the stepwise approach to biodiversity and landscape management.

Habitats of Ecological Value

17 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was undertaken by Soltys Brewster Ecology in October 2025. The assessment comprised a desk study and field survey in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2017) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal guidelines and the standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey protocol (JNCC, 2010).

18 Desk studies identified that the Craig-Y-Parcau Woodland Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located approximately 400m to the northeast, directly adjacent to the River Ogmore and providing good habitat connectivity to the site.

19 The desk study also identified that the woodland parcel inside the site separating the two agricultural site fields forms Coed-y-Tyle SINC, designated for its broadleaved semi-natural woodland. This SINC woodland parcel separating the two site fields overlaps with a Restored Ancient Woodland Site designation under the Ancient Woodland Inventory (2021).

20 There are two further SINCs adjacent to the northern and southern boundaries of the site, including Chapel Hill SINC located approximately 20m to the south and the Craig-y-Parcau SINC located approximately 45m to the northeast. Both these SINCs are physically separated from the site by roads however there is an unnamed ditch/ drain present on the site that flows through the Chapel Hill SINC, resulting in hydrological connectivity between the SINC and the proposed site.

21 There is a further Restored Ancient Woodland Site located adjacent to the south of the proposed development site, hydrologically connected to the site via the unnamed drainage ditch/ channel on the site.

22 The River Ogmore is located 20m from the eastern site boundary at its nearest point and the ditch/drain located within the site is also hydrologically connected to the river.

23 The ecological appraisal confirmed that proposed development may have potential effects on priority habitats in the form of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, semi-natural mixed woodland (including the Restored Ancient Woodland Site), and mature species-

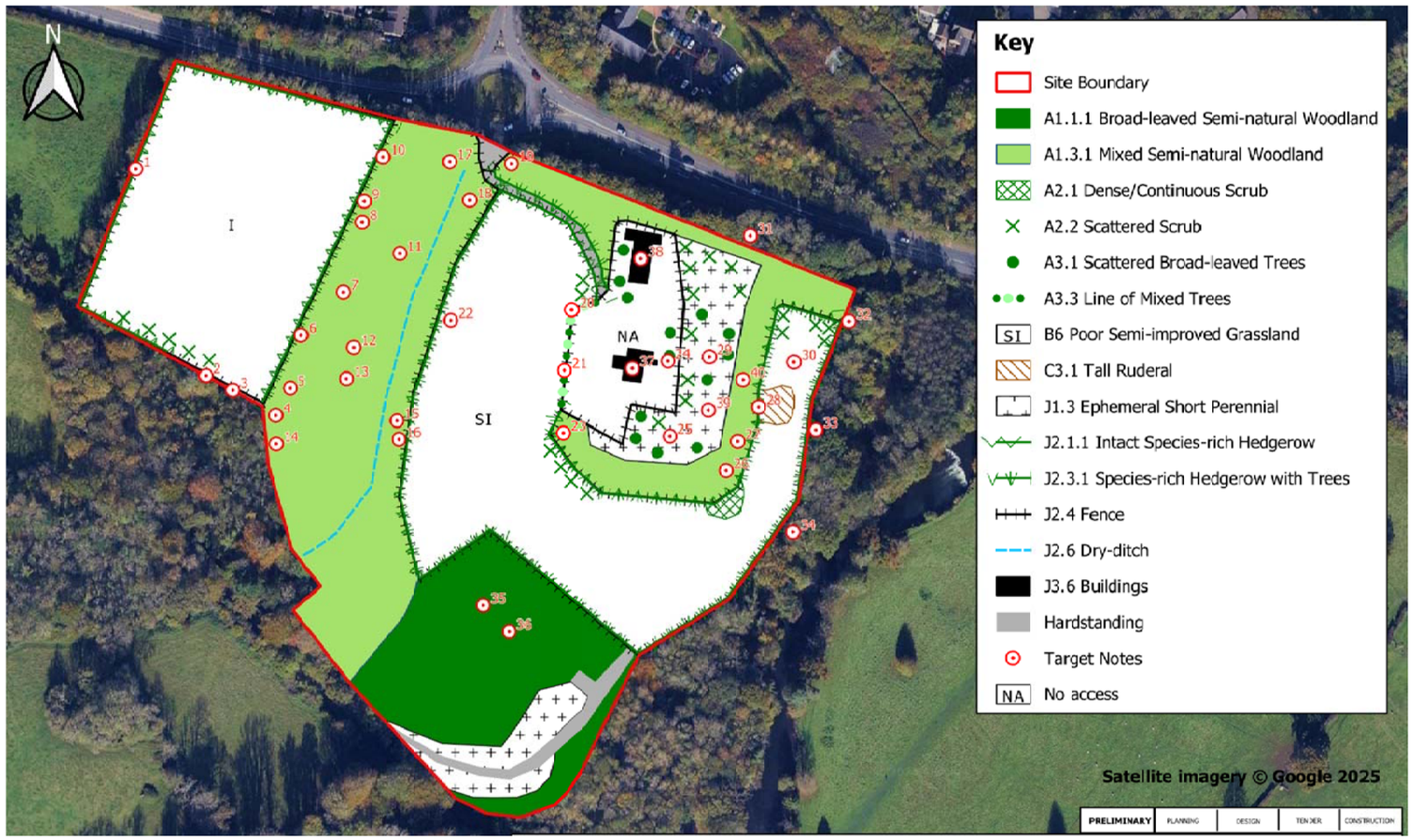


Figure 8: Extended phase 1 habitat plan (by Soltys Brewster Ecology)

rich hedgerows. These features were considered be of the most ecological value in the context of the site and of local importance, capable of supporting a range of protected/ priority listed species

