

JMS PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF A
FULL PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR RENOVATION AND RESTORATION

AT

BELLE VUE ROYAL HOTEL
MARINE TERRACE
ABERYSTWYTH
CEREDIGION



Client: Morgans Developments Ltd

Project: Belle Vue Royal Hotel, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth

Date: October 2024

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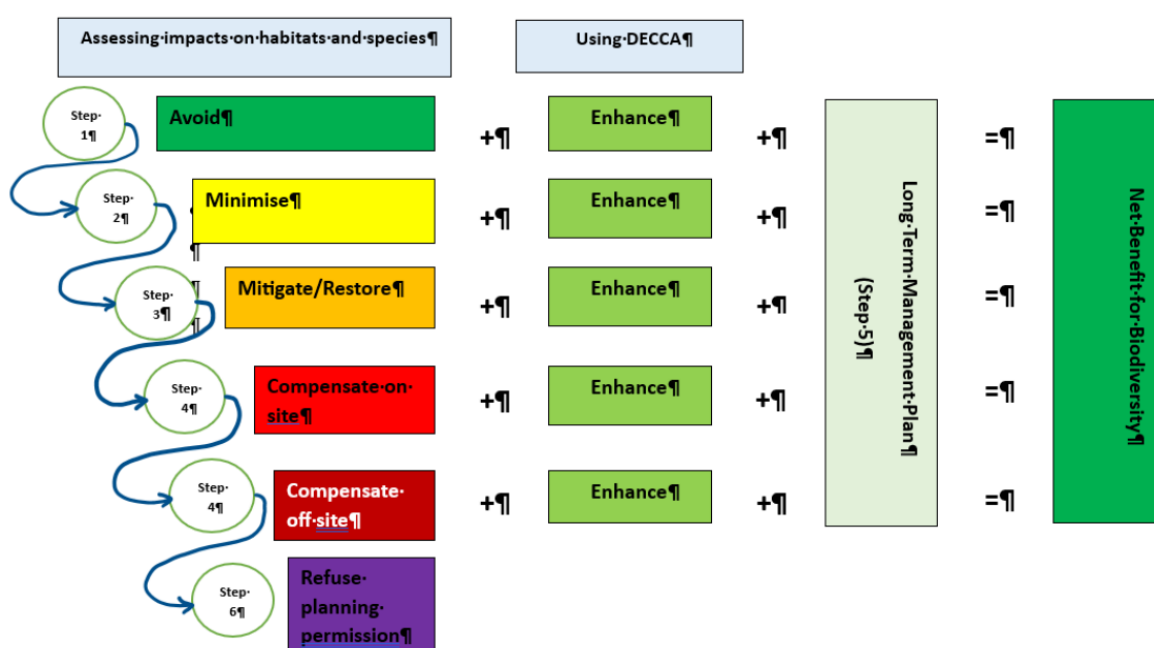
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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 JMS Planning & Development have been instructed, on behalf of Morgans Developments Ltd to submit a Green Infrastructure Statement following the publication of Planning Policy Wales (Ed 12), Chapter 6 in February 2024 to accompany the application for the restoration and renovation of the Belle Vue Royal Hotel to provide high quality accommodation and venue.

