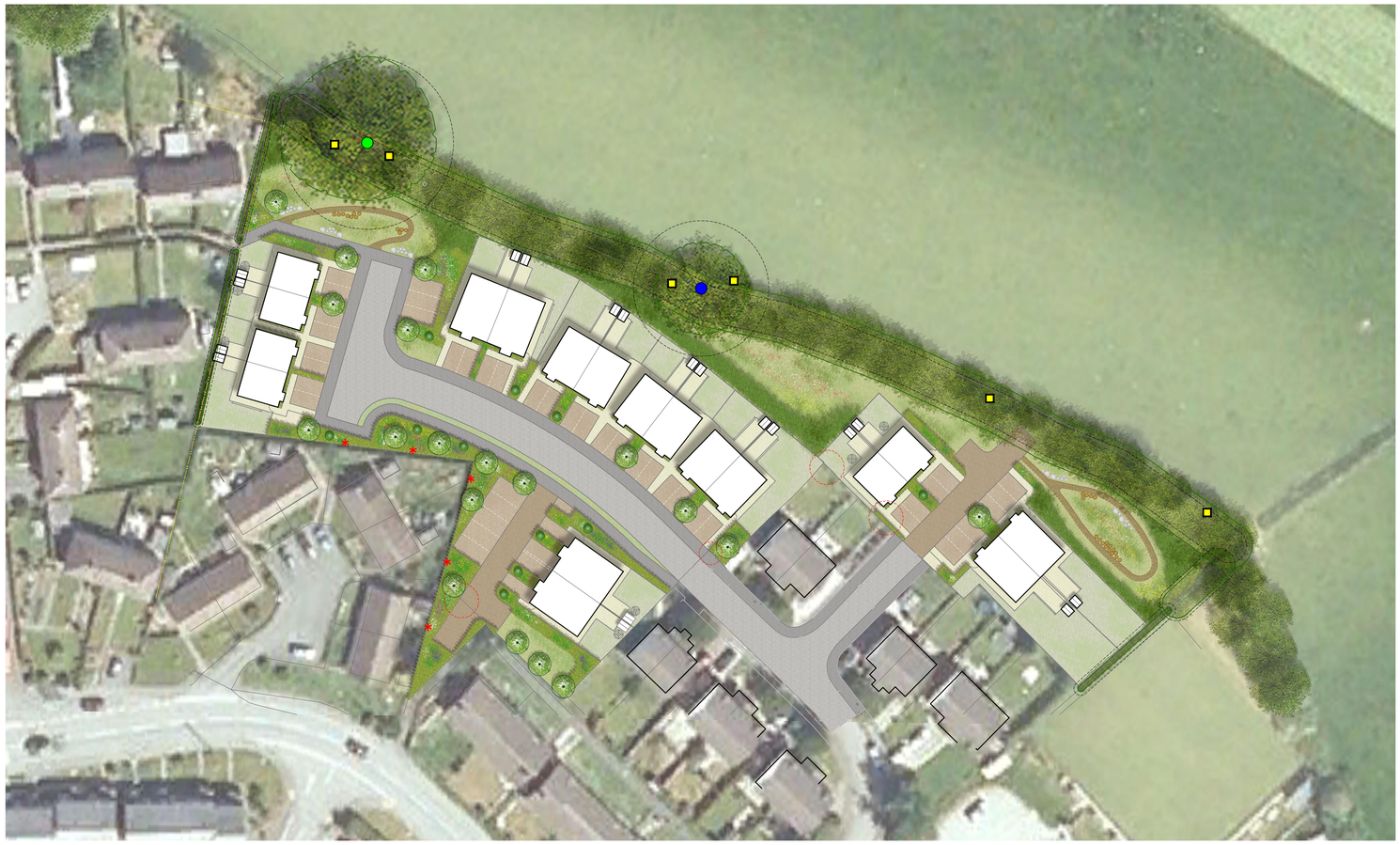

Powys

tir

Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant

Green Infrastructure Strategy/Statement

GI.**1**

DRAFT

Net Benefits for Biodiversity

Developments should seek to retain existing habitats within the proposal and avoid the loss of vegetation where possible. If this is not possible, developments should seek to mitigate for the loss of habitats and/or provide enhancement measures to provide net benefits for biodiversity.

This development seeks to retain the existing vegetation along the north of the site in addition to supplementing with native shrub planting and providing species rich grass seeding on areas of improved grassland being retained. Tree, shrub and herbaceous planting throughout the remainder of the site will provide an increase in amenity value and biodiversity enhancements.

Avoidance

Habitats such as the trees and vegetation on the north, east and western boundaries will be retained. The vegetation will also be enhanced with native shrub planting which will help increase the biodiversity of the site. **[BwN 11, 12]**

Mitigation

No symbol

Bats and lighting: As a matter of best practice, external lighting must be minimised or avoided altogether. Where used, lighting must be fixed on the lowest column practical with light spread kept well below the horizontal using cowls, hoods, screens or simply by downward directionality.

No symbol

Existing grass: It would be advisable to regularly cut or graze the existing site in the lead-up to the development to ensure that no protected or priority species can take up residence in the field during the lead-in period (e.g. Hedgehogs and Grass Snakes).

