

# Ecological Assessment



**Pontfaen Road, Lampeter**

**9<sup>th</sup> November 2021**



**Tyler  
Grange**

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# Summary

- S.1. Tyler Grange Group Ltd was instructed by Aldi Stores Ltd in October 2020 to undertake an Ecological Assessment of a parcel of land off Pontfaen Road, Lampeter, SA48 7JL, hereafter referred to as the site.
- S.2. The site comprises an existing sports ground with two pitches and associated hardstanding access road, parking and pavilion. The boundaries are formed by hedgerows on the northern, eastern and southern boundary. Scattered trees are also present. The hedgerows and trees are of local ecological importance with the grassland, buildings and hardstanding of negligible ecological importance.
- S.3. Aldi Stores Limited and University of Wales Trinity Saint David have submitted planning application for the erection of a Class A1 retail Aldi foodstore, the refurbishment of a Grade II listed sports pavilion, the installation of three pre-fabricated wooden exhibition pods and a nature and biodiversity area with associated access, car parking and landscaping to Ceredigion County Council. The application also includes Listed Building Consent involved with the refurbishment of the listed pavilion
- S.4. The site is not covered by or adjacent to any statutorily or non-statutorily designated sites, although a number of such sites are present within the potential Zone of Influence of the development. This includes the River Teifi Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is connected to the site by a watercourse which is located adjacent to the western boundary of the site. The proposals will include measures to ensure no contaminated run-off can enter the watercourse both through the construction and operational phase of the development. This would be through the adoption and implementation of a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) and through the design of the SuDS. A shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (including a Phosphate calculation) has also been undertaken to ensure the proposals do not increase any Phosphates within the SAC (refer to separate shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)) from increased sewage at the local sewage treatment works.
- S.5. The site has limited potential to support protected and notable species specifically roosting/foraging bats and nesting/foraging birds. A bat emergence survey would be completed on the pavilion to ensure no roosts would be impacted by the restoration works to this structure. This would be completed in the 2022 survey season with the results submitted as an Addendum prior to determination of this element of the application. Should a roost be present then, depending on the potential for effects, works would be either covered by a Natural Resources Wales Bat Mitigation Licence or a Precautionary Working Method Statement to ensure that no breach in legislation occurs.
- S.6. The proposals seek to retain and protect the hedgerows and trees which are the habitats of highest ecological importance. New native hedgerow and tree planting will be provided along with ornamental shrub which will ensure the scheme provides new habitats of value for bats, birds and invertebrates. In addition, the provision of bat and bird boxes would provide ecological enhancements at the site, leading to biodiversity gains and improved opportunities for UK and local Priority Species.



- S.7. A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) would ensure retained and created habitats are managed favourably to maximise their benefit to wildlife and to provide continued opportunities for the species which could utilise the site.
- S.8. With the implementation of the recommended mitigation and enhancement strategy described, the proposed development would be in conformity with relevant planning policy and legislation, as set out at Appendix 1. The strategy could be controlled by appropriately worded planning controls



# Section 1: Introduction and Methodology

## Introduction

- 1.1. Tyler Grange Ltd were instructed by Aldi Stores Ltd in October 2021 to undertake an Ecological Assessment of an existing sports facility located off Pontfaen Road, Lampeter, SA48 7JL (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The site is centred on National Grid Reference SN 57320 48156.
- 1.2. The site comprises an existing sports ground with two pitches and associated hardstanding access road, parking and pavilion with changing rooms. The boundaries are formed by hedgerows on the northern and southern boundary. A wooded stream corridor is on the western boundary. Scattered trees are also present. The hedgerows, woodland and trees are of local ecological importance with the grassland, buildings and hardstanding of negligible ecological importance.
- 1.3. Aldi Stores Limited and University of Wales Trinity Saint David have submitted planning application for the erection of a Class A1 retail Aldi foodstore, the refurbishment of a Grade II listed sports pavilion, the installation of three pre-fabricated wooden exhibition pods and a nature and biodiversity area with associated access, car parking and landscaping to Ceredigion County Council. The application also includes Listed Building Consent involved with the refurbishment of the listed pavilion
- 1.4. The purpose of this report is to:
  - Use available background data and results of field surveys, describe and evaluate the ecological resources present within the likely 'zone of influence' (Zoi) of the proposed development;
  - Assess ecological issues and opportunities as a result of development; and
  - Where appropriate, describe mitigation and enhancement proposals, together with planning controls to ensure their delivery and conformity with relevant policy and legislation.

## Context

- 1.5. The site forms part of a college playing field located to the south of Pontfaen Road. Residential housing, commercial properties and hard standing lie to the north and east, a leisure centre with amenity grassland to the south and a wooded stream and arable fields to the west. Further afield the habitats comprise of residential areas, the town of Lampeter and farmland.

## Methodology

- 1.6. This Ecological Assessment has been informed by the following, with detailed methods provided at Appendix 1:
  - Full desk study and records search;
  - Phase 1 habitat survey; and,
  - Bat surveys –assessment of buildings for roosting bat including internal and external.



- 1.7. The above scope of work has informed the description and assessment of importance of ecological features - in line with the 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment' published by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2019) - the consideration of opportunities and constraints to development, and mitigation and enhancement requirements to ensure conformity with legislation and policy (see Appendix 2). In addition, all work undertaken complies with British Standard's for Biodiversity – BS42020 (BSI Standards Publication 2013).

## **Quality Control**

- 1.8. This report has been through a technical review process, with the final sign off being undertaken by an Associate or Full member of CIEEM. All CIEEM members are bound to abide by the Institute's Code of Professional Conduct.



## Section 2: Ecological Features and Evaluation

- 2.1 Ecological features within the site are described below, together with an assessment of their importance using a geographical frame of reference advocated by CIEEM (2019).

### Designated Sites

- 2.2 The site is not covered by or adjacent to any statutory or non-statutory designation for nature conservation importance. However, several statutory designated sites are present in the study area, which are detailed **Table 2.1** below, including their ecological importance.





**Table 2.1:** Designated Sites within the Study Area

Site name and Designation	Site Details/Summary of Reason for Designation	Ecological Importance
River Teifi Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Special Area of Conservation (SAC); c. 0.65km southeast Annex I habitat of water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation.	International/ European
River Teifi Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); 0.65m southeast. River designated for both biological and geological importance. Wildlife rich supporting Atlantic salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> , otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> , various wetland birds and multi-fruited river moss <i>Cryphaea lamyana</i> .	National
Restored Ancient Woodland Site	16 restored ancient woodland sites lie within 2km, the closest being 0.54km north. These are broadleaved woodland believed to be continuous for over 400 years.	Local - Priority Habitats
Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site	18 plantation on ancient woodland sites lie within 2km, the closest being 0.52km northwest. These are woodlands believed to have been continuously wooded for over 400 years and have been replanted with native or non-native species, most commonly with conifers.	
Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category	Five ancient woodland sites of unknown categories lie within 2km, the closest being 0.73km southwest. These woodlands predominantly in transition where the existing tree cover is described as shrubs, young trees, felled or ground prepared for planting.	
NRW Priority Area (Woodland - PAWS)	18 woodland PAWS priority areas lie within 2km, the closest being 0.52km northwest. These are large scale areas which were prioritised for targeted conservation work, based on factors including the habitats within them.	