- Although no evidence of Badger were identified during the survey, the habitats on site and in the surrounding area are considered suitable and site use by foregoing/ commuting badger on at least an occasional basis cannot be precluded.
- The survey identified a range of suitable roosting opportunities for bats across the site, including multiple trees with Potential Roost Features (PRFs) classified as PRF-I (low potential) and PRF-M (moderate/ high potential). Two buildings were identified within the site boundaries, both of which were considered to be potentially suitable for roosting bats.
- The linear habitat features at the site including the hedgerow, woodland edges, scrub, and a line of mature trees within the site were considered likely to support a range of foraging and commuting bats species.
- The site has the potential to support breeding birds due to suitable habitats comprising semi-natural broadleaved/ mixed woodland, line of mature trees/ scattered trees, dense scrub, hedgerows and derelict buildings.
- The woodland and hedgerow habitats present on site are considered suitable to support a breeding population of Dormouse, particularly given the high availability of suitable habitat in the surrounding landscape.
- The semi-natural broadleaved/ mixed woodland, hedgerows, ephemeral/short perennial, tall ruderal, and scrubby field margins were considered suitable to support populations of common reptile species, particularly given the high availability of suitable habitat in the surrounding landscape.
- A large pile comprised of brash, logs, crushed aggregate, and soil at the northeast of the site is suitable for use by hibernating herpetofauna (retiles and amphibians) and overwintering small mammals (e.g. Hedgehog)
- Although no evidence of Otter was identified during the site survey, Otter are known to use the River Ogmore located approximately 20m from the eastern site boundary at its nearest point. Furthermore, the site contains a variety of terrestrial habitat considered suitable for foraging/ commuting Otter.
- The semi-natural broadleaved/ mixed woodland and mature species-rich hedgerows are listed as Priority Habitats under Section 7 of the Environmental Act (Wales) 2016 and as such should be retained and protected wherever possible and incorporated as part of a strategic green infrastructure (GI) network.
- Although no development is proposed within or directly adjacent to the River Ogmore, the eastern boundary of the development footprint is situated approximately 50m from the river channel. The unnamed ditch/ drain that runs through the area of ancient woodland separating the two field parcels at the site is hydrologically connected to the River Ogmore.
- Himalayan Balsam is present throughout the site. This species is listed as an invasive species.

24 Additional common habitat types were also present on site, which are considered of some ecological value within the context of the site only, including scattered trees and areas of scrub, tall ruderal, and ephemeral / short perennial vegetation present throughout the site.

25 This initial information provides a baseline understanding of ecological sensitivities at the site. The ecological survey work and collaboration with the project ecologist has guided the mitigation and enhancement measures as part of the development proposals.

Figure 10: Area of hardstanding in southwest part of the site

Figure 9: Existing derelict buildings in central part of the site

Trees and Hedgerows

33 A Tree Survey (Figure 9) was conducted by Treescene Arboricultural Consultancy Ltd in July 2025. The existing vegetation on site was assessed in accordance with BS5837:2012.

34 137 arboricultural features (trees / groups/ hedges) were recorded. Refer to the Tree Survey for full details. The following features were categorised as:

- Category A: 12no. features
- Category B: 37no. features
- Category C: 22no. features
- Category U: 66no. features

35 The majority of trees within the site comprise Category U - trees in such condition that they cannot be realistically retained as living trees in the context of the current landuse for longer than ten years.

36 There are several early-mature to mature trees of moderate quality (Category B), primarily including the large central woodland block and other groups along site boundaries and within existing hedgerows. Category B features are of moderate quality and value, often semi-mature to mature specimens in reasonable condition. While not of exceptional merit, they still make a positive contribution to the site and local landscape, and their retention is generally desirable where practicable.

37 Category A features are of high arboricultural value, typically large, well-structured specimens with long remaining life expectancy. There are 12 Category A trees within the site, including a linear cluster to at the eastern edge of the western field parcel, and others scattered elsewhere throughout the site.

38 Category C features include younger trees or those of lower quality or condition, offering limited long-term contribution to the landscape. While these may be more flexible in terms of retention, consideration should still be given to their collective value in providing local habitat and screening.

Figure 11: Tree constraints plan (by Treescene)

01

02

01 - View from northwest part of western site field, looking south along the edge of the central woodland

02 -Stand of Himalayan Balsam in the east part of the eastern site field

3 Design Considerations

3.1 Vision

39 The vision for the Green Infrastructure at Craig y Parcau, Bridgend is to establish a resilient and multi-functional landscape that champions a context driven approach, reflecting the woodland, tree and hedgerow resource at the site, as well as creating a distinctive place that brings people closer to nature and water and delivers a climate resilient development.

3.2 Site Context and Analysis

40 A detailed analysis of the site and surrounding context revealed the following:

Strengths

- Significant tree and hedgerow resource, including Ancient Woodland and SINC woodland, along with individual mature trees, tree belts and hedgerows that all provide ecological value, a strong existing framework of green infrastructure, connectivity and natural screening.
- Mature landscape framework results in a well-screened site Strategic location at the edge of the settlement of Bridgend with direct access to the A48 via an existing access point into the eastern field parcel of the site

Weaknesses

- Unused buildings in poor condition, areas of dereliction that would require demolition and remediation
- Large number of Category U trees, unsuitable for retention as a result of condition. This includes Ash trees displaying signs of Ash dieback infection.

Opportunities

- Exisitng footpath close to the River Ogmore with the potential to connect to the site
- To provide tree planting that builds longevity of the tree resource
- To positively manage to existing tree assets to improve quality and longevity
- To incorporate sensitively designed attenuation features that brings water closer to people
- The provide accessible green infrastructure for new residents, including through healthy and social spaces that incorporate play
- Highly visible approach to the site from the A48 roundabout presents an opportunity for a strong entrance

Threats

- Sensitivity of Ancient Woodland and ecologically designated parts of the site
- Necessity for woodland removal to accommodate access to the western parcel
- Necessity for some tree removal to facilitate development in field parcels
- Nearby designated heritage assets, including Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest, registered park and garden, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings
- Invasive species within the site such as Himilayan Balsam

3.3 Design Interpretation

41 The analysis of the site and its wider context highlights the importance of balancing development requirements with the sensitive environmental components of the site.

42 The design must respond to the existing green infrastructure, which includes valuable ecological assets such as designated Ancient Woodland, that requires a strong ecological framework. This could include the creation of buffers, wildlife corridors and new habitats. Where woodland and tree loss is unavoidable, new native woodland/ tree planting should be provided to enhance the habitat resource. Similarly, new hedgerow should be created to compensate for any hedgerow loss required to facilitate the development. Existing hedgerows should be strengthened through new native tree planting.

Figure 12: View from south boundary of western site field, looking north toward Bridgend

Figure 13: Site analysis

The Proposals

4 The Proposals

4.1 The Proposed Development

44 Details of the proposed development are provided on the planning application drawings and the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. The proposals comprise the construction of approximately 120 residential properties, with associated landscape proposals, drainage infrastructure, access road and other supporting amenities.

