LIDL RISCA : COMMERCIAL STREET RISCA MIXED DEVELOPMENT NP11 6EE

## **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT**



30 January 2025 Rev 13 Feb 2025 Rev 26 Feb 2025

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#### **GREEN STRUCTURE STATEMEN**T

#### LIDL RISCA MIXED DEVELOPMENT : COMMERCIAL STREET : PONTYMISTER : RISCA. NP11 6AW

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the Green Infrastructure Statement for the existing LidI store and associated carpark to be developed as a residential development with a retail unit with residential above. The River Ebbw and the battered edge are southwest of the Site. To the south east of the Site is an undeveloped area woodland area and a dental practice. Commercial Street is northeast of the Site with a pocket park and war memorial and residential properties on the opposite side of the road. To the northwest is the Bethany Baptist Church and associated buildings and Risca RFC Building. Site access is from Commercial Street. It has a postal code NP11 6EE and grid reference ST 239902 and is referred to as the 'Site' in this document.

#### 2.0 TERMS

The definition of Green Infrastructure in Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales 12 February 2024 is

'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, 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'.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 provides a context for the delivery of multi-functional green infrastructure. Its provision can make a significant contribution to the sustainable management of natural resources. Green infrastructure is capable of providing several functions at the same time and as a result offers multiple benefits, for social, economic and cultural as well as environmental resilience and respond to challenges presented by the climate emergency.

A Step Wise Approach is required to be demonstrated in the Green Infrastructure Statement.

To assess impacts on habitats and species

Step 1 Avoid

Step 2 Minimise

Step 3 Mitigate/Restore

Step 4 Compensate on Site

Step 4 Compensate Off-Site

Steps 1-4 Using the DECCA Framework for all relevant steps that require enhancement

Step 5 Long Term Management Plan

These steps will indicate how Net-Benefit-for-Biodiversity is achieved.

Without an achievement Step 6 would result in a refusal for a development.

Mitigation' to mean 'measures taken to avoid or reduce negative impacts', as separate from 'compensation' meaning 'measures taken to make up for the loss of, or permanent damage to, biological resources through the provision of replacement areas'

#### 3.0 DOCUMENTS

Refer to the following documents as reference for the statement

• CA 2025-RMIX-01 Rev A Existing Features

- CA 2025-RMIX-02 Rev A Landscape Existing Features and Overlay
- CA 2025-RMIX-03 Rev E Landscape Proposals Overall
- PEA Plan Biodiverse Consulting February 2025)
- 2966 P412 B Proposed Site Plan

#### 4.0 EXISTING SITE DETAIL

The existing Site area is 6783m2 (0.68Hectares) and 1.67Acres.It is roughly rectangular and is currently a Lidl store with an associated carpark and boundary planting beds and a gated access off Commercial Street.

The north east boundary with Commercial Street is a low brick wall hooped metal railings curving in at the access road point which is near to the dental practice. The low wall and railings continue at the footpath edge to the Bethany Baptist Church with a pedestrian access near the church.

The southwest boundary is the fenced section at the rear of the store which also encloses the external plant area. There is a narrow strip of scrub between the fence and retaining wall at the top of the River Ebbw embankment.

The southeast boundary is a stone wall approximately 1.80m height extending along the dental practice boundary until the undeveloped area when it becomes a 1.80m galvanised palisade fence. A wide shrub bed of clipped planting extends from Commercial Street ends by the service area access where the fence cuts back into the undeveloped area. The rest of this boundary has a narrow shrub bed to the end of the service ramp. The remainder by the side of the store building is hard surfacing.

There are extensive stands of Japanese Knotweed in the undeveloped area adjacent to this boundary.

The northwest boundary by the church is a stonewall from Commercial Street up to a small building and the start of the industrial unit which is the Risca RFC Sports and fitness centre and Pegasus fitness suite. The floodlit rugby playing field is northwest of the RFC Centre unit. The boundary here is a low fence. There is a narrow shrub bed along the length of this boundary with a trip rail up to the start of the store where the bed widens up to the site boundary.

There are no trees on Site and no internal planting beds. The carpark and access road all tarmac finish with street lighting on the Site south east and northwest and northeast boundaries.

#### 4.1 EXISTING SITE SUMMARY

The existing site is a generally level.

