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## **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT**

**For**

### **Land off Valley Road**

Colwyn Bay  
Denbighshire  
LL29 8RY

**NGR: (SH) 85516 77626**

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Prepared for: Anwyl Land Ltd  
Written by: Heather Tewnton, UES Field Ecologist  
Approved by: Kathryn James, UES Senior Project Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'K James'.

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024  
UES reference: UES04339/03

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Author and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Heather Tewnion BSc, Field Ecologist for United Environmental Services (UES) Ltd. Heather holds a level 3 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC), which certifies her as competent to undertake phase 1 and UKHab surveys.

This report has been verified by Kathryn James BSc MRes MCIEEM, UES Senior Project Manager. Kathryn holds a level 4 FISC, which certifies her as competent to undertake phase 1 and UKHab surveys, as well as more detailed botanical surveys, such as national vegetation classification (NVC) surveys. Kathryn is licensed by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to disturb, take and handle all species of bat, other than greater or lesser horseshoe, under licence number S091413/1. Kathryn is also licensed by NRW to disturb, take and handle great crested newts (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* under licence number S091414/1.

## 1.2 Proposed development

The proposed development is a housing scheme for the construction of numerous residential dwellings with associated access roads, footpaths, parking and landscaping.

## 1.3 Survey objectives

UES was commissioned in July 2024 to prepare a green infrastructure statement for the proposed development at Land off Valley Road, Colwyn Bay. This was completed in order to:

- Identify where existing green infrastructure can currently be found and where there may be opportunities for improvement, such as through the provision of new green infrastructure, or the enhancement of existing green infrastructure.
- Consider what improvements can be made to biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, as well as consider the needs of local communities and society as a whole and how these can be met through green infrastructure.
- Demonstrate how the stepwise approach has been applied throughout development design.



## 2 LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

In February 2024 the Welsh Government published Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 to address the nature emergency which contains a revised Chapter 6 'Distinctive and Natural Placemaking and Well-Being'.

One key change is the requirement for all planning applications to be submitted with a 'green infrastructure statement'. In Planning Policy Wales paragraph 6.2.1., green infrastructure is defined 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.'*

Paragraph 6.2.12 states that *'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 stepwise approach (Paragraph 6.4.15) has been applied.'*

The stepwise approach, as outlined below, demonstrates the sequential approach that must be adopted as part of a 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. Enhancement must be secured by delivering a biodiversity benefit primarily on site or immediately adjacent to the site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact

1. Avoid
2. Minimise
3. Mitigate / restore
4. Compensate onsite
5. Compensate offsite
6. Refuse planning permission



### 3 BASELINE DATA

A desk study and preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) survey were undertaken by UES on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (see report reference UES04339/01).

The proposed development site has an area of approximately 0.87ha and mainly comprises improved grassland with an area of dense scrub and woodland along the northern and eastern site boundary. There is a steeply cut ditch running from the southwest along the western boundary of the woodland, and a main badger *Meles meles* sett located within the woodland and dense scrub.

The PEA provides an assessment of potential ecological impacts associated with the development of the land parcel. The PEA has highlighted potential issues with the following ecological receptors on or adjacent to site: amphibians, badgers, bats, birds, hedgehogs, reptiles, hedgerows, watercourses and woodland.



## **4 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSALS**

### **4.1 Retained habitats**

#### **4.1.1 Dense scrub and woodland**

UES were instructed early in the design programme to identify the key ecological constraints on site and ensure that the highest quality habitats were retained as part of the scheme design, where practicable. The majority of the development site comprises intensely managed modified grassland, which is of limited value to wildlife, and as such was prioritised for development. Whereas higher quality habitats, such as woodland and dense scrub, were prioritised for retention.

The majority of the dense scrub onsite is due to be retained as part of the proposed development, which includes the area containing the badger sett. This is being buffered by an area of grassland and is not being isolated by the proposed development, with access between the woodland to the north and southwest of the development (where there was evidence of badger activity during the initial ecological survey) being maintained.