Enhancements

Species-rich grass will be provided on the open space areas in the north west and north east to help increase biodiversity, colour and interest **[BwN 1, 2, 3, 7, 11]**

Tree planting will be planted to attenuate transmitted light and to provide habitat corridors, food sources, foraging areas and nesting habitats suitable for hedgehogs, bats, reptiles and birds **[BwN 1, 2, 3, 7, 11]**

Ground cover planting to help provide visual interest, and increase biodiversity. A combination of native plants and ornamental species would be planted as appropriate where space allows. **[BwN 1, 2, 3, 7, 11]**

Specimen shrubs for height and interest **[BwN 1, 2, 3]**

Bat or bird boxes to be installed within the vegetation along the north **[BwN 11]**

0 10 20 30 40 50 metres

Scale 1:500 @ A1

North

TC23185 Landscape Plans v2.dwg 12 December 2023

tir collective LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Floor 7, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, CF24 0EB

This **Green Infrastructure Strategy/Statement** should be read alongside the surveys, reports and proposals that have been carried out as part of the development scheme, which accompany the planning application including the **Ecological Impact Assessment** (Churton Ecology), the **Drainage Strategy** (Powys Council), the **Tree Survey** (ArbTS), and the **Landscape Strategy** including specifications (Tir Collective).

"*Annex to Heads of Planning Letter Dated 11 October 2023: Addressing the Nature Emergency through the Planning System: Updated National Planning Policy for Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales*

Green infrastructure is 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."

Ref: https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-10/annex-addressing-the-nature-emergency-through-the-planning-system.pdf

Site appraisal and existing green infrastructure

The site is located west of Maes Yr Esgob, in Llanrhaeadr-Ym-Mochnant.

"*The site comprises an irregular parcel of land which increases in steepness to the north-west corner, measuring approximately 0.8Ha in size. The site is vacant greenfield land, and is considered to be overgrown. No existing structures are located within the site boundary. An established hedgerow (Category C quality) forms the site's northern boundary.*" *(Ref: Asbri planning)*

The village of Llanrhaeadr-ym-mochnant is bounded by large agricultural fields which expand for several kilometres in all directions away from the village. The fields are defined by boundary hedgerows with individual trees scattered within the hedges. Within the village, there are some open spaces, a graveyard and private gardens. a network of footpaths surround the village which extend into the wider landscape.

Ecology

An Ecological Impact Assessment was undertaken by Churchon Ecology in October 2022.

The EIA notes that the site consists of "*occasionally cut, improved grassland and a small area of tall ruderal vegetation*".

The desktop and walkover of the site aimed to "*establish the presence or absence of bats, Badgers, breeding birds and other protected species and habitats with potential to be negatively affected by the proposal.*"

The EIA describes that the site "*supports habitats of **low biodiversity value.** Bats are considered to be an important ecological feature of the site's potential area of influence.*"

The EIA also describes that "*with avoidance and mitigation measures in place for bats there will be **no significant residual adverse effect on protected species or habitats.** With enhancements in place there could be a maintenance or increase in the biodiversity value of the site.*"

Existing vegetation (Tree survey)

The tree survey has identified a large Common Oak at the northwest (Category A), a large Sycamore (Category B) on the northern boundary, some small trees within the core of the site (Category C), a large native hedge on the northern boundary consisting of Hazel, Hawthorn, and Field Maple (Category C), and other hedges of lesser value (Category C) on the northeast and north western boundaries.

Proposed site and Green Infrastructure

The site would consist of 18 houses within an approximate area of 0.8ha. The proposal for the site also includes parking, a highway, footway and a swale.

The landscape proposal for the site seeks to retain existing vegetation on the site boundaries and enhance it through proposing native shrubs, particularly along the rear garden boundary fences to the north. The area of grassland being retained in the northwest and the northeast will be seeded with a species-rich grass with 20% wildflowers and 80% grasses which will be cut less frequently than amenity grass areas throughout the year, to help increase biodiversity, colour and interest.

A range of herbaceous and shrub plants will be provided throughout the site to increase amenity and biodiverity of the site. Tree planting will be planted to help cool the land during the summer months and provide structural interest in the winter. Where appropriate, native tree planting will be provided.

The drainage proposals include a main swale along the southern edge of the highway and permeable paving will be provided on the private drive areas. The swale will be seeded appropriately with a species-rich grass mix suitable for damp and dry conditions.

Pedestrian linkages would be provided via the access road in the south and at the northwestern boundary.

Effects on Green Infrastructure

Ecology

Refer to the Ecology Impact Assessment.

Bats: the EIA notes that the development "***will not** result in the damage, destruction or obstruction of a bat roost and no bats will be injured or killed by the proposal*". If any external lighting is proposed, the EIA notes that "*a lighting plan may be requested as a condition of planning consent.*" The EIA also refers to the potential for bat and bird boxes to be installed within the existing vegetation.

Habitats: the EIA notes that "*existing hedgerows, trees and shrubs must be retained wherever possible. Where hedgerows, trees and/or shrubs are to be removed... increased numbers of native species must be planted elsewhere to offset the loss and to enhance the biodiversity could be in the form of creating native hedgerows along any of the site boundaries that are currently open. Gaps in existing hedgerows could also be planted up with native woody species.*"

Existing vegetation

The small number of existing Category C trees within the core of the site will need to be removed to facilitate the development, and part of the existing hedge along the north will need to be cut back and laid to accommodate a private drive. Within the scheme, a total of 19no. new trees will be planted.

Conclusions

The development proposals have considered the existing green infrastructure on the site, particularly the existing ecology and proposed vegetation. Mitigation and enhancements include appropriate measures for avoidance of impacts on bats, planting of new trees, shrub planting, species rich seeding, the installation of bat and bird boxes and hedgehog fence gaps. A swale is provided along the southern boundary of the site. These new features would contribute to the wider green infrastructure of the site and local context, whilst enhancing biodiversity.

Building with Nature (BwN): Standards Framework

BwN describes "individual Standards that collectively form a definition of **high-quality green infrastructure**." There are 6 Core Standards, 2 Wellbeing Standards, 2 Water Standards and 2 Wildlife Standards as below. This GI strategy/Statement signposts the standards:

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

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

WATER Standard
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