The existing vegetation is

- Ornamental beds on southeast or northwest boundaries with varying widths.
- Rough scrub strip between rear store fence and retaining wall.
- Off-site Japanese Knotweed blocks and trees and scrub growth.
- Japanese Knotweed extending into the Site from the off-site Knotweed.

Japanese Knotweed is a constraint to the developed boundary section of the Site.

#### 4.2 EXISTING SITE AREAS

Overall Site Area	6873m2
Ornamental Beds	848m2
Hard Surfacing and Buildings	6025m2

## 4.3 PROPOSED SITE AREAS Notional

Overall Site Area	6873m2
Attenuation Pond/Wetland	201m2
Ornamental Beds to include pollinators	s 302m2
Rear Gardens	356m2
Grass eco rich mix	1187m2
Hard Surfacing and Buildings	4719m2
Hedgerows	103linm
Trees predominantly native	28No

## 5.0 TREES

No trees are present on Site nor off-site trees which can have any impact on the Site.

## 6.0 ECOLOGY

#### 6.1 HABITATS

The Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) notes there are no priority habitats on Site and the following habitats on Site are :-

- Mixed ornamental planting of low value and low biodiversity and contains Schedule 9 invasive Cotoneaster.
- Developed Land Sealed Surfaces area of negligible value.
- Sparsely Vegetated strip at rear of store area of low value and low diversity.
- Artificial unsealed Surfaces of negligible value.

The current Site boundary excludes the River Ebbw and riverbank slopes. The unmanaged riverbank slopes have some vegetated growth.

The River Ebbw has SINC (site of Interest for Nature Conservation) status and is a Priority Habitat

#### 6.2 PROTECTED AND PRIORITY SPECIES

The protected species which may occur on site are`

- Bats
  - The habitats onsite afford no suitability for roosting bats and the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) of the building presented no Potential Roosting Features (PRF's) and was deemed negligible for roosting bats.
- Birds
  - Overall, the Site is considered to be of local value for birds and further surveys are not recommended. A precautionary approach to safeguard birds during construction, together with post development compensation measures, is recommended.

#### Badgers

- Due to lack of connectivity to suitable habitats this species is considered to be absent from the Site.
- Otter
  - The Site is considered to be of negligible value to otter but a precautionary approach will be taken to safeguard this species during construction and the lifespan of the development.
- Hedgehog

• The Site has the potential to support the priority species hedgehog, with habitats providing some limited suitability for foraging and resting. However, no evidence of this species was found at the time of survey.

## 6.3 INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Schedule 9 Invasive species Cotoneaster to be removed in general site clearance and disposed off appropriately to reduce spread.

Invasive non-native species (INNS) Japanese Knotweed was noted on the southeast Site boundary which is off-site and where Knotweed stems or roots have extended will be treated and monitored for reoccurrence by a competent contractor.

#### 6.4 ECOLOGY SUMMARY

#### AVOIDANCE

The following measures should be incorporated into the design of the development, including the construction phase, to avoid and reduce impacts on wildlife:

- All works will be undertaken in accordance with a CEMP (Construction Ecological Management Plan). Ecological receptors likely to be covered in this plan will include, but not be limited to hedgehog, birds and reptiles.
- Avoid Site clearance works during the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) unless the Site is checked by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) and active nests are confirmed to be
- absent no later than 48 hours before works commence.
- External lighting will be designed in line with BCT Guidance 8 to reduce the impacts on bats and range of other wildlife associated with off-site habitats.
- Schedule 9 Invasive species Cotoneaster removed during clearance and Japanese Knotweed will be removed by a licensed specialist contractor.

## MITIGATION

Mitigation is proposed to reduce the impacts on wildlife that cannot be avoided through design:

- All construction activities will be programmed to daytime hours to reduce disturbance to sensitive nocturnal species, such as bats and roosting bird species.
- Excavations should be securely covered or fenced overnight, or otherwise provide a means of escape for animals that may become trapped in the form of a ramp at least 300mm wide and angled no greater than 45°. Excavations should be inspected for the presence of animals before work recommences and, in the event of trapped animals being trapped, an ecologist contacted for advice.
- Gaps of at least 13cm x 13cm will be created within boundary fences to facilitate movement of hedgehogs and other small animals through the Site.