The approach of avoid and minimise has been followed in balancing the need to create a serviceable and developable site area whilst allowing for the retention of existing habitats of high biodiversity value, which has led to the decision on the location and extent of the development proposals.

#### **4.1.2 Watercourse**

There is a steep sided ditch containing running water which flows on the boundary of the woodland adjacent to the site. Control measures will be implemented during the construction phase to ensure there is no disturbance and / or pollution of the watercourse.

### **4.2 Landscaping and habitat enhancement**

A landscape masterplan has been prepared by Above Zero (drawing number: 117.01.01) in support of this planning application, which is shown at Appendix 1. To increase biodiversity on site the proposed development has been designed to incorporate the following landscaping proposals: native tree and hedgerow planting, and wildflower meadow.

#### **4.2.1 Native tree and hedgerow planting**

Native tree and hedgerow planting will provide foraging opportunities for invertebrates including larval stages, adult herbivorous species and pollinators. Providing a range of planted species will support a greater diversity of invertebrate species, which will in turn benefit other faunal species that will predate these invertebrates, such as bats and birds. In addition, the trees and hedgerows will provide increased nesting opportunities for birds and sheltered commuting opportunities for amphibians and mammals. Once fully mature, the trees may also develop potential roosting features for bats such as cavities and crevices.

In addition, the planting of trees onsite will ensure the proposed development is climate resilient by incorporating mitigation and adaptations that respond to the impacts of climate change; tree planting will provide shading, sequester carbon, improve air quality and reduce flood risk, as well as provide habitats for wildlife.



#### **4.2.2 Wildflower meadows**

Wildflower meadows will provide immediate benefits for wildlife in the form of foraging, breeding and sheltering opportunities. In the longer term, the grassland will also be colonised naturally by additional native plant species.

#### **4.2.3 Amenity grassland and ornamental planting**

As the proposed development is a housing scheme, numerous areas of amenity grassland will be created onsite, most of which will be associated with the residential properties and access roads. In addition, there will be areas of ornamental planting throughout the proposed development site. Ornamental structural and accent planting will occur around the plots and mainly comprise either evergreen or flowering species.

### **4.3 Protected species**

The preliminary ecological appraisal has highlighted potential issues with the following ecological receptors on or adjacent to site: amphibians, badgers, bats, birds, hedgehogs and reptiles.

#### **4.3.1 Badgers**

A main badger sett is located in the woodland and dense scrub immediately to the northwest of the proposed development site. As the proposed development is located within 30m of the badger sett, a further badger activity survey should be undertaken to establish the level of activity and usage of the sett. Depending on the findings of the survey, further species-specific mitigation and compensation measures may be required onsite, including the requirement for a licence issued by Natural Resources Wales.

The site layout and landscape design include the retention of the linear green corridor along the western site boundary, which will be enhanced with wildflower grassland and will continue to provide commuting, foraging, and sheltering opportunities for badgers. These habitats will be subject to ongoing management as part of the operational phase of the development, and as such, will secure suitable habitat for badgers onsite in the long term.

#### **4.3.2 Bats**

If any of the trees on site or adjacent to the site will be affected by the proposed development, then a ground level tree assessment will be required to determine the suitability of the trees to support roosting bats. Depending on the findings of the survey, further surveys and / or species-specific mitigation and compensation measures may be required onsite, including the requirement for a European protected species (EPS) mitigation licence issued by Natural Resources Wales.

The site layout and landscape design include the retention of the linear green corridor along the western site boundary, which will be enhanced with wildflower grassland and will provide commuting and foraging opportunities for bats. In addition, numerous bat boxes will be installed onsite, which will provide an enhancement in roosting opportunities.

Connectivity across the development site and between the site and offsite habitats will be maintained and enhanced as part of the proposed development. There will be no fragmentation or isolation as a result of the proposed development, and the linear features will continue to provide ecological linkages for bats (as well as other species) commuting between



the site and offsite habitats within the wider landscape, maintaining ecosystem resilience. A wildlife friendly external lighting scheme will be designed to avoid overspill onto the ecological corridors at the site boundaries, as well as ecological enhancement features installed onsite.