## Habitats and Flora

- 2.3 Habitats present within the site and adjacent to it, along with an assessment of their ecological importance are detailed in **Table 2.2** and shown on Habitat Features **Plan 13550/P05a**. Photographs of these habitats are provided in **Appendix 4**.



**Table 2.2:** Habitat Features

Habitat	Description and Importance	Ecological Importance
Building	A grade II listed pavilion (photograph 1) building built in 1909 is located within the survey boundary in the southern part of the site, adjacent to the southern boundary. It has imitation half timbering to the front and sides with hipped and plain-tiled roofs with moulded terra cotta chimneys and finials. It has single glazed small-pane casement windows. There is a central turret with bellcote, and an ogee Gothic window at the front. The building had unrendered plain stone to the rear and a red brick chimney. In addition there is a flat roof changing block to the south of the pavilion.	Negligible
Fence and wall	Wire fencing ran along the sites eastern and western boundaries. A stone wall was also present on the eastern boundary near to the northern gated entrance.	Negligible
Grassland (Amenity)	The majority of the site comprises amenity grassland used as sports pitches. The grassland has a very short sward managed by mowing and is dominated by common bent <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> with frequent Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i> and perennial ryegrass <i>Lolium perenne</i> and forbs including daisy <i>Bellis perennis</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> and groundsel <i>Senecio vulgaris</i> .  The margins of the grassland, alongside the hedgerows, were unmown at the time of survey and dominated by tall, rank grass species such as false oat-grass <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> and cock's-foot <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> with scattered common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> and bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> .	Negligible
Hedgerows	Species poor intact hedgerow (northern boundary) and species rich intact hedgerow with trees (southern boundary) are located within the site. The hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> with abundant blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> , hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> , beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> and sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> . Ground flora associated with these hedgerows comprise wood avens <i>Geum urbanum</i> and male fern <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> with barren strawberry <i>Potentilla sterilis</i> and ground ivy <i>Glechoma hederacea</i> present in the northern hedgerow, both of which are typically associated with woodlands.  The margins of the hedgerow comprised rank, poor semi-improved grassland	Local
Scrub	A small patch of bramble dominated dense scrub is located in the north western corner of the site.	Negligible
Semi-natural broadleaved woodland	Along the western boundary of the site is a strip of woodland adjacent to the Nant Creuddyn stream. It consisted predominantly of semi-mature sycamore which lined each side of the brook and contains additional woodland species such as bluebell <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> , enchanter's nightshade <i>Circaea lutetiana</i> and pignut <i>Conopodium majus</i> .	Local
Trees	A row of young to semi-mature horse chestnuts <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> are located alongside the northern boundary.  A distinctive row of seven large 'Robusta' hybrid black poplars <i>Populus x canadensis</i> are located along the western boundary.  Three mature ash trees are located along the southern boundary, with young specimens of ash and alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> also present.  Along the eastern boundary, three mature aspen <i>Populus tremula</i> are present.	Site - Young to semi-mature trees  Local - Mature trees
Invasive Species	Invasive species recorded have been identified in small quantities along the western survey boundary including Himalayan balsam <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> , Himalayan cotoneaster <i>Cotoneaster simonsii</i> and yellow archangel <i>Lamium galeobdolon</i> subsp. <i>Argentatum</i> .	Negligible
Other Habitats	A section of wall within the north eastern corner of the site supports the ferns wall-rue <i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i> and rusty-back fern <i>Asplenium ceterac</i> as well as ivy-leaved toadflax <i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> and keel-fruited corn salad <i>Valerianella carinata</i> . The invasive non-native species wall cotoneaster <i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i> is growing draped across this wall.  Wire fencing ran along the sites eastern and western boundaries.  Areas of bare ground are scattered throughout the site, especially on the sports pitches.  Log and brush piles and grass clippings (photograph 14) are located within the northern, western and southern hedgerows.	Negligible



## Fauna

2.4 Records of protected and priority fauna held by West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre (WWBIC) for the study area as well as the results of previous survey work is detailed below.

**Table 2.3** Fauna confirmed or with potential to be present on site

Species/ Group	Data Search	Potential onsite	Ecological Importance
Badgers	No records of badger <i>Meles meles</i> on or within 2km of the site.	No evidence directly attributed to badger was seen during the survey. The grassland, woodland and hedgerows are likely to be used as part of the wider foraging resource.	Negligible
Bats	Record centre returned records of brown long-eared bat <i>Plecotus auratus</i> , common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> , soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> , Daubenton's bat <i>Myotis daubentonii</i> and noctule <i>Nyctalus noctule</i> .  The closest record returned from the biological records centre was 0.11km north of the site.  According to the MAGIC website, no EPS licence searches were granted within 2km of the site.	The trees on site ranged from negligible to high roost potential. No further surveys were completed as all trees with Moderate to High potential are to be retained.  The Pavilion was assessed as having "Low/Moderate" roost potential with the associated changing block of "Low" potential. A single further emergence survey would be completed to confirm roost status prior to works commencing. This would be submitted as an Addenda to the Ecological Assessment.  The wooded stream corridor along the western boundary of the site provides a potential commuting/foraging corridor for bats with the hedgerows and trees providing additional foraging/commuting habitat.	Local
Birds	Red listed Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) including willow tit <i>Poecile montana</i> , song thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i> , starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> and wood warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i> , the closest being 0.51km north.  Amber listed BOCC including kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i> , dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i> , kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> and osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> , the closest being 0.41km north.	The red listed BOCC house sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i> was recorded onsite during surveying adjacent to the hedgerow on the northern boundary.  The listed pavilion contains chimneys and the central bellcote turret which is open on all sides, allowing easy access by breeding birds. Two swallow nests were recorded under the recessed entrance to the front of the Pavilion. A probable blackbird nest was recorded within the housing of the sliding door on the western elevation of the changing rooms block.  Potential for common and widespread garden and farmland birds including some declining species in the hedgerow and in the offsite embankment. Potential for ground nesting birds is limited by the enclosed nature and small size of the site.	Local
Dormouse	WWBIC does not hold any records of dormice <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i> within 1km of the wider site.	The woodland had limited understorey vegetation and hedgerows were intensively managed. As such the presence of this species was considered unlikely.	Negligible
Great Crested Newt (GCN)	No records for great crested newt (GCN) <i>Triturus cristatus</i> were returned from the biological records centre. No records of EPS licences from Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the countryside (MAGIC) website.  No common toad <i>Bufo bufo</i> records were returned on or within 2km of the site.	One pond is located 139m south of the site however it was inaccessible at the time of surveying.  The grassland within the site is sub-optimal GCN habitat, lacking in structural diversity with bare patches of earth present; the hedgerows are optimal habitat although isolated and only connected to the south along the Nant Creuddyn stream. The Nant Creuddyn stream and the adjacent busy Pontfaen Road provide a barrier to dispersal to the north and west.	Negligible
Invertebrates	No notable invertebrates were recorded within the desk study.	The well managed and species-poor nature of the habitats within the site means they are unlikely to be of importance to invertebrates.  The off site woodland and boundary hedgerows would be expected to have more potential to be used.	Negligible
Otter	17 records for otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> were returned with the closest being 0.57km west of the site.	Whilst there are no water courses onsite, the Nant Creuddyn stream adjacent to the western boundary of the site is likely to be used by otters. The main site however had no suitability for this species.	N/A
Reptiles	No records of reptiles within 2km of the site have been returned from the biological records centre.	There is limited potential for common reptile species as the grassland lacks tussocks and cover, the hedgerow is isolated and the site is bounded by roads providing a minor barrier to dispersal.  Reptiles are considered absent from the site.	Local