#### COMPENSATION/ENHANCEMENT

Compensation is proposed to address the impacts on habitats which cannot be avoided or mitigated:

- The incorporation of roosting bat and nesting bird boxes attached to 10% of residential units of suitable aspect.
- Introduction of hedgerows and predominantly native trees and attenuation pond to the Site.
- New planting beds with berrying and fruit-bearing species alongside pollinator species, to provide increased foraging opportunities in the local area.
- Grass areas will use an eco-rich grass seed mix.
- Management of communal areas
- Fragmented eco corridors
  - Hedgerow and trees on northeast boundary.
  - Boundary with commercial street has landscaped for approx 1/3 of the boundary.
  - South east boundary trees and planting in grass areas and rear gardens abutting boundaries 2/3 of boundary link to adjacent overgrown woodland area.
  - The western boundary requires a flood buffer and planting is limited to beds at the rear of the flats.

#### 6.5 DECCA FRAMEWORK

DIVERSITY

- Genetic and species diversity increased through habitat creation, enhancement and management to promote a greater diversity and number of fauna and flora species using the Site.
- The existing Site had low diversity and the proposed trees, hedgerows, planting beds, grass and attenuation ponds will increase structural diversity of habitats which will be maintained through habitat enhancement and management.

EXTENT

- The extent of tree, planting beds, hedgerow, grass areas and attenuation pond within the Site is increased by the proposed works and their management in communal areas..
- CONDITION
  - Habitat condition will be improved through habitat creation and enhancement and management which will include invasive species management.

CONNECTIVITY

- Connectivity within the Site will be increased to some extent in the north and south boundary treatments and internally with increased planting.
- Connectivity in the wider landscape will be improved through structural planting on the boundaries and within the Site to the river and nearby woodlands and parks.

ASPECTS OF ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE

• Recovery of ecosystems will be improved through an increase in the diversity of habitats and increased connectivity and management.

#### 7.0 DRAINAGE AND BUILDING

• The proposed Site will have hard surfaces with gullys and drains the proposed scheme will ensure water pollution into the adjacent River Ebbw will be avoided and the introduction of an attenuation pond address surface water storage. This is of great importance due to the status of the River Ebbw as an SINC.

#### AVOIDANCE

• Ensure drainage system avoids pollution into adjacent River Ebbw

#### 8.0 SITE SETTING

Designated areas more than 2 Kilometres from Site

- Ramsar Severn Estuary (Wales) 9410m from Site : Estuarine habitat.
- SPA Special Protection Area Severn Estuary (Wales) 9410m from Site : Breeding, feeding, overwintering and migration of national and international importance,
- SAC River Usk 7390m from Site : Estuary area

The Site and designated areas or within the Site or 2 Kilometres are as follows:

#### DESIGNATIONS

• National Landscape Character Area NLCA35 Cardiff and Newport and NCLA37 South Wales Valleys.

The Site is located on boundary of two National Character Areas. Within the Cardiff and Newport Character is in the lowland river corridor of the River Ebbw of one of the most urbanised busy areas in Wales. The River Ebbw forms a wooded river corridor through a urbanised valley floor with wooded agricultural fields up the valley sides.

Within the South Wales Valley Character is extensive ribbon developments filling many valley bottoms and lower slopes. Their urban and industrial character is juxtaposed with dramatic upland settings with steep hillsides, open moors or forests. Networks of railways and roads connect valley settlements. Topography constrains passage between valleys, and there are only a limited number of high passes between valleys. The noise and business of many valleys contrast with the relatively remote and wild qualities of adjacent hill plateaux.

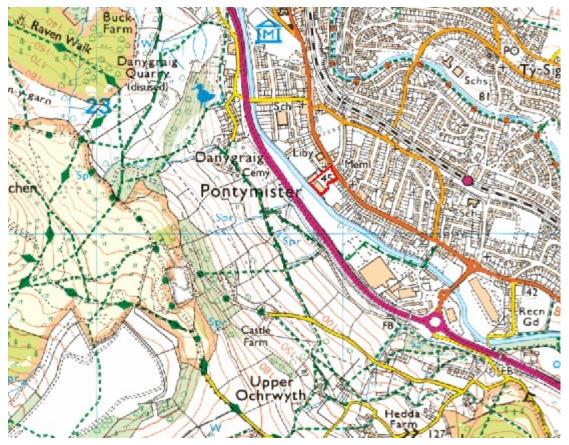
Yet today a new image is gradually but fundamentally changing the old one. Modern road improvements and bypasses bristle with street lighting, spreading the urban influence beyond the old settlement envelopes and altering the character experienced when travelling. IMPACT LOW