4.2 Landscape Proposals

45 Landscape proposals would aim to create a simple hierarchy of spaces focussed around the existing and proposed green infrastructure. The Landscape Strategy (Figure 14) shows areas of green infrastructure enhancement based on the illustrative masterplan for the proposed development. The concept for green infrastructure on the site has also focussed on the protection and positive management of the existing assets.

46 The landscape strategy complements the strong existing green infrastructure through tree and hedgerow planting to improve connectivity. A naturalistic greenspace in the eastern site parcel would provide an attractive setting for the development and help to integrate built form sympathetically into the landscape, within the context of the River Ogmore. The existing mature trees would be retained to provide a strong ecological and landscape framework for the space and surrounding properties, which benefit from a positive interface with the space. This would be strengthened by additional tree planting. Two attenuation basins in this part of the site would provide further ecological and amenity enhancement, incorporating native structural planting to provide structure and connectivity. The greenspace would include opportunities for play.

47 Residential amenity and views from proposed properties would benefit from street tree, hedgerow and planting to enhance green infrastructure and connectivity, bring nature to residents and seasonal changes to the landscape. The design of the streets creates an attractive public realm, with planting to increase biodiversity and filter intervisibility between houses. Tree planting will include native fruiting and flowering species and combine mixed shrub and perennial planting to provide a source of nectar for pollinators.

Retained woodland, trees and hedgerow

48 Trees and hedgerow within the site are primarily to be retained. Removal has been avoided as far as possible and has been minimised through the sensitive engineering of features such as the woodland crossing, making use of an existing track. Development within and access to parcels has required the removal of some individual trees and tree groups/ part groups, which have been subject to AIA and collaboration with the project arborist to minimise impacts as far as possible. The majority of trees required to be removed to facilitate the development are category C trees (low quality), with some category B trees (moderate quality) and a single category A tree (good quality). A detailed breakdown of the number and categorisation of trees to be removed is outlined in the AIA. Retained woodland and trees will be protected during construction operations following the BS5837:2012 "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations".

49 Retained woodland areas will be managed with the aim to promote ecological value and the health of mature and veteran trees. Future management proposals would seek to promote the health of the existing tree resource and infill plant with appropriate tree species where there are gaps. Management interventions would also address diseased Ash and Elm and control invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam. Ongoing management of the hedgerows will aim to promote structural and botanical diversity.

Proposed woodland, trees and hedgerow

50 Where tree loss is unavoidable, the tree planting proposals use will mitigate for loss, using design and species mixes reflective of the parts lost. Native species will be selected to tolerate the site's conditions, including planting within SuDS and being sited in appropriate space to thrive. (Step 3: Mitigate / Restore + Enhance) and (Step 4: Compensate for the impacts).

51 Strengthening of hedgerows and specimen tree planting is incorporated to address key views such as at the entrance to the site and along streets. These would also strengthen ecological corridors, provide screening, and offer foraging and nesting opportunities for birds and invertebrates, diversifying the tree resource for long-term resilience. (Step 3: Mitigate/Restore + Enhance) and (Step 4: Compensate for the impacts).

Native Hedgerows

52 Tree and hedgerow planting will be introduced across the site to improve connectivity, enhance biodiversity and contribute to the long-term ecological resilience of the landscape (Step 3: Mitigate / Restore + Enhance) and (Step 4: Compensate for the impacts).

53 Existing hedgerows on the site are species-rich and defunct in some areas. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) indicates that with the exception of the hedgerows bordering the access road at the north of the site, most do not appear to have been subject to recent management and have begun to develop a more scrub-like structure with tree growth. Hedgerow management will aim to maintain and enhance their value for biodiversity and existing hedgerows will be strengthened through new native tree planting.

Grassland

54 Species-rich grassland will be established across open spaces and within SUDs features, providing foraging resources for pollinators, supporting invertebrate populations, and contributing to carbon sequestration and climate regulation. (Step 3: Mitigate/Restore + Enhance).

Key

Site boundary

Existing Features

Vegetation to be retained
Central woodland to be retained and enhanced through management and infill planting or natural regeneration where appropriate. Existing hedgerows to be retained and managed to improve biodiversity and strengthened with native tree planting where appropriate.

Vegetation to be removed

Proposed Soft Landscape

Trees to enhance amenity, support biodiversity and provide visual interest, using the species such as;
* *Acer campestre 'Elsrijk'*
* *Betula pendula*
* *Tilia cordata 'Greenspire'*

Woodland mix to mitigate the removal of existing woodland areas, enhancing biodiversity and landscape character, using the species such as;
* *Acer campestre*
* *Crataegus monogyna*
* *Corylus avellana*

Specimen shrubs to create focal points and provide visual interest and diversity

Formal hedgerows to create boundary treatments, enhance visual appeal and support biodiversity; instant hedging to be implemented for immediate visual effect and enclosure to property frontages, with gravel strip at building edges

Mixed ornamental and native planting to create seasonal interest, enhance visual appeal and support biodiversity; pot sizes between 5L-10L

Species-rich grass to support wildlife and to enhance biodiversity and soil health

Amenity grass

Rear gardens to be seeded with hardy grass mix for low-maintenance, durable lawns

Proposed Drainage

Rain gardens to be planted with species can tolerate short-term inundation and enhance biodiversity and visual interest

Attenuation basins to be planted with damp grassland species within the basins and shrub planting around the perimeter to manage stormwater runoff, reduce peak flows and enhance biodiversity and visual interest

Proposed Furniture, Play Features and Boundaries

Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)

Boundary walls

Low level boundary walls

Closed board fencing

Figure 14: Landscape strategy

SuDS planting

55 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), including rain gardens and attenuation areas, will manage surface water runoff while creating new ecological opportunities. These features will incorporate planting of native shrubs, herbaceous species, and ornamental grasses to enhance biodiversity and visual amenity. (Step 3: Mitigate/ Restore + Enhance).

Invasive species

56 Invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam within the site boundaries will aim to be controlled through management.

Other ecological features

57 Bat and bird boxes will be integrated onto retained trees and new buildings, offering nesting and roosting opportunities in alignment with ecological recommendations. Hibernacula or brash/ log piles within retained areas of woodland and grassland would also be provided. (Step 3: Mitigate/Restore + Enhance) and (Step 4: Compensate for the impacts).