Species /Group	Data Search	Potential onsite	Ecological Importance
Water vole	Four records of water vole <i>Arvicola amphibius</i> were returned from the biological records centre, with the closest being 1.07km northwest of the site.	Whilst there are no water courses onsite, the Nant Creuddyn stream adjacent to the western boundary of the site may be used by water vole. There are no habitats suitable for this species within the redline boundary.	N/A
Other species	Three records for brown hare <i>Lepus europaeus</i> were returned by the biological records centre, with the closest being 0.94km northwest of the site  No other records of protected/ priority fauna were returned.	The amenity value of the site is not considered suitable for brown hare and none were seen during the site walkover.	Negligible
	Four records for west European hedgehog were returned with the closest being 0.45km northeast of the site.	The hedgerow and embankment vegetation onsite could provide foraging habitat for West European hedgehog however none have been recorded onsite.	Negligible



# Section 3: Potential Impacts, Mitigation and Enhancement

## Proposals

- 3.1 Aldi Stores Limited and University of Wales Trinity Saint David have submitted planning application for the erection of a Class A1 retail Aldi foodstore, the refurbishment of a Grade II listed sports pavilion, the installation of three pre-fabricated wooden exhibition pods and a nature and biodiversity area with associated access, car parking and landscaping to Ceredigion County Council. The application also includes Listed Building Consent involved with the refurbishment of the listed pavilion
- 3.2 The proposals will include the retention and protection of hedgerows, woodland corridor and the majority of trees. The scheme will seek to increase biodiversity and enhance opportunities for wildlife post development in line with relevant policy. This will be achieved through new landscape and tree planting which will comprise a mix of native species and those of known wildlife importance that will seek to provide a net gain in biodiversity post-development.

## Potential Impacts, Mitigation and Enhancement

- 3.3 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 gives the importance of conserving biodiversity a statutory basis, requiring government departments (which includes Local Planning Authorities) to have regard for biodiversity in carrying out their obligations (which includes determination of planning applications) and to take positive steps to further the conservation of listed species and habitats. In addition, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires the Welsh Ministers to identify living organisms and types of habitats of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales. In exercising their functions under this section, the Welsh Ministers must apply the principles of sustainable management of natural resources. These articles of legislation require Ceredigion County Council to take measures to protect species or habitats from the adverse effects of development, where appropriate, by using planning conditions or obligations.
- 3.4 Where there are potential impacts in the construction and/or operational phases of the development to the ecological features described and evaluated in Section 2, these are described below. Where potential impacts would cause a breach in legislation or planning policy (as set out in **Appendix 2**), the requirement for mitigation is noted.
- 3.5 The mitigation and enhancement strategy would be controlled through the implementation of the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), to maximise the biodiversity potential of the created habitats and a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP), to protect retained habitats and the adjacent watercourse.



## Designated Sites

### Statutory Sites

- 3.6 With regards to the River Teifi SAC and SSSI the proposals for construction of a ALDI store would not directly cause an impact on the Annex I habitat within the designated site nor the species listed in the SSSI citation. The store location is separated from the proposed development by extensive areas of agricultural land. There is however potential for contaminants from construction to enter the watercourse along the Nant Creuddyn stream, which is located on the western boundary of the site and is hydrologically connected to the River Teifi. This is however buffered from the construction area by the existing and retained sports field (located c.140m from the development area for the supermarket). Nonetheless standard best practice construction safeguards will take place, such as those in relation to noise, dust and contaminated run-off which would be detailed within a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP).
- 3.7 With regards to any potential increases in Phosphates within the SAC a separate shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (sHRA) has been completed which has concluded that the discharge threshold of Phosphates deemed to be sufficient to cause an impact to the SAC would not be exceeded.

### Non-statutory Sites

- 3.8 The nearest non-statutory site is c.500m north west comprising woodland Priority Areas. Given the distances involved, and the fact that no direct habitat links are present, the development is not anticipated to have any adverse effects on non-statutory sites.

### Habitats and Flora

- 3.9 The proposals will result in the loss of amenity grassland, hardstanding and three trees negligible to local ecological importance. The proposals include the provision of wildflower meadow/tussocky grassland margins, native, shrub, hedgerows, scattered trees and SuDS which will compensate for the loss and provide habitats which are greater biodiversity value at the local level within the site. This will seek to provide a net gain in biodiversity. In addition, mitigation and compensation measures are provided that will help to provide enhancements in wildlife and biodiversity post-development. A summary of the proposals is provided on the Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (Plan 13550/P06a).
- 3.10 Retained trees, woodland and hedgerows on and adjacent to the site will be protected from accidental damage during construction works, with suitable root protection fencing, in line with BS 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations'.
- 3.11 Himalayan balsam, cotoneaster and yellow archangel, all Schedule 9 species, are present within the woodland on the western boundary of the site. Under the WCA, 1981, as amended, it is an offence to 'allow such species to escape into the wild, be planted or otherwise cause to grow'. Construction activities are located away from these plants. Measures would be included within



the LEMP to remove and manage these species under the guidance of a specialist contractor. Precautionary methods would also be included within the CEMP.

- 3.12 The proposals will therefore seek to provide better quality habitats which are of known value for wildlife and with greater ecological importance than that which is currently within the site boundary. Ongoing management of these habitats to maximise their importance to wildlife, where appropriate, will be detailed within the updated LEMP. The scheme would therefore be in-line with national and local planning policy (see **Appendix 2**).

## **Fauna**

### **Badger**

- 3.13 No evidence of badger has been recorded within the site, although it is probable that badger could utilise the site for foraging on occasion.
- 3.14 Given the dynamic nature of badgers, which can result in new setts being created, updated surveys are recommended to record the levels of any badger activity prior to any construction commencing. In the event any active setts are recorded within the site and could be impacted upon by the proposals, either directly or indirectly, a mitigation strategy would be devised prior to the commencement of works, and if necessary, a licence obtained from Natural Resources Wales (NRW).
- 3.15 Protection measures during construction will include briefing all contractors working on the site regarding the potential presence of badgers and any trenches or deep pits that are to be left open overnight will be capped or provided with a means of escape should a badger enter, such as a roughened plank of wood placed in the trench as a ramp to the surface. This will also avoid impacts to any other small or medium sized mammals. Protection measures covering the storage of fuel/oil/chemicals and fires will also be detailed.
- 3.16 Overall opportunities for badger will be retained within site as well as the wider site. The retention of the existing woodland adjacent to the site, creation of new hedges and creation of wildflower grassland, foraging habitat would be maintained.

