

Monmouth Health and Wellbeing Centre

Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy

Tilbury Douglas

61248

October 2024



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S0 – Work in progress **S1** – For coordination **S2** – For information
S3 – For review and comment **S4** – For approval **F1** – Final

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1. INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared by TACP (UK) Ltd Landscape Architects. It is a simple statement proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal.

2. THE SITE

The Scheme would be located at National Grid Reference (NGR) SO 50446 13954 within the town of Osbaston in the Monmouth district of Monmouthshire. The site is located to the north west of the town of Monmouth. Monmouth is a market town and community in Monmouthshire, Wales, situated on the confluence of the River Monnow and the River Wye, two miles from the Wales–England border.

The development site is a private green space in a semi-rural setting, located approximately 1300m to the north west of the town of Monmouth. The site sits to the south of the suburb of Osbaston with Osbaston Road running along the northern boundary. The site slopes gently downwards from north to south towards Forge Road and the River Monnow, which are off-site to the south. The site is irregular in shape.

To the north of the site, just past Osbaston Road is a number of residential houses which extend north and east into the wider landscape. Open fields are present to the south and west of site.

Osbaston Church In Wales School is located to the east of site. Residential properties and gardens are to the southwest separated from the site by a narrow water course and fields are located to the west.

Forge Road runs along the southern boundary of the site providing vehicular access to the housing to the south west. The River Monnow flows west to east just south of Forge Road.

Whilst the site is not open to the public, access can be gained to the site from Osbaston Road to the north of the site and also by various pedestrian cut throughs on the west and south of the site. The community uses the site for dog walking.

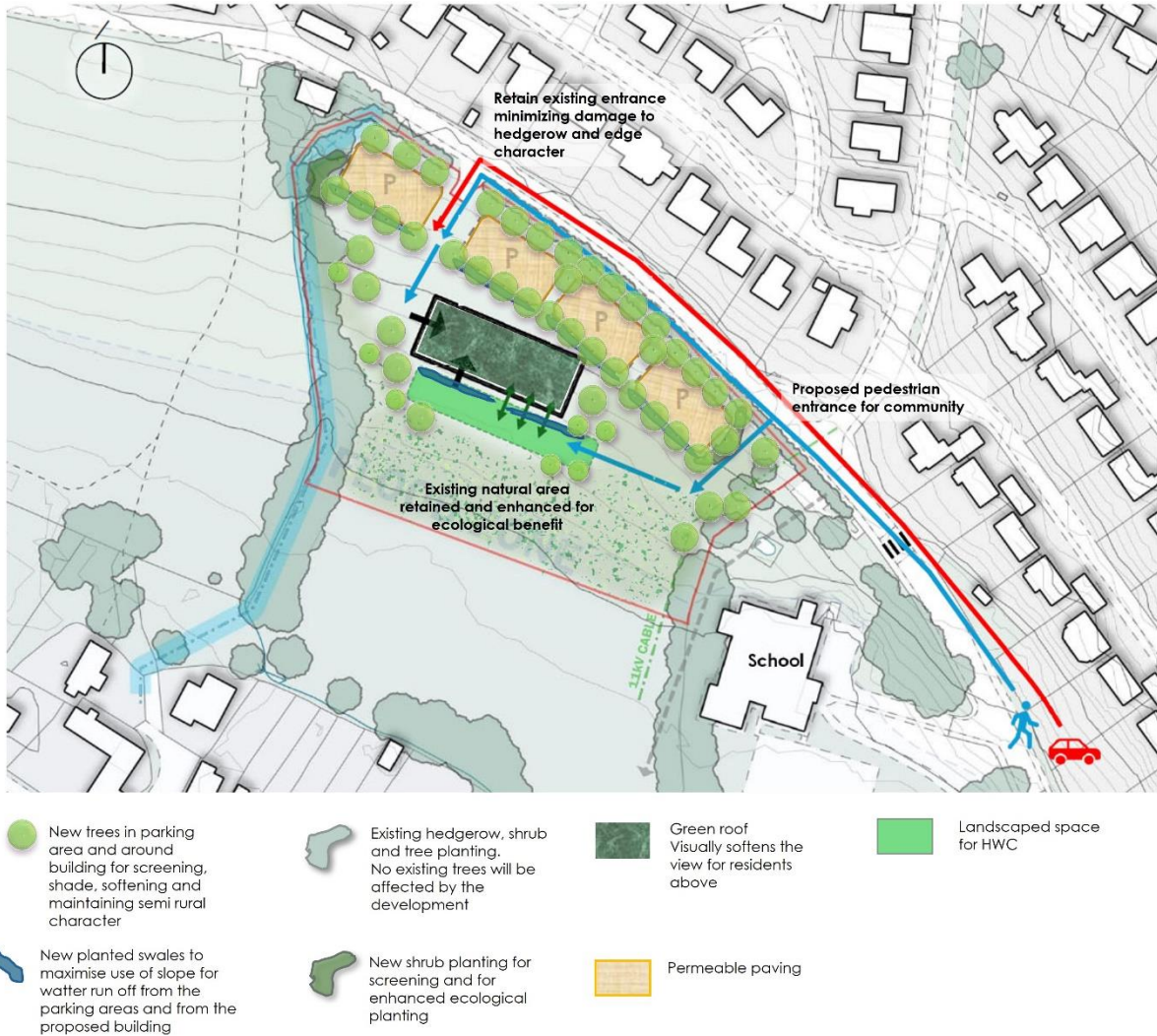
At present the site is a large open grassland field bounded by an established hedgerow, tree lines and small areas of woodland. The southern half of the site lies within a flood plain and is unsuitable for development, but is suitable for SUDs and biodiversity enhancements.