58 Site lighting will be designed to minimise artificial light spill onto boundary features and all potential roosting features with mature trees to limit impacts to bats.

59 Any required security fencing is to include an access gap at the bottom to allow continued connectivity for Badger and other small mammals post-development.

4.3 Planting

60 The proposed planting scheme will introduce a simple and structured landscape palette that is ecologically valuable. Tree planting will enhance amenity, support biodiversity and provide visual interest, including native species and formal canopy structure.

61 Strategic woodland planting is proposed in the east part of the site for connectivity and amenity, with the aim of mitigating the removal of existing woodland areas, enhance biodiversity and landscape character. Species will include native species and reflect existing woodland species on site.

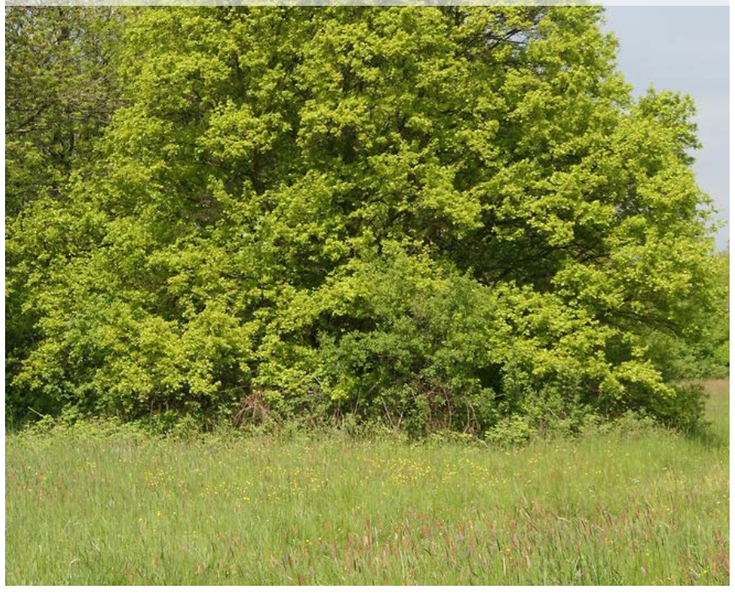
62 Specimen shrubs and formal hedgerows will create focal points and provide visual interest and diversity, supporting biodiversity. Species will include evergreen and structural plants that will provide instant impact from the outset, along with colourful perennials for visual and wildlife interest.

63 Formal hedgerows will create boundary treatments, enhance visual appeal and support biodiversity. Instant hedging will be used for immediate visual effect and enclosure along streetscenes.

64 Species rich grass seed mixtures will be strategically used to promote wildlife value. Attenuation basins will be planted with species rich damp grassland species within the basins, shrub planting around the perimeter and matrix woodland to enhance biodiversity and visual interest. SuDS features will be planted with species which can tolerate short-term inundation and enhance biodiversity and visual interest. Street trees are proposed within the rain garden verges to further promote connectivity and amenity value.

1 Species rich grassland

2 Existing tree setting and native tree planting

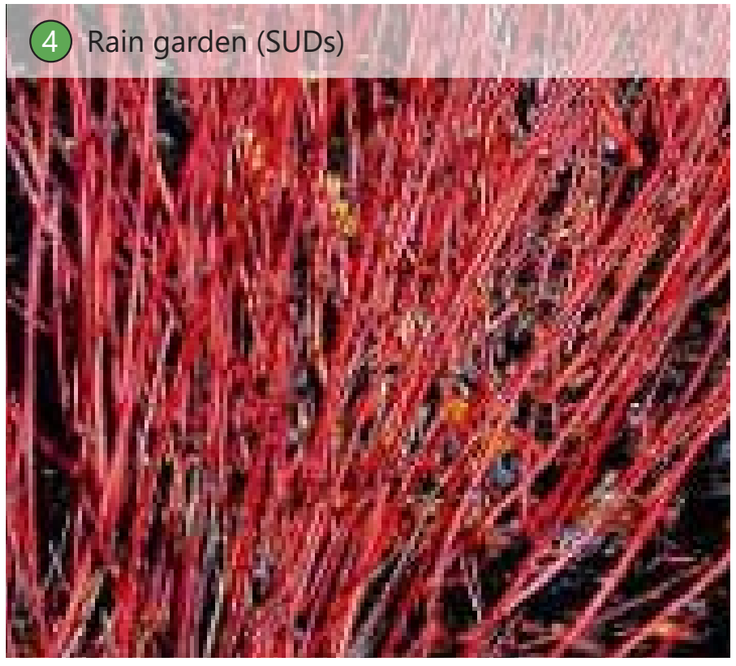


3 Mixed shrub and herbaceous planting

5 Mixed shrub and herbaceous planting

1 Mixed shrub and herbaceous planting

4 Rain garden (SUDs)



6 Rain garden (SUDs)

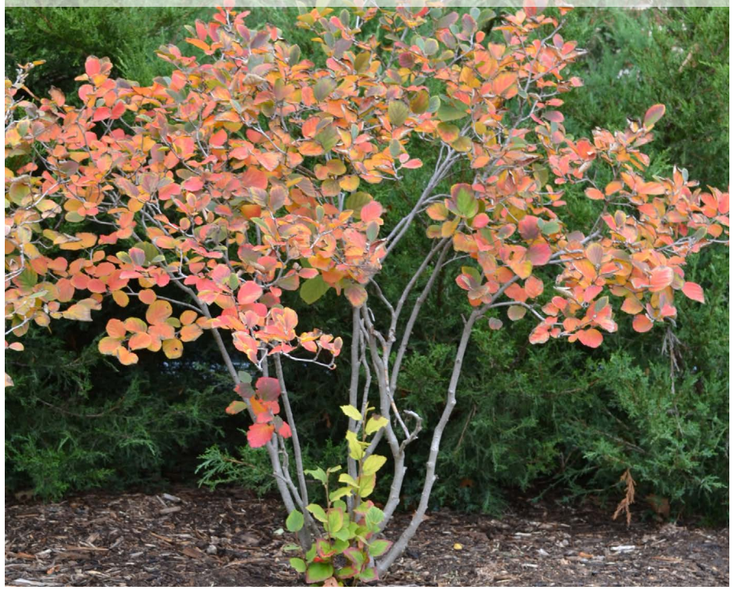
8 Tree planting

9 Tree planting

11 Tree Planting

13 Hedge planting, including instant hedging

Specimen plants



12 Specimen plants

14 Specimen plants

Green Infrastructure

5 Green Infrastructure Statement

5.1 Stepwise Approach

65 A stepwise approach was applied through the design process. The first stage was to **Identify and Assess the value of existing Green Infrastructure,** refer to section 2 above. The retention of existing GI was a priority wherever possible, in accordance with **Step 1: Avoid** and **Step 2: Minimise.**