### **Bats**

- 3.17 No trees with potential to support roosting bats would be directly affected by the proposed development. The pavilion would be renovated and restored as part of the university's improvements to the site. To ensure that no bat roosts are impacted on by the restoration works an emergence survey would be completed in the 2022 survey season. The results of which would be submitted as an Addendum report prior to determination of this element of the application. Should this identify a roost then the renovation works would either be covered by a NRW Bat Mitigation Licence or be completed under a Precautionary Working Method Statement to ensure that no legislation is breached.
- 3.18 Loss of amenity grassland, hardstanding and three trees would not cause an impact to foraging bats. The wooded stream corridor, hedgerows and mature trees would be retained and protected.
- 3.19 A sensitive lighting strategy has been designed to prevent an increase in light levels on the wooded stream corridor on the western boundary of the site. The lighting design adopts the



following design measures (as required) as detailed in Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2018):

- Alter the beam angle of any proposed lamps or use composite LED units to enable parts of the unit to be turned off to direct the light beam to a specific area;
- The use of cool white light (4000K) LED lamps in preference to high-pressure sodium or mercury lamps for external lighting;
- Careful consideration to the height of the lighting column to ensure minimal light spill;
- Lighting will be directed to where it is needed thereby avoiding light spillage and any upward lighting will be minimal to avoid light pollution;
- Increase spacing between light columns to allow bats to fly within the dark area between lights.

3.20 During the construction period no lighting would be left on during the night and any security lighting would be low-level and motion activated on short-timers. This would additionally be sited away from the boundary vegetation where possible.

3.21 Post-development, new native shrub planting, trees, hedgerow and wildflower meadow/SUDS will provide additional foraging and commuting habitat for bats post-development.

3.22 To create a post-development enhancement for bats, a variety of bat boxes (totalling six) would be installed in suitable locations on retained trees on or immediately adjacent to the site (as this is within the same ownership, within the wider site), to be confirmed by an ecologist on site. Details would be confirmed within the updated LEMP.

3.23 Overall, it is considered that the measures detailed will maintain and improve existing opportunities for foraging and commuting bats and will create additional features of importance post-development.

## **Birds**

3.24 With the retention of the woodland, scrub and hedgerow, impacts to nesting birds would be minimised. With the creation of new trees, shrub and hedgerow planting there will be an overall increase in nesting and foraging habitat for birds post development. There may, however, be some partial displacement though this is considered to be insignificant especially given the areas of new planting proposed and the extent of suitable habitat in the wider area that will remain unaffected by the proposals.

3.25 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are afforded protection under the WCA 1981 (as amended). In order to avoid a breach in the legislation, renovation of the buildings and removal of suitable nesting habitat, such as trees should be undertaken between October and February (outside the recognised core nesting bird season). Should this not be possible, a thorough search of the vegetation would need to be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately prior to vegetation removal, to check for signs of active bird nests. If an active nest is found to be present, an appropriate buffer will need to be retained until the young have fledged and the nest is no longer active, as confirmed by an ecologist.





- 3.26 To create a post-development enhancement for birds, a variety of nesting boxes (totalling six) would be installed in suitable locations on retained trees on or immediately adjacent to the site (as this is within the same ownership, within the wider site), to be confirmed by an ecologist on site. Details would be confirmed within the LEMP, expected to be updated, controlled by planning condition.

### **Invertebrates**

- 3.27 The proposals will result in the loss of amenity grassland which is of negligible importance to invertebrates. The habitats likely to be of greatest importance to notable invertebrate species such as small heath and cinnabar including the woodland and scrub would be retained. This along with the proposed wildflower grassland/SUDS and native hedgerow and shrub including the ornamental planting, will compensate for the losses involved and create new habitats of importance for this faunal group.
- 3.28 Any felled/coppiced wood will be left in piles for saproxylic invertebrates within the woodland to provide an ecological enhancement.

### **Other Species**

- 3.29 Regard will be had for any other protected or notable species that may be present within the site and in particular, hedgehog, a UK Priority Species, which could be affected during the construction phase, if present. Prior to site clearance work, any obvious piles of leaves or brash will be cleared by hand and should any hedgehogs be found, they will be carefully moved by hand to other areas of suitable habitat, away from the proposed development.
- 3.30 Post-development new areas of wildflower grassland, hedgerow and shrub planting will provide improved opportunities for hedgehogs.



## Section 4: Conclusion

- 4.1 No adverse impacts to any statutory or non-statutory designated sites are anticipated as a result of the proposed development.
- 4.2 In order to compensate for loss of habitats and to deliver a biodiversity net gain the scheme has been designed to include a landscape planting scheme which would provide native species and those that would benefit wildlife.
- 4.3 The site is considered to provide opportunities to foraging badgers, foraging and commuting bats, nesting and foraging birds and hedgehog. These opportunities will remain in the medium to long-term following the compensatory planting, and enhancements to the biodiversity value of the site for these species are possible through the provision of bat and bird boxes, as well as habitats to be created.
- 4.4 With the implementation of the mitigation and enhancement strategy described in this assessment, along with the results of the bat survey which will be provided in an Addendum, it is considered that the proposed development would be in conformity with relevant policy and legislation, as set out in **Appendix 2**.
- 4.5 The mitigation and enhancement strategy could be controlled by and the implementation of a CEMP and LEMP.



## References

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Eaton MA, Brown AF, Noble DG, Musgrove AJ, Hearn R, Aebischer NJ, Gibbons DW, Evans A and Gregory RD (2009). *Birds of Conservation Concern 3: the population status of birds in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.* British Birds 102, pp296–341. BoCC

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit.* JNCC, Peterborough

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Interactive maps, available online at: <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk>



# Appendix 1: Proposals



# PROPOSED MASTERPLAN



# Appendix 2: Legislation and Planning Policy

## Legislative Context

- A2.1. Specific habitats and species receive legal protection in the UK under various pieces of legislation, including:
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended);
  - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
  - The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000;
  - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006;
  - The Hedgerows Regulations 1997; and
  - The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.
- A2.2. The European Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna, 1992, often referred to as the 'Habitats Directive', provides for the protection of key habitats and species considered of European importance. Annexes II and IV of the Directive list all species considered of community interest. The legal framework to protect the species covered by the Habitats Directive has been enacted under UK law through The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- A2.3. In Britain, the WCA 1981 (as amended) is the primary legislation protecting habitats and species. SSSIs, representing the best examples of our natural heritage, are notified under the WCA 1981 (as amended) by reason of their flora, fauna, geology or other features. All breeding birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Act, which makes it illegal to knowingly damage or destroy the nest site during the nesting season. Schedules 1, 5 and 8 afford protection to individual birds, other animals and plants.
- A2.4. Schedule 12 of the CRoW Act 2000 strengthens the species enforcement provisions of the WCA 1981 (as amended) by the introduction of a new offence of 'reckless' disturbance of certain listed birds and animals at their place of rest or shelter.