- SSSI Dan y Graig Quarry: designated for its geological and geomorpological value. NO IMPACT
- SINC River Ebbw– within the Site boundary, designated for anadromous fish species and otter. VULNERABLE : AVOIDANCE MEASURES needed to avoid pollution.
- SINC Ochrwth Grassland : designated species rich neutral grassland with waxcap. NO IMPACT
- SINC Monmouth to Brecon Canal 600m from Site. designated for wetland and woodland habitat. NO IMPACT
- SINC Coed Mawr West. designated for ancient woodland. NO IMPACT
- SINC Coed y Mochyn, designated for woodland and calcareous grasslands.NO IMPACT
- SINC Mynydd machen, designated for acid and calcareous grasslands.NO IMPACT
- SINC Ty-Sign Meadows, designated for species rich grasslands.NO IMPACT

#### URBAN SETTING

The Site is either within or connected or outside and not connected to following:

- It is within a retail area north of River Ebbw and is one of the opportunity areas for Risca and Pontymister Town Centre
- No connections to the National Cycle Route No47
- The open spaces close to the Site are:
  - The pocket park with the war memorial opposite the Site.
  - Undeveloped site south east of the Site.
  - The Risca RFC playing fields to the north of the Site.
  - Tredegar Grounds large park north east of the Site with allotments to the east within housing.
  - Woodland area and riverside walk west of the River Ebbw.
  - The western agricultural valley sides with their footpath network including the Sirhowy Valley Walk.
- Public Rights of Way
  - There is no public right of way through the Site.
  - No direct across the river from the Site.
  - The access to cross the river
    - north is along Tredegar Street via Dan y Graig Road 480m from the Site and road goes under the A467 and gives access to the footpath network of the western valley sides including Sirhowy Valley Walk.
    - south is along Commercial Street to a PROW to a footbridge 525m from Site.
    - further south along Commercial Street and B4971 565m from Site.
      The southern river crossings give access to the Tesco Extra and its landscaping and a landscaped path by the river. Going through roads and
      - footpaths of the industrial area leads to a footpath over the A467. This similarly to the other road footbridge gives access to the footpath network of the valley sides.



#### GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Site is part of a Green Blue Infrastructure in an urban area.

The Blue Infrastructure is the River Ebbw and the number of streams flowing into the river from the south west valley sides. The River Sirhowy merges with the River Ebbw west of the Site. The Momouthshire and Brecon Canal lies north and collects water from streams on the north east valley sides and is unconnected to the River Ebbw due to separation by the railway line and major roads in the valley floor.

The Green Infrastructure of the Site is connected to the green network in adjacent areas.

The Site lies on the valley floor of the River Ebbw where there are a number of linear features the A467, River Ebbw, Railway line and Brecon & Monmouthshire Canal and National Cycle Route 47 all of which have linear bands of vegetation along them forming ecological corridors. The A467 and River Ebbw have combined vegetation lines in places. Commercial Street another linear feature to the north of the Site has limited vegetation and does not form a linear corridor except the ornamental bed which links with the undeveloped site vegetation and river edge embankment.

The woodlands, trees, hedgerows and fields on the south west valley sides form links to the river and A 467. The Site has planting is a combination of trees, hedgerows and planting beds parts of all boundaries and introducing internal planting to increase the ecological value of the Site. It forms fragmented ecological links to the river on the west and northwest and south east boundaries. To the north there are only fragmented groups of vegetation which form weak links through nearby Tredegar Park to the railway vegetation lines.

The proposed development also creates new and enhanced local habitats with the increase species diversity.

## 9.0 LONG TERM MANAGEMENT

The Site communal areas will have a Planting Methodology 5 Year Landscape Management Plan which will include landscape annual inspections and reports to assess the establishment of the landscape and undertake defects replacements in this period and will be copied to the ecologist. The

ecologist will undertake monitoring inspections in years 1 and 5 additional visits if annual reports raise issues. Revisions to the management plan will be made as necessary to assist successful establishment. The rear gardens and garden frontages will pass to the occupiers within Year 1 of maintenance.

#### 10.0 SUMMARY OF SITE AND NET BIODIVERSITY GAIN.

The River Ebbw and the northern sloped river bank are retained behind a flood wall outside the Site. The existing development platform has overall a store and large carpark area with ornamental planting beds only on the boundaries except by the boundary flood wall with rough grass and some scrub There are no trees on Site. There is an infestation of Knotweed extending from blocks off-site on the south east boundary. The general development platform has low ecological value and limited biodiversity.