66 Step 1 - The proposed development at Craig y Parcau will seek to minimise or avoid impacts on green infrastructure, where feasible. Where possible, areas of woodland, trees and hedgerows will be retained and protected throughout the design and construction of the development. Existing hedgerows, trees and woodland on the site provide important wildlife corridors and connections, whilst providing a landscape framework and visual amenity resource for the development. Retained woodland, trees and hedgerow would be protected during construction operations following the BS5837:2012 "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations".

67 Step 2 - Where tree loss is unavoidable, sensitive design of features such as the woodland crossing and development close to existing trees within parcels will minimise impacts. The woodland crossing point has been carefully located to minimise habitat loss/ disturbance to the Coed-y-Tyle SINC and Ancient Woodland.

68 Tree and vegetation that is to be removed would be removed outside the bird nesting season (March to August). If this is not possible, a qualified Ecologist will check for nesting birds and active nests will be left undisturbed.

69 Any potential bat roots on site will also be protected. Proposed lighting on the site will also seek to avoid potential impacts on commuting and foraging bats that may be present.

70 Timing constraints for construction would reduce the disturbance to Otter and other nocturnal species.

71 Mitigation for the habitats and species follows the stepwise approach **Step 3: Mitigate/Restore,** see below paragraphs.

72 Enhancement opportunities for the habitats and species will follow the stepwise approach **Step 4: Compensate** for the impacts, see below paragraphs.

Arboriculture

Mitigation (Step 3: Mitigate/ Restore)

73 In relation to the arboricultural assets at the site, the tree survey identified 137 arboricultural features across the site (refer to Section 2). These included 66 Category U trees that are unsuitable for retention, 37 Category B features of moderate quality, 22 Category C features of low quality and 12 Category A features of high quality and value. While the design will seek to avoid impacts on high-value trees and hedgerows wherever possible, the scale and footprint of the proposed development will mean that a single Category A and some B trees are likely to be removed. The design process has focussed on seeking to retain higher-value trees, preserving areas of woodland and safeguarding root protection areas for retained features, including during construction, and clearance will be undertaken in a way that limits disturbance to surrounding habitats.

Compensation/ Enhancement (Step 4: Compensation)

74 Compensation measures will aim to address any unavoidable loss of trees, woodland and hedgerows. Existing woodland will be enhanced through positive managed and infill planting or natural regeneration, where appropriate. Future management proposals would promote arboricultural enhancement, addressing invasive species such as Himalyam Balsam and diseased Elm and Ash.

75 Strategic woodland planting is proposed in the east part of the site for connectivity and amenity, with the aim of compensating the removal of existing woodland areas, enhancing biodiversity and landscape character. Tree planting across the site will provide compensation for unavoidable tree losses, as outlined on the Landscape Strategy (Figure 14).

Ecology

Mitigation (Step 3: Mitigate/ Restore)

76 In relation to the ecology of the site, as set out in Section 2, part of the site is designated as SINC and Ancient Woodland and supports a range of habitat types. Semi-natural woodland and species-rich mature hedgerows are listed as Priority Habitats and are therefore considered of most ecological significance at the site.

77 Mitigation measures include the sensitive location of the woodland crossing point to minimise habitat loss/ disturbance. Design of site lighting to minimise artificial light spill onto boundary features and mature trees to limit impacts to bats and other nocturnal wildlife.

78 Excavations will be covered overnight or means of escape provided during construction phase to minimise risks to Badger and any other small mammals.

79 Any required security fencing to include an access gap at the bottom to allow continued connectivity for Badger and other small mammals post-development.

80 Environmental management plan prepared for construction and operational phases to limit risk to the River Ogmore, Coed-y-Tyle SINC, Chapel Hill SINC, Restored Ancient Woodland, and other retained habitats;

81 Timing constraints for construction works to reduce disturbance to Otter and other nocturnal species.

82 Planting of new native hedgerow to mitigate for loss of hedgerow required to facilitate the construction of the proposed scheme

83 Creation of replacement structure suitable for use as a feeding perch and roosting opportunity for bats.

Compensation/ Enhancement (Step 4: Compensation)

84 Enhancement opportunities for the habitats and species follows the stepwise approach **Step 4: Compensate for the impacts,** see below paragraphs.

85 New native tree/shrub woodland planting is proposed to provide additional habitat resources for a wide variety of wildlife and compensate for any loss of woodland area. Natural regeneration will also be encouraged where appropriate. Existing hedgerows will be strengthened with new native tree planting. Shrubs, herbaceous species, ornamental grasses and species which provide pollinator, foraging and nesting opportunities. Created and retained grassland and SuDS areas will be enhanced with species-rich meadow seed mixtures.

86 Inclusion of bat and bird boxes onto retained trees and new buildings. Creation of log/brash piles within appropriate habitats to enhance site suitability for reptiles and amphibians.

87 A Management Plan will be implemented for retained and proposed planting to maintain and enhance value to Biodiversity. Management measures would include the control of invasive Himalayan Balsam within the site boundary.

5.2 Drainage

88 The existing drain/ ditch within the central woodland parcel is to be retained. There could be opportunities to enhance the biodiversity of the channel and create other drainage feature connections, such as to the new attenuation areas. A future Environmental Management Plan would be prepared for construction and operational phases to limit risk to the River Ogmore, Coed-y-Tyle SINC, Chapel Hill SINC, Restored Ancient Woodland and other retained habitats.

89 Throughout the site SuDS features would be proposed which provide an opportunity for new habitat creation that would support some wetland species. The SuDS features would be planted with a mix of tree, shrub and grass species to enhance biodiversity and create areas of visual interest.

