# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT: HOUSEHOLDERS

## What is this guidance for?

This guidance note is primarily for planning applications in the Monmouthshire County Council planning area that fall into the Householder category which can include extensions and associated landscaping.

Other small scale applications include single dwelling & significant outbuildings, swimming pools, Agricultural prior approval, small scale changes of use that has an external impact.

## What is Green Infrastructure (GI)?

GI 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. At the landscape scale green infrastructure can comprise entire ecosystems such as wetlands, waterways and mountain ranges. At a local scale, it might comprise parks, fields, public rights of way, allotments, cemeteries and gardens. At smaller scales, individual urban interventions such as street trees, hedgerows, roadside verges, and green roofs/walls, wildflower areas, ponds can all contribute to green infrastructure networks.

## Why do we need this guidance note?

Planning Policy Wales 12 highlights that a Green Infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications and will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development. The statement which will need to be informed by a GI assessment of the site will describe how green infrastructure will be incorporated into the proposal and how the step wise approach to protecting biodiversity, habitats and GI onsite will be managed.

monmouthshire sir fynwy

Monmouthshire Local Nature Partnership

Partneriaeth Natur Lleol Sir Fynwy

WCVA CGGC

Ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru
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## What is a GI Assessment

A GI assessment from a small-scale development perspective will focus on the GI and biodiversity assets and habitats that are in your property curtilage or bound your property. They could be existing trees, shrubs, wildflower and grass areas, hedges, ponds, orchard, scrub, field and woodland for instance. Each will support different species and also connect to corridors that link with your property. So your assessment will describe what GI and biodiversity assets and habitats are present in and bound your property

## A Step wise approach

A step wise approach considers what impacts may occur as a result of development activity to any identified biodiversity, habitats and green infrastructure assets and networks that may be present on or bounding a site. The approach then seeks to manage any harm that may occur by (a) avoiding (b) minimising (c ) Mitigate / Restore. Typical development activity that needs planning permission may be new build, conversions, extensions, outbuildings, larger ground level changes, patios, decking and ponds.

**Extensions**

**New builds**

**Out buildings**

## The GI Statement

In the statement you will describe what relevant works may occur and how you propose to address possible development impacts on your GI assets and biodiversity habitats eg:-

### Avoid:-

This may be changes to development layout, best means of access, careful storage of materials and alignments of trenches to avoid roots of trees and hedges or damaging a stream or pond.

### Minimise:-

When all locations, siting and design options to avoid harm have been exhausted design solutions to minimise impact need to be considered. This may be maintaining largest areas of habitats as possible, ensure connectivity is maintained, retain existing features and develop a plan of aftercare that may include enhancements.

### Mitigate / Restore:-

Effective measures should be incorporated into the design proposals to mitigate for and repair damage to habitats and GI assets . So this could include new tree, hedge, shrub, wildflower planting as well as alternative new habitats such as bird and bat boxes, hibernacula or green roof, living walls, rain gardens and improvements to ponds and enhancing or restoring Green Infrastructure connectivity.

In the GI statement you would describe your approaches and a short description of any GI asset mitigation / enhancements proposed to compensate for any potential harm and to demonstrate net biodiversity benefits.

This is not meant to be onerous and we are always available to answer any queries via the planning duty officer **01633 644831**, email us on **planning@monmouthshire.gov.uk** or follow the link to the Monmouthshire planning web site **https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning/**

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## What is a GI assessment and the step wise approach?

The existing GI on site needs to be identified and assessed to determine the condition and value as a habitat and its GI role. This is a **GI assessment**. For householder level we have produced a simple GI proforma (location) which will act as guide. This brochure also describes what GI assets maybe present in and by your development site.

A **step wise approach** considers what impacts may occur to any identified biodiversity, habitats and green infrastructure networks that may be present on or bounding a site as a result of development activity. These maybe trees, woodland, copses, hedges, wildflower areas, ponds, steams, mature shrubberies and orchards that maybe present or near the development site.

The step wise approach is made up of six phases of design consideration when designing, developing and delivering a project

1. **Avoid.** This is where you consider at the outset ways to avoid harm to valuable or vulnerable biodiversity and GI that has been identified in the pre assessment of your site. So this may be changes to development layout, access , storage of materials and trenches to avoid roots of trees and hedges, damaging a stream or pond, bats in the roof or outbuildings, changes in levels that affect habitats

2. **Minimise**. When all locations, siting and design options to avoid harm have been exhausted design solutions to minimise impact need to be considered. This may be maintaining largest areas of habitats as possible, ensure connectivity is maintained, retain existing features and develop a plan of aftercare that may include enhancements.

3. **Mitigate / Restore.** Effective measures should be incorporated into the design proposals to repair damage to habitats of disturbed species. So this could include new tree, hedge, shrub, wildflower planting as well as alternative new habitats such as bird and bat boxes, hibernacula or green roof, living walls, rain gardens and improvement to ponds and enhancing or restoring Green Infrastructure connectivity

4. **Compensation on site.** Where all options above have been considered and are not sufficient to secure biodiversity and Gi outcomes additional on-site like for like provision will need to be made inclusive of establishment and management plans

5. **Compensation off site.** Where all options above have been considered and are not sufficient to secure biodiversity and Gi outcomes on site as a last resort additional off-site like for like provision will need to be made inclusive of establishment and management plans

6. **Refusal of planning permission.** where the adverse effect and impact on Biodiversity and GI clearly outweighs other material considerations then development may be considered for refusal