### *The Environment (Wales) Act 2016*

- A2.5. This piece of legislation is to plan and manage Wales's natural resources. The key area that is relevant to the proposals relates to the sustainable management of the Welsh Natural Resources, the principles of which are outlined below:
- Building resilience-A resilient ecosystem is one that is healthy and functions in a way that is able to address pressures and demands placed on it and is able to deliver benefits over the long term to meet current social, economic and environmental needs.
  - Managing multiple benefits -Our ecosystems provide us with a wide range of services and benefits. We need to take all of these into account when we make decisions about how we



use them, so that they provide multiple benefits for the long term. This includes taking into account their intrinsic value.

- Adaptive management -Ecosystem processes and functions are complex and variable, and our approach will be adaptive with a focus on active learning derived from monitoring and outcomes and taking into account the time lags and feedback times for ecosystems to respond to interventions. It is about 'learning by doing'.
- Long term -It is also important to take account of the short, medium and long-term consequences of actions, and consider time lags and feedback times for ecosystems to respond to any interventions.
- Evidence -This means gathering information and considering all the social, economic and environmental evidence (including evidence in respect of uncertainties) from a wide range of experts and stakeholders at the local, regional and national level as appropriate, both to identify priorities and opportunities for their management and also in delivering the management actions.
- Collaboration and co-operation -It is about having a two-way communication across local, regional, national and international levels and being interconnected between policy, process and people to break down silo ways of working. This approach supports the development and implementation of the new, innovative solutions that are needed.
- Working at the right scale -An ecosystem is a functioning unit that can operate at any scale depending on the problem or issue being addressed.

## National Planning Policy

*Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11*

A2.6. Chapter 6 of the PPW (Distinctive and Natural Places) includes the following commitments and what they relate to where they are applicable to this site:

- 6.2: Green Infrastructure – The planning system should protect and enhance green infrastructure assets and networks because of [their] multi-functional roles. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity must be carefully considered as part of green infrastructure provision...The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development.
- 6.4: Biodiversity and Ecological Networks – Promoting biodiversity by enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty (as set out in The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Nature Recovery Action Plan supports this legislative requirement to reverse the decline in biodiversity, address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and increase the resilience of ecosystems.
- Development plan strategies, policies and development proposals must consider the need to:
  - support the conservation of biodiversity, in particular the conservation of wildlife and habitats;



- ensure action in Wales contributes to meeting international responsibilities and obligations for biodiversity and habitats;
  - ensure statutorily and non-statutorily designated sites are properly protected and managed;
  - safeguard protected and priority species and existing biodiversity assets from impacts which directly affect their nature conservation; interests and compromise the resilience of ecological networks and the components which underpin them, such as water and soil, including peat; and
  - secure enhancement of and improvements to ecosystem resilience by improving diversity, condition, extent and connectivity of ecological networks.
- Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (Section 6 Duty) – Planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity. In doing so planning authorities must also take account of and promote the resilience of ecosystems.
  - Designated sites - Planning authorities must have regard to the relative significance of international, national and local designations in considering the weight to be attached to nature conservation interests.
  - Protection and Management of Designated Sites - Statutorily designated sites must be protected from damage and deterioration, with their important features conserved and enhanced by appropriate management.
  - Maintaining and Enhancing Biodiversity - Planning authorities must follow a stepwise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity and build resilient ecological networks by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for; enhancement must be secured wherever possible.
  - Protected species - The presence of a species protected under European or UK legislation, or under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in disturbance or harm to the species or its habitat and to ensure that the range and population of the species is sustained.
  - Trees, woodlands and hedgerows - Planning authorities should protect trees, hedgerows, groups of trees/...woodland where they have ecological value, contribute to the character or amenity...or perform a beneficial...green infrastructure function.

*Technical Advice Note 5 (TAN 5), Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)*

A2.7. The purpose of Technical Advice Note (Wales) 5 (TAN5) is to supplement the information provided in PPW. This provides advice for local planning authorities on:

- The key principles of positive planning for nature conservation;
- Nature conservation and Local Development Plans;





- Nature conservation in development management procedures;
- Development affecting protected internationally and nationally designated sites and habitats; and
- Development affecting protected and priority habitats and species.

## Local Planning Policy

### *Ceredigion Local Development Plan 2007-2022 (Adopted April 2013)*

- A2.8. Policy DM14: Nature Conservation and Ecological Connectivity Development will be permitted where it protects and, where possible, enhances biodiversity, geodiversity and ecological connectivity across Ceredigion, including local sites and local priority species and habitats. Where it is appropriate to the scale and location of the development and opportunities exist, development should incorporate nature conservation education and access, providing the site's ecological or geological integrity can be safeguarded.
- A2.9. Policy DM15: Local Biodiversity Conservation Development will be permitted where: 1. A step-wise approach is adopted to ensure there will be no significant negative effects to biodiversity and ecological connectivity both on-site and off-site; 2. Appropriate species, habitats and wildlife corridor/stepping stone enhancements have been incorporated into the development through good landscape and building design, or where applicable will be carried out offsite; 3. With regard to developments affecting LNRs, sites that meet SINC criteria and priority species and habitats, there is an overriding social, economic or environmental need for the development that outweighs the losses to biodiversity (after mitigation), the development could not reasonably be located elsewhere and these losses can be readily and fully compensated within the local area; and 4. Where necessary, management plans are produced and agreed with the LPA and developments phased to take into account mitigation and compensation measures.
- A2.10. Policy DM20: Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands Development will be permitted providing: 1. it would not remove, damage or destroy trees, hedgerows or woodlands of visual, ecological, historic, cultural or amenity value unless the need of the proposed development outweighs these values; 2. it is able to mitigate or if necessary compensate for any negative impacts of the loss or damage; 3. it would achieve appropriate biodiversity gain; and 4. compensation and enhancement measures are mainly native species of local provenance and are not non-native invasive species.

### *Emerging Ceredigion Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033 (in consultation)*

- A2.11. Objective 12: To prevent loss of and enhance biodiversity and its connectivity across Ceredigion, including local priority species and habitats, whilst improving the enjoyment and understanding of biodiversity by encouraging access to sites of conservation interest; providing their ecological integrity can be safeguarded.

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## Appendix 3: Survey Methodology and Bat Survey Results

- A3.1. The PRA survey was undertaken in accordance with guidance (Collins; 2016) on the 27 September 2021 by Lee Bullingham-Taylor, an experienced ecologist and bat surveyor (Natural Resources Wales EPS Survey Licence – Licence No. SO87672/1).
- A3.2. Externally, the buildings were inspected from the ground, utilising binoculars, an extendable mirror and a high-powered torch. The external inspection focussed on identifying features suitable for bats to gain access to potentially suitable roosting areas. This included gaps within broken, missing and slipped roofing tiles, under lifted lead flashing, behind fascias and holes within damaged cladding in canopy joining both buildings etc. The buildings were also inspected for the presence of nesting birds.
- A3.3. Evidence of bat use of the buildings was sought, including droppings, insect prey remains, urine splashes as well as live or dead bats.
- A3.4. The main trunks and boughs of each tree assessed were inspected closely from all sides (where possible) with binoculars enabling potential bat roost features to be recorded and assessed. Each tree was also searched for signs of occupancy by bats, such as staining, wear or scratches around entrance points, prey remains, bat droppings, noise or smell of bats etc., though recognising that these indicators are often difficult to observe.
- A3.5. The potential of the buildings and trees to support roosting bats was made using professional judgement, based on criteria described in guidance (Collins, 2016). The location and extent of the buildings and trees are shown below. They are located at approximate grid reference: SN 57266 48091.