1.2 The step-wise approach has been used throughout this assessment.

Figure 1X: Summary of the Step-Wise Approach



The Step-Wise Approach



SECTION 2: SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site is located within the Urban Service Centre of Aberystwyth, according to Volume 2B of the Ceredigion Local Development Plan.
- 2.2 The application site is an existing site which extends from the Marine Terrace to the front to Corporation Street at the rear. The works are necessary following a fire at the adjacent premises (Ty Belgrave House hotel) on 25th July 2018, which spread to the application site. This caused extensive fire and water damage and affected the structural condition of the building. The northern part of the hotel was completely destroyed, which has left a gap in the terrace.
- 2.3 The proposed works include reconstruction of the fire damaged north end of the hotel to re-establish the terrace, remedial works to the front façade, creation of a new entrance door, insertion of glazed windows at ground floor level, demolition of the rear extension and its replacement with a three-storey building with fourth storey setback, creation of a spa, rearrangement of the plan-form internally, creation of an integral car park with entrance from Corporation Street, replacement windows, re-roofing and other associated works.
- 2.4 The application site is located in the heart of Aberystwyth, the largest town in Ceredigion and a priority area for focused intervention by the Welsh Government to fulfil its role as the 'Capital of Central Wales'. Within the town, the site is located on Marine Terrace, in a highly prominent location facing the promenade and seafront. There is also additional access to the rear via Corporation Street which was used for deliveries and servicing pre-fire.
- 2.5 The application site is a mid-terraced, Grade II listed building (ref. 10281) of four storeys (three storeys plus attic), with an additional basement level. The application site has an established hotel (C1) use. The listing description notes that the property is shown on the 1834 map, and at an early date *"it established itself as the main hotel in the town"*.
- 2.6 In terms of the exterior, the listing description states the following:

"Three-storey basement and attic mixed 11-bay (1+3+7) painted stucco front with part rusticated ground floor. To left incorporating the former cross range and right-hand pavilion of No 24; right-hand seven bays are stepped up. Slate roofs, bracket eaves and ridge cresting to cross range roof with pediment treatment to gable end; rubble chimney stacks. Sash windows replaced by modern glazing but retain architraves with scrolled and moulded keystones; some blocked to second floor, modern



bay to left. Modern loggia forward to the street and entrance offset to right; sash and casement windows to basement.

Part scribed stucco right gable end; rubble rear with mixed rendered courtyard buildings reached off Corporation Street; arched headed stained glass windows.”

- 2.7 There is no listing description for the interior of the hotel, thereby implying that the building’s significance relates more to the exterior. The listing description also notes the reason for designation being “*included for group value*”, hence recognising the historic value of the wider terrace.
- 2.8 There are no public right of ways that run through the site, nevertheless there are several footpaths on the outskirts of the town and the promenade is an excellent area for people to walk, run and cycle.
- 2.9 The Urban Service Centre has excellent transport and access links, benefiting from a bus and train station.



SECTION 3: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.1 Green infrastructure is necessary not just to soften the impact that development has on our natural environment, but to ensure that it contributes a biodiversity net gain that results in an enhancement of the site compared to the pre-development baseline.
- 3.2 Ensuring that there is a suitable network of green infrastructure is a key concern as it will benefit current and future residents.
- 3.3 Green infrastructure must consider the local context and character as taking design cues from local habitat types while also serving local community needs.
- 3.4 Green infrastructure must deliver public benefits for all both directly and indirectly, including recreational and health and wellbeing benefits.
- 3.5 The application site is already developed and there will be minimal changes to the site, the change will be in the way it is used going from a holiday accommodation destination to permanent residential homes. The village is already designated as a Rural Service Centre and therefore the site is within easy walking distance to facilities and the village school and park. No ecological survey has been undertaken as no works are proposed which would affect any protected species. The site is bound to the West by the Afon Teifi and to all other sides by residential development.
- 3.6 There is a designated open spaces with equipped park and a football pitch within the village which are within walking distance of the site. There are numerous public footpaths within the vicinity of the site however none within the site itself.
- 3.7 Aberystwyth has a regular bus service with several routes available along with a school bus to serve the local primary and secondary schools from the catchment area. It also has a train station which connects the town with towns further afield along with over the boarder in England
- 3.8 The applicant is committed to improving the overall well-being and health of the community and the environment by enhancing biodiversity on site and encouraging the use of green infrastructure in the locality. The site being a listed building and located within a dense urban environment is constrained in terms of what it can achieve in terms of enhancements.