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is to construct a Health & Wellbeing Centre, including parking spaces and an access road and a pedestrian entrance within the development site. The development proposal is a two storey building that is situated on the northern half of the field only, approximately 20 - 25m from the existing hedgerow. There is an existing entrance gate, which will be used, to keep damage to the existing hedgerow at a

minimum. An additional pedestrian entrance will be created on the north eastern side of the site. This will enable community access.

There will be parking areas to the north of the building. Additional trees will be planted for screening.



4. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE BASELINE

(Refers to Preliminary Ecological Assessment prepared by Ecological Service Ltd and Arboricultural Report prepared by Barton Hyett Associates Ltd)

The Ecological Assessment confirms that there are a number of Statutory Protected Sites present within 2km of the development site.

- The River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 1.2km to the south east at its closest point.
- The Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC and Wye Valley Woodlands SAC are both located approximately 1.8km away to the south east.

- The River Wye is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SSSI designation is approximately 1.2km to the south east at its closest point.
- Newtown Court Stable Block SSSI is located approximately 1.76km away to the north east. The Fiddlers Elbow SSSI is approximately 1.8km away to the the east.
- Fiddlers Elbow National Nature Reserve (NNR) is located approximately 1.8km to the east.

There are 15 Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs) within 2km of the site. The closest such site is River Mono SINC approximately 20m to the south of site.

There are 41 areas of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) within 2km of the site boundary. The closest areas is approximately 160m east of the site.

There are five areas of Restored Ancient Woodland within 2km of the site boundary. The closest area is approximately 760m south of the site.

There are eight areas of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites within 2km of the site boundary. The closest areas is approximately 1.6km north of the site.

Hedgerow habitat is present within the site boundary. Hedgerow is a section 7 habitat of importance for protection under The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Therefore any impacts to hedgerow must be avoided. If impacts are unavoidable hedgerow translocation and or replacement hedgerow planting must be provided.

The proposed development site is located in close proximity to the River Monnow. Whilst the River Monnow has no statutory protection it is designated a SINC site. The river also leads directly into the River Wye approximately 1.5km away to the south. The River Wye is a SAC and SSSI.

5. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI) STRATEGY

Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined by the Town and Country Planning Association as follows:

“Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space and other green features, urban and rural, which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities.

Green infrastructure is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space. It includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands – and also street trees, allotments, private gardens, green roofs and walls, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and soils. It includes rivers, streams, canals and other water bodies, sometimes called ‘blue infrastructure.’

Key features: The key features of green infrastructure are that it is a network of integrated spaces and features, not just individual elements; and that it is ‘multi-functional’ – it provides multiple benefits simultaneously. These can be to:

- *support people’s mental and physical health*
- *encourage active travel*
- *cool urban areas during heat waves*

- attract investment
- reduce water run-off during flash flooding
- carbon storage
- provide sustainable drainage

The extent to which green infrastructure provides these benefits depends on how it is designed and maintained, and the maturity and health of the elements (such as trees) that form it.

The site lies within a landscape that is semi-rural and 'pastoral' in character. An established hedgerow runs along the north of the site providing screening of the development. Treelines run down the east and west boundaries. There are also established trees and hedges along Forge Road. The south edge of the site falls into a flood plain.



