Green Infrastructure Statement

Gaerfechan
Cerrigydrudion
Corwen
LL21 0RS

Construction of a slurry storage tower, silage clamp and all associated works

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1. Policy Background

1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) supports a full planning application for the construction of a new slurry storage tower, silage clamp and all associated works at Gaerfechan, Cerrigydrudion, Corwen, LL21 0RS .

1.2 This GIS aims to respond to the requirements of Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024). This states:

"6.2.11 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.

6.2.12 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.

6.2.13 There are multiple ways of incorporating green infrastructure, depending on the needs and opportunities a site presents, and the green infrastructure assessment should be referred to, as appropriate, in order to ascertain local priorities. Landscaping, green roofs, grass verges, sustainable drainage and gardens are examples of individual design measures that can have wider cumulative benefits, particularly in relation to biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems as well as in securing the other desired environmental qualities of places. Wider landscape measures, such as the creation of species rich meadows, woodlands and the improvement of linkages between areas of biodiversity value should be considered for larger scale development. In most cases the green infrastructure statement should highlight any baseline data considered and surveys and assessments undertaken, including but not limited to, habitats and species surveys, arboricultural surveys and assessments, sustainable drainage statements, landscape and ecological management plans, open space assessments and green space provision and active travel links".

1.3 The 'step-wise approach', as outlined below, demonstrates the sequential approach that has been adopted as part of the proposed development 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. In addition, enhancement has been secured by delivering a net biodiversity benefit on-site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.

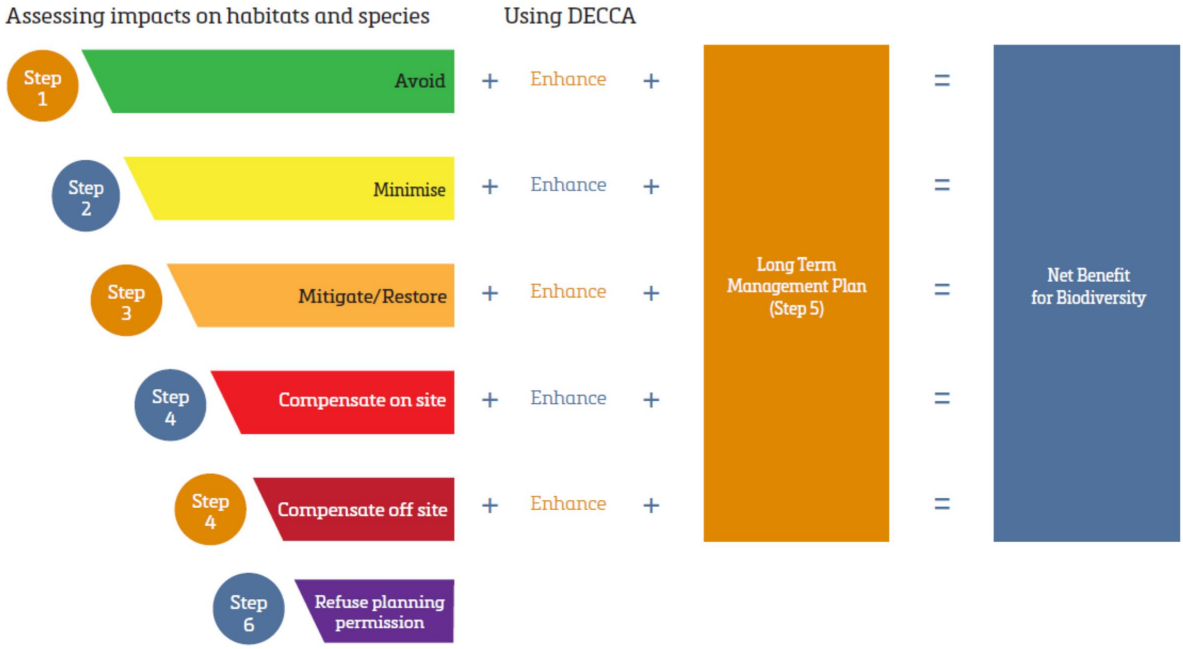


Figure 1: A summary of the step-wise approach taken from Chapter 6 of PPW (Ed. 12, 2024)

2. The Proposed Development

2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a new slurry storage tower, together with a new silage clamp and all associated works.

2.2 The proposed slurry storage tower would have a floor area of approximately 701m2 and would measure approximately 4.9m in height above ground-levels. The slurry tower's elevations would be finished with 'juniper green' metal. The tower would not have a roof. The tower would be sited on an impermeable concrete base. Slurry from the farm and buildings would be tankered to the proposed tower for storage.

2.3 The slurry tower will be constructed to comply with SSAFO Regulations and The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations (2021).

2.4 The proposed silage clamp will form an extension to an existing sheep shed on the site and would thus form an integral part of the existing built development at Gaerfechan.

2.5 The proposed silage clamp will measure approximately 9.15m in length and 18.3m in width. It will have mass concrete walls (3.05m in height) and will have no roof.