SECTION 4: BIODIVERSITY NET BENEFIT

- 4.1 The annexe to the letter by the Chief Planning Officer dated 11th October 2023 explains that:

“Biodiversity underpins the structure and functioning of ecosystems. It is the diversity of living organisms whether at the genetic, species, habitat or ecosystem level. An ecosystem is made up of living organisms, plants, animals and micro-organisms, in conjunction with their non-living environment, air, water, minerals and soil, and all the diverse and complex interactions that take place between them.”

- 4.2 **Extent:** The planning application is a full application which includes a minimal landscaping plan with biodiversity enhancement. The applicant understands the need to plan for every individual development proposal to avoid negative impact on existing biodiversity and is committed to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity on the site. As mentioned, the site is an existing operational business and the changes will be minor in that they will incorporate the renovation and restoration of the property. At present the site has no green spaces which is located within an urban environment surrounded by the existing built form.
- 4.3 **Condition:** The condition of the ground as it currently stands is poor and of little ecological value as it’s a disused hotel. The hotel is only home to pigeons as it is open to the elements. The property is in a very poor state of repair following a large fire in 2017. However the current owners are eager to re-instate the property and renovate it to a high quality hotel along the seafront in Aberystwyth. There are various green and blue infrastructure paths within the vicinity of the property, most notably is the promenade which extends for a length of 2000 meters. There is also a green open space within the castle grounds and an equipped park which is within walking distance of the site.
- 4.4 **Connectivity:** Opportunities will arise for the development to be connected to the biodiversity and ecological networks which exists currently in the area – as the surrounding areas, in particular the open countryside beyond Aberystwyth and the Marine SAC of Cardigan Bay is rich in biodiversity with numerous ecological networks. The site is constrained due to its listed status and therefore there are minimal ways of providing a gain to the ecological and green infrastructure connectivity. However bird and bat boxes will be incorporated on the external walls of the property within the courtyard area and along the front of the hotel planting of different flowers within beds will also be included. In addition solar panels are proposed on the roof of the building to generate clean energy. The additional landscaping and planting within the site will enhance the biodiversity offer of the site compared to its existing value.
- 4.5 **Adaptation:** Sustaining the habitats and associated species in the longer term will be key, through proper management and securing the green infrastructure



already present around the site is sustained into the future. The protection of the Marine SAC and the beach is of paramount importance to the developer also as it's a key element in their business model as a hotel on the seafront in Aberystwyth.



SECTION 5: PROTECTION OF SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

5.1 The site does not form part of land within a Site of Special Scientific Interest.



SECTION 6: TREES AND WOODLANDS

- 6.1 The annexe to the letter by the Chief Planning Officer dated 11th October 2023 explains that:

“Trees, hedgerows, groups of trees and areas of woodland are of great importance for biodiversity. They are important connecting habitats for resilient ecological networks and make an essential wider contribution to landscape character, culture, heritage and sense of place, air quality, recreation and local climate moderation. They also play a vital role in tackling the climate emergency by locking up carbon, and can provide shade, shelter and foraging opportunities, wider landscape benefits such as air and diffuse pollution interception, natural flood management, and building materials. The importance of trees, in particular urban trees, in creating distinctive and natural places which deliver health and well-being benefits to communities, now and in the future should be promoted as part of plan making and decision taking. Planning authorities must promote the planting of new trees, hedgerows, groups of trees and areas of woodland as part of new development.”

- 6.2 There are no trees on the site however and there is no scope to incorporate trees within the development.



SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

- 7.1 To conclude, the development of the application site will not result in damage or a negative impact on existing biodiversity or on the function of existing ecosystems. The development site is of low ecological value but nevertheless its surrounded by nationally designated sites on the periphery of the town centre which will be carefully protected and managed during the course of the construction process and beyond.
- 7.2 The proposed scheme will deliver a net benefit of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience along with green infrastructure measures in line with the step-wise approach and Planning Policy Wales (Ed 12).