**Figure 1:** Aerial image of the site showing the two buildings (1 = Grade II Listed Sports Pavilion and 2 = Changing Room Block) and trees



### **Building 1 – Grade II Listed Sports Pavilion**

- A3.6. This Grade II Listed Sports Pavilion is thought to date back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (c.1909). It's construction consists of imitation timbering to its front (north facing) and sides (east and west facing), with the presence of multi-pane casement glazing. The roofs are hipped, unlined and covered in plain tiles, with moulded terracotta chimneys and finials. A central turret with bellcote, and an ogee Gothic window are present to the upper level.
- A3.7. On the ground floor there is a recessed entrance to the front. This has three sets of double-leaf half-glazed doors flanked by multi-paned windows. Two gabled blocks are present either side of the recessed entrance, with paired windows and each end. The rear of the building is constructed from plain stone with three multi-paned windows and a red brick chimney above.

Refer to Photographs on following pages.





**Photograph 1:** Eastern elevation (side)



**Photograph 2:** Western elevation (side)





**Photograph 3:** Northern elevation (front)



**Photograph 4:** Southern elevation (rear)





**Photograph 5:** Central turret with bellcote



**Photograph 6:** Plain stone wall with red brick chimney





**Photograph 7:** Moulded terra cotta chimney



**Photograph 8:** Three multi-paned windows within stone built rear





**Photograph 9:** Recessed entrance to front



**Photograph 10:** Ogee Gothic window to upper level

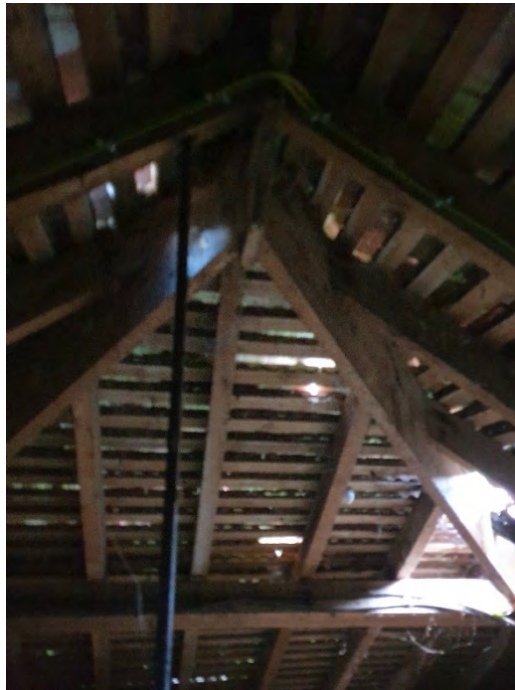


**Photograph 11:** Gabled blocks with paired windows either end of recessed entrance





## Internal Photographs of Grade II Listed Pavilion



**Photographs 12 to 14:** Loft above western section of pavilion – timber truss construction, unlined roof with high levels of light ingress and fluctuating temperatures observed.





**Photographs 15 to 16:** Room to west of main entrance





**Photograph 17:** Kitchen occupying the western gable block



**Photograph 18:** Paired window on eastern gable block

### **Building 2 – Changing Rooms Block**

A3.8. This consisted of a single-storey flat roof building housing changing rooms, showers, toilets, boiler room, cleaners store and maintenance store. It's construction is a mixture of rendered blockwork and brickwork walls, with a flat roof covered in felt and wooden fascias below. A large sliding wooden door is present on the western elevation, providing access into the maintenance store. It's northern elevation has a single wooden panel entrance door. The southern elevation lies adjacent to a hedgerow forming the site's southern boundary and has a number of vents, some in a poor state of repair. The building is joined to the Grade II Listed Sports Pavilion by a small section of roofing which is felted above and cladded beneath.

Refer to Photographs on following pages.



**Eastern Elevation (side)**



**Photograph 19 and 20:** Eastern elevation (side)



**Photograph 21:** Western elevation (side)





**Photograph 22:** Northern elevation (front)

### **Internal Photographs of the Changing Room Block**



**Photograph 23:** Fire retardant ceiling above hall elevation (front)





**Photograph 24:** Brick work and blockwork internal wall construction



**Photograph 25:** Ceiling of maintenance store





**Photograph 26:** Large sliding door in maintenance store



**Photograph 27:** Shower room



**Photograph 28:** Changing room



**Photograph 29:** Boiler room



## BCT classification

### Building 1 - Photographs of potential bat access points



Gap into void between small roof connecting building with adjacent Changing Rooms Block to the south and angled soffit box



Gaps created by lifted, missing and damaged roofing tiles on bellcote







Lifted leaf flashing at base of moulded terracotta chimney and gaps created by lifted, missing and damaged roofing tiles



Gap at end of ridge tile and lifted roofing tiles





Gap created by damaged soffit box in the corner where central entrance block meets main roof



## Building 2 - Photographs of potential bat access points



Hole in damaged wooden cladding on the underside of small roof connecting Building 1 and Building 2



Gap behind lengths of wooden fascia – mostly covered in cobwebs





Damaged wooden sliding door on the western elevation creating access into the maintenance store





Damaged vent to the rear (southern elevation) – note - doesn't provide entrance into the interior of the building

- A3.9. No droppings, or other evidence of roosting bats, was identified on the exterior of any of the buildings surveyed. Potential roosting features were therefore primarily associated with the gaps referred to above.
- A3.10. Based on the results of the PRA, an assessment of the potential suitability of the buildings for bats and nesting birds was made using the Bat Survey Guidelines (BCT, 2016) and professional judgement (see Table 1 below).

**Table 1:** Building suitability for bats and nesting birds

Building	Suitability / confirmed use	
	Bats	Nesting birds
Building 1 (Grade II Listed Sports Pavilion)	Low / Moderate	Present
Building 2 (Changing Rooms Block)	Low	Present

- A3.11. The following categories were used in order to provide a general rating and level of assessment for Building 1 and 2.