5.3 Overall

90 The findings of the arboricultural and ecological surveys have informed the green infrastructure strategy of the site and will continue to inform the development proposals going forward. The green infrastructure strategy will seek to increase species diversity through the planting of native trees, shrubs, hedgerows, and wildflower and species-rich grassland areas, alongside the retention of key existing features, where feasible. The positive management of existing assets, including the woodland, trees and hedgerow on site should aim to deliver longevity and green infrastructure enhancement.

91 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), including rain gardens and attenuation areas would be proposed and will integrate diverse planting species to provide habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, while also managing surface water runoff. There will be opportunities to incorporate bird and bat boxes throughout the site for habitat creation. The open space in the east part of the site could include woodland planting, hedgerows, and species-rich grassland to deliver compensatory habitat and further strengthen ecological connectivity across the wider landscape.

92 Collectively, these measures would enhance the biodiversity and ecological resilience of the site.

Multi-functionality of Green Infrastructure

93 This section identifies the multi-functionality of each of the green infrastructure elements: trees and hedgerows, habitats of ecological value, along with the proposed elements: trees, woodland, native planting, SuDS, species-rich grassland and shrub planting.

94 These elements reflect the over arching principle of Stepwise Step 3: Mitigate / Restore, Step 4 : Compensate and by considering Enhancement at each stage in accordance with the DECCA Framework, applying the principles of good placemaking and green infrastructure.

Multi-functionality of Green infrastructure

95 The multi-functionality of green infrastructure is described as "GI functions are the roles that assets can play if planned, designed and managed in a way that is sensitive to, and includes provision for, natural features and ecosystem services. They may have obvious primary functions, but each asset can perform different functions simultaneously". The Landscape Strategy sets outs the GI functions, the benefits of the proposals are listed in **Figure 15**, against the list below:

- Contribution to Placemaking
- Flood Mitigation
- Cooling and Shade
- Food
- Exercise
- Health and Wellbeing
- Calming and Inspiring
- Nutrient Cycling
- Wildlife Habitat
- Wind break
- Cleaning Water and Air

Landscape asset	Green infrastructure element	Functions	Building with Nature Standards
Retained Trees	Trees / vegetation	• Contribution to Placemaking • Cooling and Shade • Calming and Inspiring • Health and Wellbeing • Nutrient Cycling • Wind break • Cleaning Water and Air	2 - Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency 4 - Champions a Context Driven Approach 5 - Creates Distinctive Places 6 - Secures Effective Place-keeping
New tree and hedgerow planting	Trees / vegetation	• **Wildlife Habitat** • Contribution to Placemaking • Cooling and Shade • Calming and Inspiring • Health and Wellbeing • Nutrient Cycling • Cleaning Water and Air	1 - Optimises Multi functionality and Connectivity 2 - Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency 3 - Maximises Environmental Net Gains 5 - Creates Distinctive Places 7 - Brings Nature Closer to People 11 - Delivers Wildlife Enhancement 12 - Underpins Nature's Recovery
Proposed shrub planting	Trees / vegetation	• **Contribution to Placemaking** • Health and Wellbeing • Calming and Inspiring	1 - Optimises Multi functionality and Connectivity 2 - Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency 3 - Maximises Environmental Net Gains 7 - Brings Nature Closer to People
Proposed SuDS features	Sustainable Drainage	• **Cleaning Water and Air** • Flood Mitigation • Contribution to Placemaking • Calming and Inspiring • Nutrient Cycling • Wildlife Habitat • Cleaning Water and Air	1 - Optimises Multi functionality and Connectivity 2 - Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency 5 - Creates Distinctive Places 7 - Brings Nature Closer to People 9 - Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management 10 - Brings Water Closer to People
Proposed bird and bat boxes	Habitat	• **Wildlife Habitat** • Calming and Inspiring	1 - Optimises Multi functionality and Connectivity 3 - Maximises Environmental Net Gains 7 - Brings Nature Closer to People 11 - Delivers Wildlife Enhancement 12 - Underpins Nature's Recovery

Figure 15: Landscape assets, GI element and GI functions with signposting against the Building with Nature Standards.

Conclusion

6 Conclusion

6.1 Resilience of Ecosystems

96 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 provides a duty upon public bodies such as Bridgend County Borough Council to promote the resilience of ecosystems.

97 The proposed green infrastructure strategy would comprise a range of both native and non-native species to enhance biodiversity and botanical diversity. The species selected are climate resilient, adaptable to wet and dry conditions, including lengthy dry spells. The range of both tree and plant species proposed would enhance the biodiversity, increase species diversity, the age diversity of vegetation and improve habitat resilience to climate change.

98 The proposed green infrastructure strategy has considered the existing green infrastructure features within and beyond the site boundary and retained those of value, as recommended by the Stepwise approach. Proposed green infrastructure features would increase the biodiversity, species diversity, and habitat structure on the site whilst contributing to the multi-functionality of the green infrastructure elements.

6.2 Green Infrastructure

99 The proposed development has been designed with a comprehensive Green Infrastructure strategy that integrates ecological, arboricultural, and landscape measures across the site. Existing vegetation and trees have been retained wherever possible, with appropriate buffers and Root Protection Areas implemented to safeguard habitats and connectivity. Mitigation measures, including careful timing of vegetation clearance, species-specific protections, and sensitive lighting, ensure that ecological receptors are not adversely affected during construction.

100 Enhancement and compensation measures, such as management and control, native and ornamental tree and shrub planting, managed grassland, SuDS, and habitat provision for birds, bats, and small mammals, will deliver long-term biodiversity benefits. The proposals create multifunctional spaces that support both ecological and amenity objectives, contributing to landscape resilience and connectivity within the surrounding environment.

101 Overall, the development will not result in any significant adverse ecological effects and will provide a net benefit in biodiversity, reinforcing the site's ecological value and delivering a high-quality, sustainable landscape setting for future users.

6.3 Conclusion

102 With regards to the **Placemaking Wales Charter** the landscape proposals make a good contribution towards the six placemaking principles, which cover the range of considerations that contribute to establishing and maintaining good places.

103 The proposals contribute well to the 12 Standards of Building with Nature, creating well connected, multi-functional green infrastructure.