2.6 The silage clamp will be constructed to comply with SSAFO Regulations and The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations (2021). It will have an impermeable base that will extend beyond the silage clamp walls. It will be constructed of concrete, which will comply with British Standard EN 1992-11:2004+A1:2014. Further to this, the building's concrete walls will be constructed to comply with British Standard 5502-22:2003+A1:2013.

2.7 There will be an impermeable draining collection channel around the edge of the floor slab, outside of the clamp's walls, which will flow into an effluent tank through UPVC sewer pipes.

2.8 A new underground effluent tank is also proposed, which will be capable of lasting 20 years without maintenance.

2.9 The capacity of the proposed silage clamp will be approximately 511m3 (18.3m x 9.15m x 3.05m). SSAFO Regulations and The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations (2021) state that silage clamps with a capacity of less than 1500m3 require 20 litres of effluent storage space per 1m3 of silage storage capacity. Thus, meaning the effluent tank will need to hold a capacity of 10,220 litres. For convenience a 15,000-litre tank will be installed.

2.10 Stock numbers on the holding would not change as a consequence of the proposed developments. Indeed, the proposals are designed merely to align the farm with the current and future regulations set out by NRW and the Welsh Government as defined within The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations (2021).

3. Green Infrastructure Baseline

3.1 At present, the application site comprises improved agricultural grazing land which is in intensive agricultural use. The site of the proposed silage clamp is also located immediately adjacent to an existing sheep shed on the site. Given the site's current intensive agricultural use, it is not considered to be of any ecological or green infrastructure value.

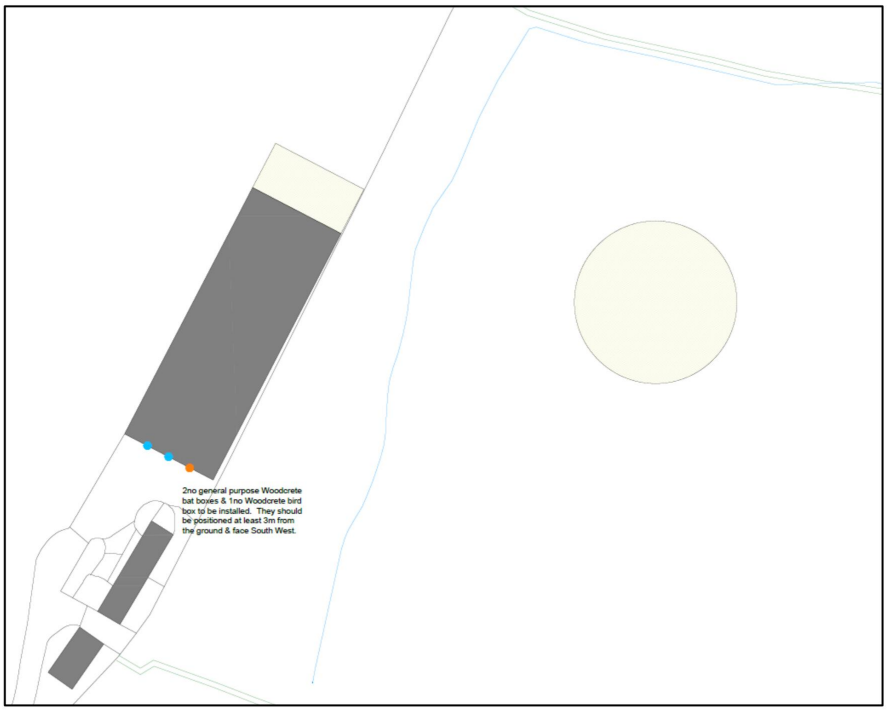
3.2 Therefore, it is considered the application site is devoid of any 'green infrastructure' at present, is of low ecological value and does not have the potential to be in use by any protected or priority species.

3.3 The application site is not located within or near to any statutory or non-statutory designated ecological sites, and therefore the proposed development does not have any potential to cause an adverse impact upon protected sites.

4. The Green Infrastructure Strategy

4.1 The approach to the design of the proposed development is fully outlined within the accompanying Planning Statement. The submitted design has been arrived at following thought being given to the environmental effects of the proposals.

4.2 It is proposed that two Woodcrete bat boxes and one Woodcrete bird box be erected on the existing adjoining building. The locations of the proposed Woodcrete bat and bird boxes are shown on the submitted Biodiversity Enhancement Plan, an extract of which is below:



4.3 The step-wise approach has been followed as impacts upon habitats and species would be avoided through the siting and design of the proposals. The development would also not prejudice connectivity between nearby habitat for protected species and wider biodiversity.

4.4 Off-site ecological mitigation will not be required as there will not be any impacts upon protected species on the site.

4.5 The proposals would also achieve an overall net benefit for biodiversity on the holding over and above the baseline.

4.6 The Applicant will ensure the long-term management and maintenance of the proposed bird and bat boxes to ensure they are kept in a useable condition.

5. Conclusion

5.1 It is clear the proposed development would not cause any impacts upon existing green infrastructure, biodiversity, ecosystem resilience or protected species. The proposal has fully followed the step-wise approach as prescribed by Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales, and the development would provide a net benefit for biodiversity which is commensurate to the scale of the proposals.