**Photographs 30 to 31:** Room to east of main entrance



**Table 2:** Tree assessment for roosting bats

<b>Trees highlighted for removal in proposal plan (refer to Appendix 1)</b>									
<b>Tree Species</b>	Number on plan	Approx. Height	Condition	Bat roost features				Evidence of bats	Roosting Potential
				Feature 1	Feature 2	Feature 3	Feature 4		
<b>Horse Chestnut</b>	T1	<10m	Moderate / semi-mature	-	-	-	-	None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE
<b>Horse Chestnut</b>	T2	<10m	Moderate / semi-mature	-	-	-	-	None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE
<b>Horse Chestnut</b>	T3	<10m	Moderate / semi-mature	Rot hole	-	-	-	None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE / LOW



Other trees assessed									
Tree Species	Number on plan	Approx. Height	Condition	Bat roost features				Evidence of bats	
				Feature 1	Feature 2	Feature 3	Feature 4		
<b>Poplar</b>	T4	>20m	Good / semi-mature	Ivy	-	-	-	None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE / LOW
<b>Poplar</b>	T5	>20m	Good / semi-mature	Ivy	-	-	-	None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE / LOW
<b>Poplar</b>	T6	>20m	Good / semi-mature	-	-	-	-	None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE
<b>Ash</b>	T7	>10m	Moderate / mature	Cavity	Rot hole	Broken branch		None recorded	MODERATE
<b>Alder</b>	T8	>10m	Poor / mature	Rot hole	Broken branch	Ivy		None recorded	MODERATE
<b>Ash</b>	T9	>10m	Poor / mature	Broken branch	Ivy			None recorded	LOW
<b>Ash</b>	T10	>10m	Poor / mature	Large vertical cavity	Rot hole	Split branch	Ivy	None recorded	MODERATE / HIGH
<b>Horse Chestnut</b>	T11	<10m	Moribund / semi-mature	Peeling bark				None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE / LOW
<b>Horse Chestnut</b>	T12	<10m	Dead / semi-mature	Peeling bark	Broken branch			None recorded	NEGLIGIBLE / LOW
<b>Horse Chestnut</b>	T13	<10m	Poor / semi-mature	Deep fissure	Broken branch	Peeling bark		None recorded	LOW





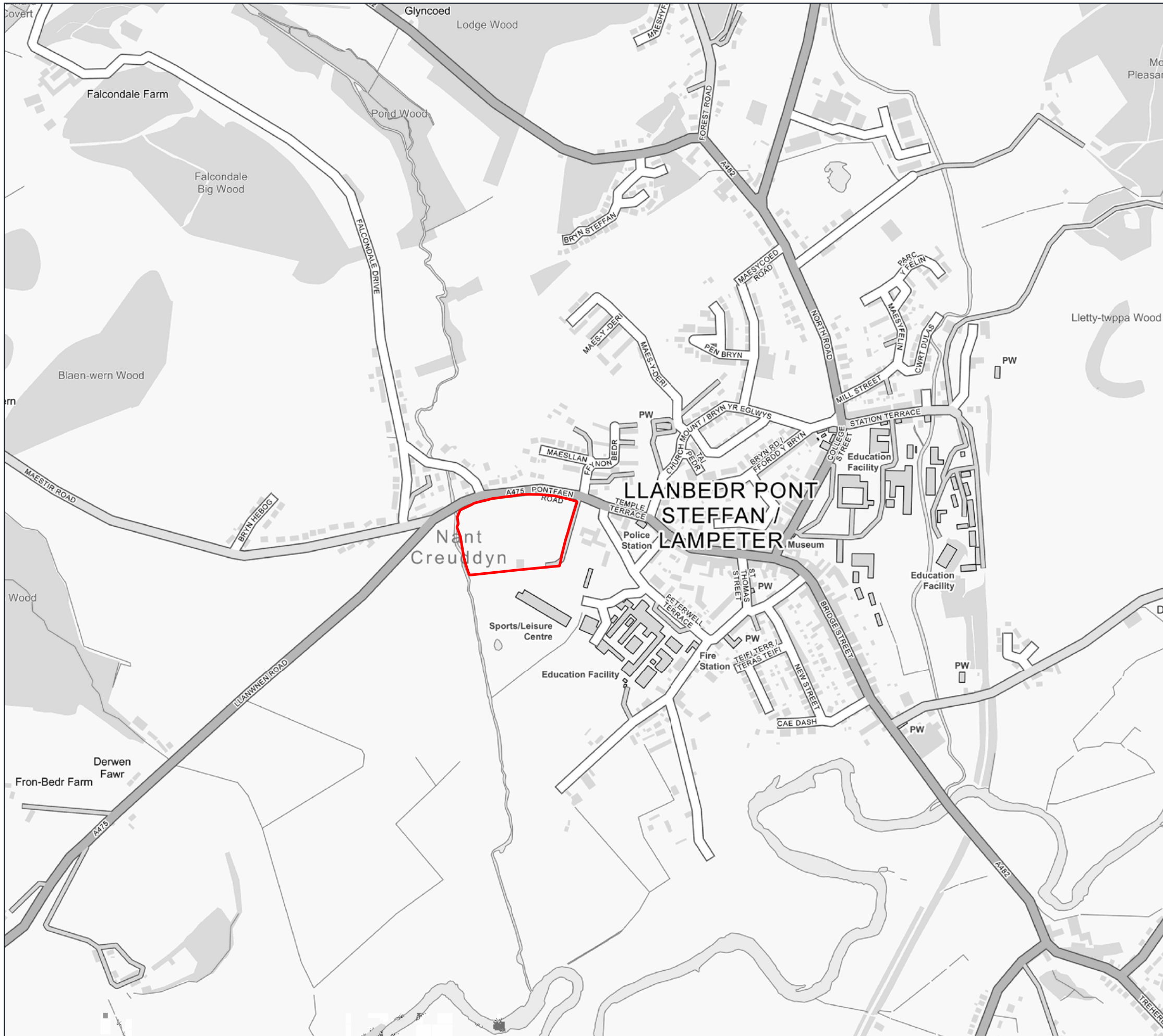
## Plans:

13550/P04: Site Location Plan

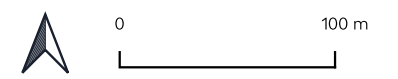
13550/P05a: Habitat Features Plan

13550/P06a: Opportunities and Constraints Plan





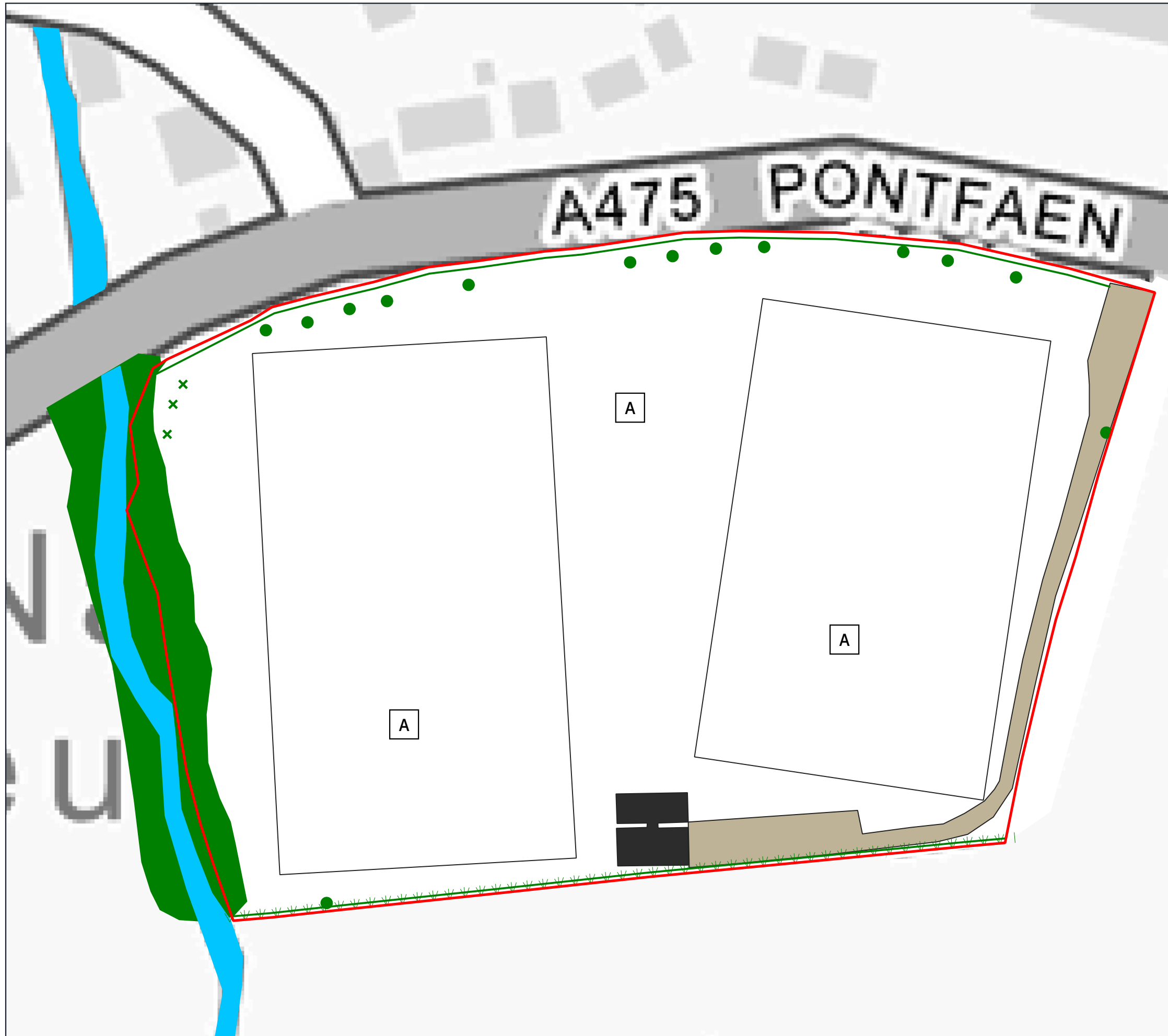
 Site Boundary



<b>Project</b>	Aldi Lampeter
<b>Drawing Title</b>	Site Location
<b>Scale</b>	As Shown (Approximate)
<b>Drawing No.</b>	13550/P04
<b>Date</b>	October 2021
<b>Checked</b>	TLR/JP



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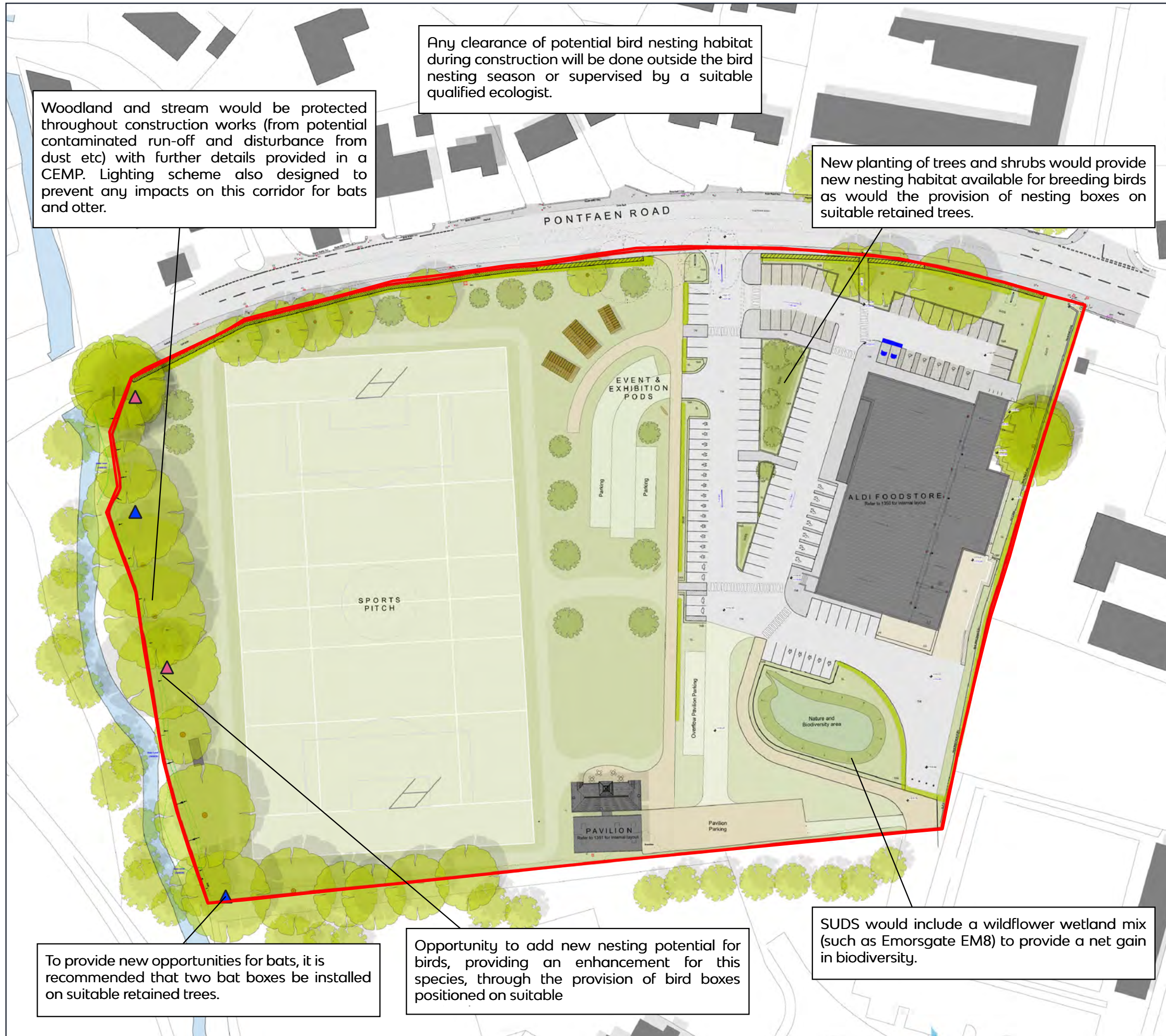
- Site Boundary
- A Amenity Grassland
- Building - Pavilion
- Hardstanding
- Stream
- Woodland
- Species Rich Hedgerow With Trees
- Intact Species Poor Hedgerow
- Trees
- x Scrub



<b>Project</b>	Aldi Lampeter
<b>Drawing Title</b>	Habitat Features
<b>Scale</b>	As Shown (Approximate)
<b>Drawing No.</b>	13550/P05a
<b>Date</b>	October 2021
<b>Checked</b>	TLR/JP



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- Site Boundary
- ▲ Bat Box
- ▲ Bird Box



<b>Project</b>	Aldi Lampeter
<b>Drawing Title</b>	Opportunities and Constraints
<b>Scale</b>	As Shown (Approximate)
<b>Drawing No.</b>	13550/P06a
<b>Date</b>	October 2021
<b>Checked</b>	TLR/JP



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