104 Overall, the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with PPW Edition 12 Chapter 6.

Appendix

7 Appendix

7.1 Legislation and Policy

Wales Legislation

111 Legislation and Policies central to this document include:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- Future Wales: The National Plan
- Planning Policy Wales (PPW)
- XXXXX Local Development Plan 2006-2021

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

112 The Act requires public bodies to carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development principle is "the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales." The principle is made up of five ways of working, including looking to the long-term; taking an integrated approach; involving a diversity of the population; working collaboratively; and preventing issues.

113 It sets out seven well-being goals including resilience and being globally responsible.

Environment (Wales) Act 2016

114 The Act is intended to work alongside the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It included a new biodiversity duty to reverse the decline of biodiversity and to secure long-term resilience.

115 Section 6 states "A public authority must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity… and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems". In relation to resilience of ecosystems, the following "must be taken into account:

(a) diversity between and within ecosystems;

(b) the connections between and within ecosystems;

(c) the scale of ecosystems;

(d) the condition of ecosystems (including their structure and functioning);

Figure 16: The seven well-being goals from Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015

National Planning Policy

Future Wales: The National Plan

105 The proposed development aligns with the strategic aims of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040, which sets a national framework for delivering sustainable, climate-resilient, and inclusive places. It supports the ambitions of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12), with specific relevance to the following policies:

- **Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Sustainable Places**
  Promotes regeneration that enhances the built and natural environment, improves public health and well-being, and supports the creation of vibrant, inclusive communities. The Gerddi Llydaw proposals directly support this through the transformation of an underused urban greenspace into a multifunctional, accessible public asset.
- **Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth – Public Sector Leadership**
  Encourages the public sector to lead on high-quality, climate-conscious regeneration. This scheme forms part of the Carmarthen Town Centre Recovery Masterplan and exemplifies public-led investment in environmental enhancement, biodiversity, and placemaking.
- **Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure**
  Requires all development to demonstrate how biodiversity and green infrastructure are maintained and enhanced through nature-based solutions. The design responds through new tree planting, pollinator-friendly species, SUDs features, and provision for urban wildlife.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

106 PPW aims to contribute towards the delivery of sustainable development, embedding the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. PPW ingrains Placemaking Wales Charter and how sustainable development can be achieved through implementing placemaking.

107 **Section 6.2** sets out **green infrastructure** should be given early consideration in development proposals and how it should be integrated into developments.

- **Paragraph 6.2.12** states " 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… 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 has been applied**."
- **Paragraph 6.2.14** states "Development proposals should be informed by the priorities identified in green infrastructure assessments and locally based

planning guidance. The **Building with Nature standards** represent good practice and are an effective prompt for developers to **improve the quality of their schemes and demonstrate the sustainable management of natural resources**."

- **Section 6.4** describes **biodiversity and ecological networks** and provides a summary of the **Step-Wise Approach** and how it should be used 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 minimised, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for."[1] **Paragraph 6.4.12** states "providing evidence in the Green Infrastructure Statement that the step-wise approach has been followed, a scheme of enhancements must be provided to ensure a **net benefit for biodiversity**."
- In relation to **trees, woodland and hedgerows, paragraph 6.4.37** sets out their importance for biodiversity and "connecting habitats for resilient ecological networks and make an essential wider contribution to landscape character, culture, heritage and sense of place…"
- The **planting of new trees, hedgerows, groups of trees and areas of woodland** should be promoted as part of new development. Existing trees/ groups of trees, hedgerows and areas of woodland must be protected "where they have ecological value, contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality, or perform a beneficial green infrastructure function."[2]
- In relation to the permanent removal of trees, woodland and hedgerows, it "will only be permitted where it would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits."[3] The step-wise approach must also be followed. Where loss is unavoidable, PPW sets out the requirements of replacement planting, which "shall be at a ratio equivalent to the quality, environmental and ecological importance of the tree(s) lost and this must be preferably onsite, or immediately adjacent to the site, and at a minimum ratio of at least 3 trees of a similar type and compensatory size planted for every 1 lost."[4]
- Finally, in relation to **SUDs,** paragraph 6.6.18 states "The provision of SUDs must be considered as an **integral part of the design of new development** and considered at the earliest possible stage when formulating proposals for new development." Paragraph 6.6.19 goes on to state "Design for multiple benefits and green infrastructure should be secured wherever possible…"[5]

1 Paragraph 6.4.11, Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, February 2024
2 Paragraph 6.4.39 Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, February 2024
3 Paragraph 6.4.42 Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, February 2024
4 Paragraph 6.4.42 Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, February 2024
5 Paragraph 6.6.19 Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, February 2024

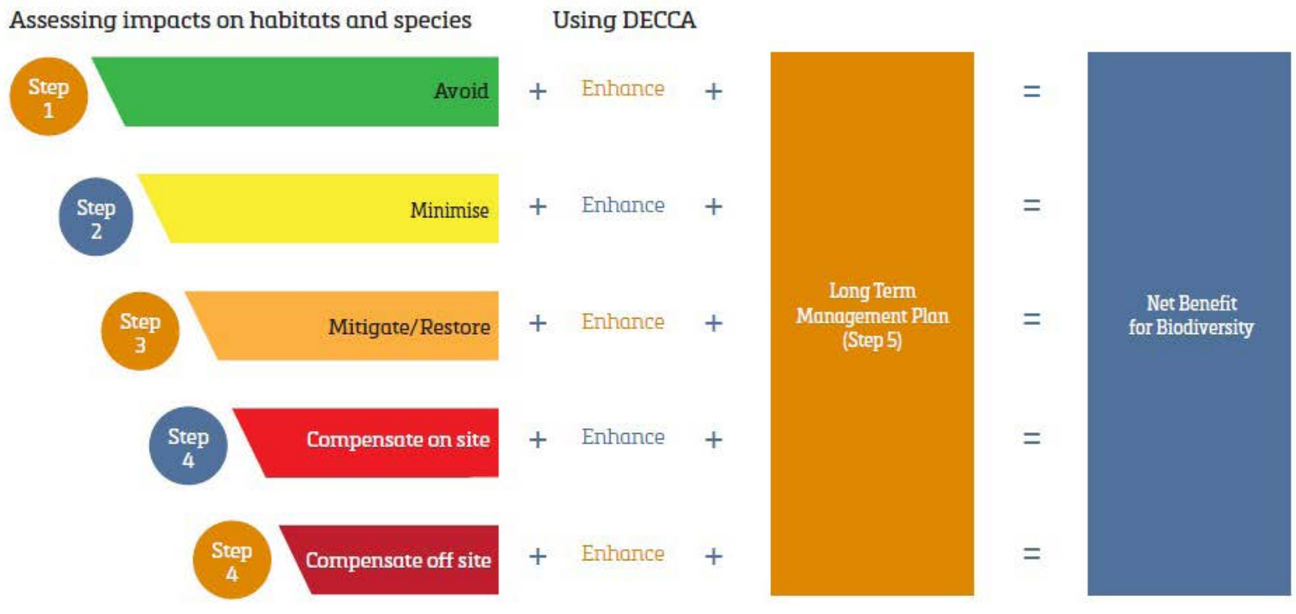


Figure 17: The Step-Wise Approach from PPW Edition 12, Chapter 6

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 - Design (2016)