#### **4.3.3 Other species**

Reasonable avoidance measures in relation to amphibians, birds, hedgehogs and reptiles, as detailed in UES' PEA report, will be implemented onsite during the construction phase of the development to reduce potential impacts on these species to a negligible level. Provided these issues are addressed in accordance with the recommendations detailed in the PEA report, the development may proceed without adversely impacting the aforementioned ecological receptors.

Once implemented, the landscaping and habitat enhancements will provide a biologically diverse landscape. The bottom-up approach to improving the biodiversity on site will ensure that the habitats on site can support a range of invertebrate species and provide other food sources, which will then in turn benefit fauna further up the food chain.





## 5 CONCLUSION

UES were instructed early in the design programme to identify the key ecological constraints on site and ensure that the highest quality habitats were retained as part of the scheme design, where practicable. Pre-application discussions between UES and the client were taken at the earliest stage to inform design, layout and options in early adoption of the stepwise approach. This allowed significant habitat retention, enhancement and creation to be incorporated into the design proposals.

The proposed development layout has been designed to be ecologically sympathetic and ensures that the retained and proposed green infrastructure onsite creates effective links with existing ecological networks offsite. The landscaping proposals onsite look to retain the dense scrub in the west of the site, maintaining the connection between the woodlands to the north and southwest of the site and in the wider landscape. The proposed green infrastructure will compensate for the loss of existing vegetation, ensuring that the ecological integrity of the site is maintained and enhanced. The newly planted hedgerows and trees are spread evenly across the site which, coupled with the creation of ecologically valuable habitats around the site, will contribute to the green infrastructure network onsite promoting the natural distribution of species.

The impact on habitats and species of principal importance has been minimised, as far as is practicable; the small areas due to be lost are to be compensated for through a substantial ecological enhancement scheme onsite which goes over and above what is required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact. In addition, the provision of a mosaic of connected habitats along the site boundaries will contribute to the green infrastructure network onsite promoting the natural distribution of species. In summary, the proposed development provides a significant net benefit for biodiversity ensuring that ecological resilience is maintained within the wider landscape.






## **APPENDICES**






### **Appendix 1 – Landscape masterplan**

**KEY**



General

-  Proposed Development Footprint
-  Principal Entrances to New Dwellings
-  Retaining Walls (To engineers specification)







Hard Surfacing

-  Paving
-  Buff Colour Paving Slabs
-  Bitumen Macadam/ SMA Surfacing- (Vehicle Overrun Areas)
-  Bitumen Macadam/ SMA Surfacing- (Pedestrian Areas)
-  Tegula Surfacing- Tegula Trio. Colour Bracken by Tobermore or similar

Existing Trees and Vegetation

-  Existing Trees (Site Boundaries and Off-site Trees)
-  Existing Scrub Woodland and Gorse

Proposed Trees, Hedges and Vegetation

-  Trees (Proposed) (See Schedules)
-  Ornamental Planting (See Schedule)
-  Single Species Hedging (See Annotation (Code) and Schedules)
-  Mixed Species Native Hedging (See Annotation and Schedules)
-  Wildflower and Grassland Meadow Mixture (EM1 by Emorsgate Seeds)
-  Amenity Grass

Tree Root Barrier

**Tree Root Barrier**  
By Green Blue Urban (or similar) to be used to protect existing and proposed services and hard-standing and building foundations. Location and depth of product be continually reviewed and developed up to and during construction phase with engineering and M&E design. Depth of barrier to suit depth of construction, service or foundation.

Project:  
**Heol Dirion, Colwyn Bay.**

Drawing Title:  
**Hard and Soft Landscape Plan**

Scale: <b>A3: 1/500 A1: 1/250</b>	Date: <b>16/09/2024</b>
Status: <b>Planning</b>	Drawn: <b>ES</b> Checked: <b>TS</b>
Drawing Number: <b>117.01.01</b>	Revision: <b>-</b>

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