

Green Infrastructure Statement

Planning Policy

In February 2023, the Climate Emergency Development Plan Document was formally adopted by Cornwall Council as a functional part of the development plan for the area. Its policies aim to protect and shape the future by addressing the impacts of climate change through appropriate management of the built and natural environment, whilst planning for a sustainable future.

Policy C1 (Climate Change Principles) sets out Cornwall's main priorities for minimising greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing resilience, supporting community well-being, conserving soil quality, protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable transportation, preserving natural and historic environments, reducing pollution, enhancing carbon storage, and managing coastal and river processes effectively.

Policy G1 (Green Infrastructure Design and Maintenance) emphasises the importance of incorporating green infrastructure into development schemes to enhance biodiversity and create functional spaces. The policy outlines key principles for green infrastructure design, including creating a multifunctional network that connects natural features, ensuring accessibility, integrating sustainable drainage and blue infrastructure, promoting climate resilience, and prioritising pollinator-friendly planting. It highlights the integration of street trees and greening while respecting the historic environment. The policy also emphasises the provision of well-proportioned gardens or communal green spaces, long-term management and maintenance of green infrastructure, and the inclusion of bird and bat boxes and bee bricks which are tailored to habitat conditions.

While meeting these imperatives, the following statements demonstrate the way in which green infrastructure (GI) has been incorporated into development.

Background

Green infrastructure refers to the planned network of natural and semi-natural spaces, features, and systems within an urban area. Its purpose is to provide a range of environmental, social, and economic benefits to communities. When applied to a small development, green infrastructure can play a crucial role in enhancing the overall sustainability and liveability of the area by promoting ecological and biodiversity gains.

In the context of this proposal, green infrastructure can be implemented in various ways to support the ecological and biodiversity objectives, and contribute to the overall ecological health of the area.

Firstly, providing dedicated green space within and around the site can serve as habitats for local flora and fauna. By including native planting, the development can attract and support a diverse range of pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Additionally, bird boxes and bat roosts could be installed to provide nesting opportunities, helping to enhance local bird and bat populations.

The conservation of existing trees, hedges, with the planting of additional trees in the development, will create a more resilient and diverse environment. Trees provide vital ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration, air purification, and shade, while also providing habitats for birds and insects. The presence of healthy trees can enhance the overall ecological balance of the site and contribute to the well-being of both humans and wildlife.

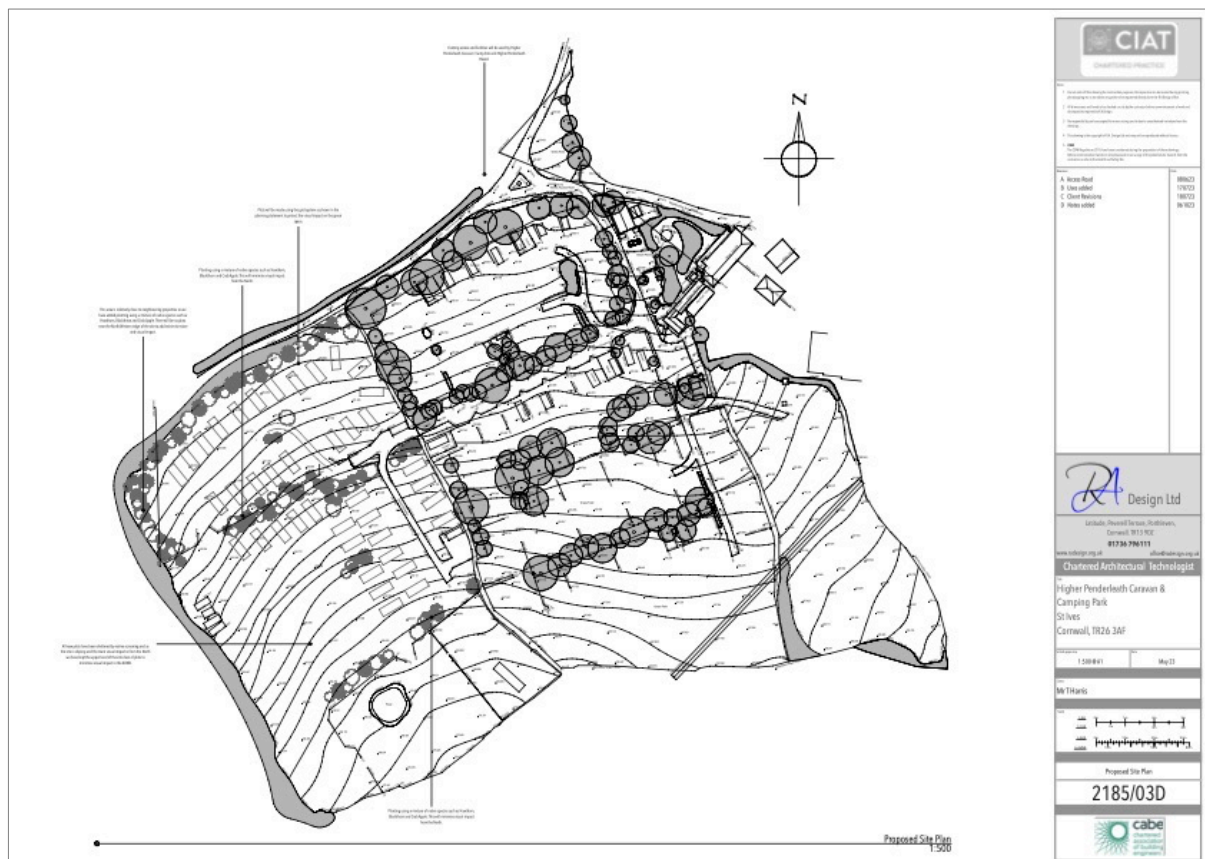


Figure 1: The application layout plan showing the introduction of landscaping across the site

GI Opportunities

- New trees or shrubs planted in suitable areas, including north boundaries, and at intervals across the site with Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Crab Apple.
- Underplanting of existing hedges, comprising species such as Hazel, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Oak, Willow, Rowan, Spindle and Crab Apple.
- If suitable structures are available, bat boxes can be installed on south, south-east and south-westerly aspects, to face the sun, at least 2m above ground level.
- If suitable structures are available, bird boxes can be installed between northern and eastern aspects, avoiding direct sunlight, at least 2m above ground level.
- Areas across the site can be sowed with flowering seed mix for a richer more diverse habitat.

- Native pollinator plants provided in open areas and in the fringes of the site to attract invertebrates which will in turn attract other species which prey upon them.
- Hedgerows will benefit ongoing management which will conserve and support the existing dense, vegetation rich structures.

Conclusion

The proposal has been considered whilst following the '10 pillars for action', which aim to help nature regenerate, and to provide the natural foundations for a green recovery, as set out by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership.

Integration of these green infrastructure measures within the proposed development will provide environmental benefits, fostering ecological and biodiversity gains, and enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents.

Through incorporating the green amenity spaces, the additional native planting, and other habitat features, the development creates opportunities for wildlife, promotes biodiversity, and contributes to the overall ecological health of the area.