However, the GI of the site and of the area will be enhanced as a result of the proposed landscape measures.

5.1 CHARACTER

- 5.1.1 Maintain as much existing native vegetation as possible, including hedgerows and trees.
- 5.1.2 Any loss of hedgerow habitat must be avoided where possible. If impacts to hedgerow habitat are unavoidable, replacement planting will be

required on a 2:1 basis. Ideally the replacement planting will include the translocation of hedgerows removed and supplementary planting.

- 5.1.3 Use existing entrances where possible to minimize further damage to existing hedges
- 5.1.4 Allow enough space in front of and to the sides of the building to plant a row of trees / hedging to screen from the road and surrounding areas

5.2 HABITAT CONNECTIVITY

- 5.2.1 Through retaining as much existing vegetation as possible, and additional enhanced soft landscaping, specifically planted through coordination with the ecologists, habitat connectivity for wildlife can be maintained.
- 5.2.2 The development of rain gardens in the front gardens of the development will generate a new range of habitats. This will increase the biodiversity of the site.
- 5.2.3 A modest amount of amenity planting associated with the gardens close to the building will include flowering shrubs and berry-bearing trees. The food source and structure provided by these features will support birdlife.
- 5.2.4 The remainder of the site to be kept natural and enhanced with native planting to provide and maintain wildlife habitats and connectivity
- 5.2.5 Provision of bird boxes, bat boxes, reptile hibernaculae, and butterfly banks.
- 5.2.6 Fencing must take animal movement across site into consideration

5.3 TREES

- 5.3.1 A root protection zone (RPZ) must be implemented around any retained trees which lie adjacent to or within the boundary of the proposed development site. British Standard BS 5837, *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations* will be followed.

5.4 PARKING

- 5.4.1 Parking area to be softened with tree and shrub planting to maintain 'pastoral' character
- 5.4.2 Edges of parking to be screened by trees and shrubs / hedges increasing connectivity to the river and surrounding natural area
- 5.4.3 Permeable paving and swales to be used in parking area for drainage and softening of space

5.5 PROXIMITY TO RIVER AND DITCH

- 5.5.1 No development to occur within 8 -10 meters of riverbank
- 5.5.2 Riverbank habitat enhanced
- 5.5.3 Should the development proposals seek to discharge and water into the River Monnow a drainage strategy will be required to demonstrate that any discharge will not adversely affect the water quality of the river.

- 5.5.4 Pollution measures must be put in place to avoid any impacts on to the River Monnow. All machinery used during any on-site works must be stored in an agreed location away from the south of the site. Spill kits must be kept on site at all times to deal with any fuel, oil or material spills. All machinery will be kept in a bunded, water-tight storage compound to prevent spills. The storage compound must be at least 10m away from any surrounding watercourse.
- 5.5.5 Should the development proposals seek to use the ditch along the western boundary a drainage strategy will be required to demonstrate that any discharge will not adversely affect the water quality of the River Monnow to the south.

5.6 SUDS INTERGRATION (PERMEABLE SURFACES / SWALES / RAIN GARDENS)

- 5.6.1 Vegetated swales and rain gardens will assist in the creation of habitat, recreational and biodiversity areas
- 5.6.2 permeable paving to be used in all paved areas such as the parking area and any other paved pathways
- 5.6.3 Swales and filter strips to be utilized in the parking area and any other paved areas for water runoff

5.7 GREEN ROOF

- 5.7.1 Less visual impact, particularly behind the existing hedge
- 5.7.2 Reduced stormwater runoff
- 5.7.3 Improved air quality
- 5.7.4 Reduced energy use
- 5.7.5 Improved human health
- 5.7.6 Sound insulation
- 5.7.7 Increased biodiversity

5.8 LIGHTING

- 5.8.1 Careful consideration must be given to the use of lighting within the development site, as this can adversely affect the activity of a variety of fauna, particularly foraging bats, nesting birds, badger, otter and dormice. Light spillage into adjacent semi-natural habitats must be avoided and brightness kept to the lowest permissible level in the areas adjacent to such habitats. All lighting must meet recommendations in the BCT Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development will introduce new habitats associated with the site drainage and biodiversity enhancements in the form of bird and bat boxes and refugia for small animals and invertebrates. By protecting identified GI features of value,

including the existing tree lines and hedgerows, together with enhancement planting, the scheme will improve links with the surrounding landscape. Green Infrastructure connectivity will be enhanced as a result.