108 TAN 12: Design provides national planning guidance on achieving good design in the built environment. It outlines the importance of understanding the context of the site and ensuring that development proposals positively contribute to local character, community cohesion, sustainability, and placemaking. The guidance supports the delivery of the Placemaking Wales Charter and the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

109 Key design principles relevant to the proposed development include:

- "Those involved in the design process need to recognise existing urban qualities and find ways of ensuring that new development strengthen or complement these." (TAN 12, p.37, 2016)

- "The design of housing layouts and built form should reflect local context and distinctiveness, including topography and building fabric. Response to context should not be confined to architectural finishes… To help integrate old and new development and reinforce hierarchy between spaces, consideration should be given to retaining existing landmarks, established routes, mature trees and hedgerows within housing areas as well as introducing new planting appropriate to the area." (TAN 12, p.43, 2018)
- "The location and definition of public and private space and the design of boundary treatment are particularly important… New development should take account of the existing relationship of buildings to landscape and the local means of boundary definition such as hedges, walls, and fences… ensuring a balance with the need to promote features of environmental sustainability." (TAN 12, p.43, 2016)
- "Building at higher densities is not synonymous with high rise development and innovative good design is a prerequisite to the success of higher densities. The perception of lower density can be influenced by skilful design." (TAN 12, p.38, 2016)

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5 - Nature Conservation

110 The key principles of positive planning for nature conservation in TAN 5 are as follows:

- Work to achieve nature conservation objectives through a partnership between local planning authorities, Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), the Environment Agency (EA) Wales (CCW and EA Wales are now collectively Natural Resources Wales (NRW)), voluntary organisations, developers, landowners and other key stakeholders;
- Integrate nature conservation into all planning decisions looking for development to deliver social, economic and environmental objectives together over time.
- Ensure that the United Kingdom's (UK) international and national obligations for site, species and habitat protection are fully met in all planning decisions;
- Look for development to provide net benefit for biodiversity conservation with no significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally;
- Help to ensure that development does not damage, or restrict access to, or the study of, geological sites and features or impede the evolution of natural processes and systems especially on rivers and the coast;
- Forge and strengthen links between the town and country planning system and biodiversity action planning particularly through policies in local development plans and the preparation of supplementary planning guidance that adds value to Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) by highlighting the ways in which the planning system can help to deliver the objectives of LBAPs in practical ways;
- Plan to accommodate and reduce the effects of climate change by encouraging development that will reduce damaging emissions and energy consumption and that helps habitats and species to adapt to climate change.

Local Planning Policy

Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan 2018-2033 (Adopted March 2024)

116 The site is located in Bridgend County Borough. Relevant LDP policies in relation to Green Infrastructure and biodiversity include:

- **Policy SP3: Good Design and Sustainable Placemaking** states in part i) that all development must "Safeguard and enhance biodiversity and integrated multi-functional green infrastructure networks"
- **Policy SP17: Conservation and Enhancement of the Natural Environment** states "Development proposals will not be permitted where they will have an adverse impact upon: 1) the integrity of the County Borough's countryside; 2) the character of its landscape 3) its biodiversity and habitats 4) the quality of its natural resources including water, air and soil"
- **DPN6: Biodiveristy, Ecological Networks, Habitats and Species** states "All development proposals must provide a net benefit for biodiversity and improved ecosystem resilience"
- **Policy DPN8: Green Infrastructure** states "Development proposals will be required to integrate, protect and maintain existing green infrastructure assets and to enhance the extent, quality, connectivity and multi-functionalist of the green infrastructure network. Where the loss or damage of exsting green infrastructure is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation and compensation will be required".

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 19 Biodiversity and Development: A Green Infrastructure Approach

117 SPG 19 expands upon the Council's existing planning policy on green infrastructure and biodiveristy contained within the LDP. The document defines Green Infrastructure and its benefits and provides examples of good practice. The methodology for Integrating the Green Infrastructure Approach into Development

has been referenced through the development of the proposals for the site and preparation of this document.

7.2 Relevant Guidance

Placemaking Wales Charter

118 The Placemaking Wales Charter has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership. The charter outlines six placemaking principles that cover the range of considerations that contribute to establishing and maintaining good places.

119 Well designed, maintained and connected green infrastructure is an essential component of good placemaking. The design of the proposed development should focus on well connected GI with multi-functionality to maximise the benefits to residents and the environment.

Landscape Institute Green Infrastructure: An integrated Approach, 2013

120 The document defines **Green Infrastructure** (GI) as "*the **network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces**, rivers and lakes… It is a natural, service-providing infrastructure that is often more cost-effective, **more resilient and more capable of meeting** social, **environmental** and economic **objectives**…*"

121 The Landscape Institute recommends "*local authorities ensure that GI is a core requirement in their policy documents" and "developers be aware of an area's strategic GI goals and appreciate how those goals contribute to mitigating the environmental impacts of new development and creating beautiful places*."

Building with Nature Standards

122 The Building with Nature Standards Framework 2.0 involves twelve Standards, arranged across four groups. There are six Core Standards and three themes, Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife, containing two Standards in each.

123 The six Core Standards underpin the delivery of high-quality green infrastructure through design, planning and development. The Standards in the Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife themes build on this to target specific aspects:

CORE Standards

Standard 1 Optimises Multi functionality 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

WELLBEING Standards

Standard 7 Brings Nature Closer to People
Standard 8 Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

WATER Standards

Standard 9 Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management
Standard 10 Brings Water Closer to People

WILDLIFE Standards

Standard 11 Delivers Wildlife Enhancement
Standard 12 Underpins Nature's Recovery

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