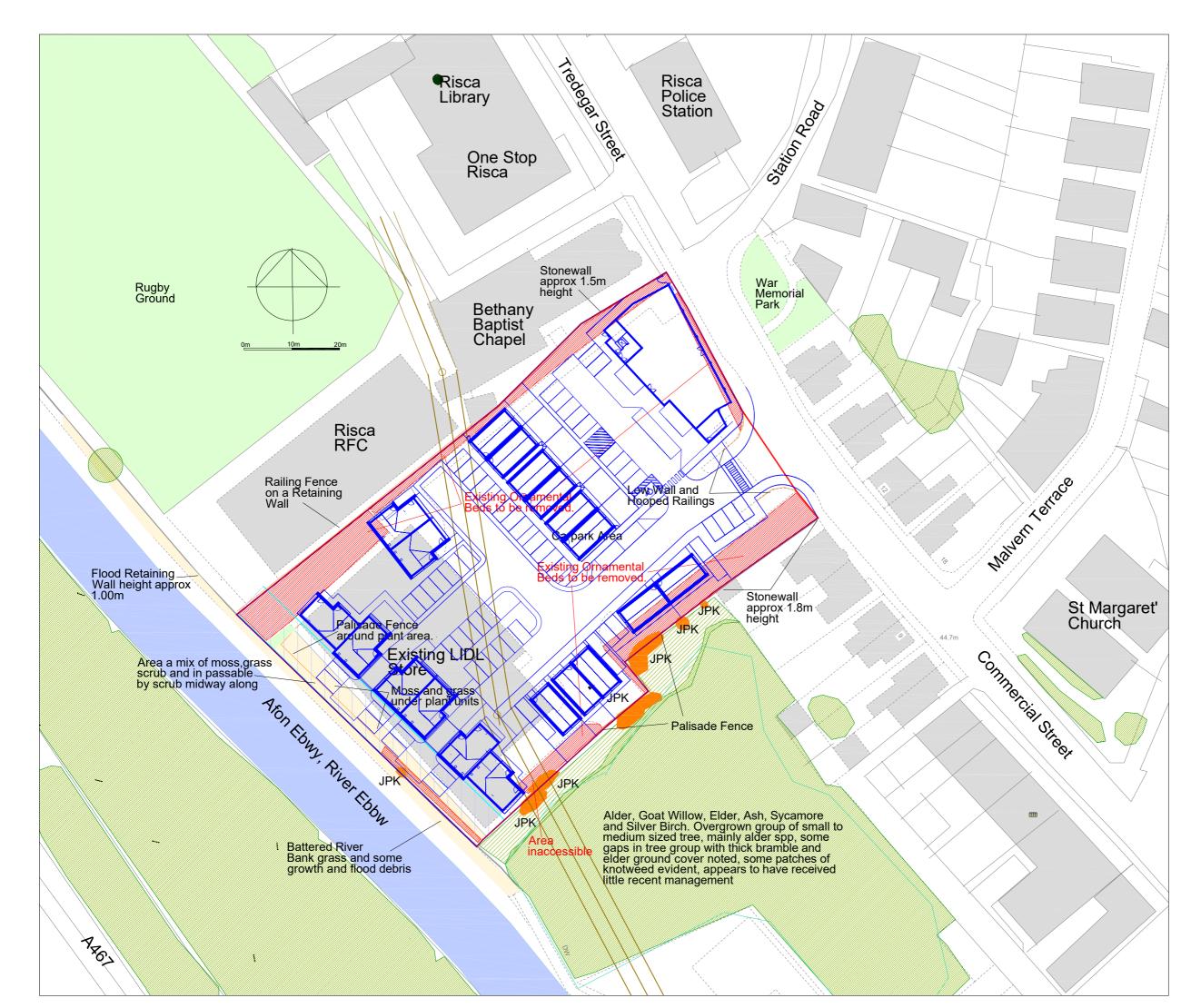
The proposed site will provide an improvement in connectivity by planting of northwest, northeast and southeast boundaries. which link to off-site vegetation. The southwest boundary with a flood buffer zone with planting beds near the flat block is a weaker ecological link. The attenuation pond introduces a new wetland habitat to the Site.

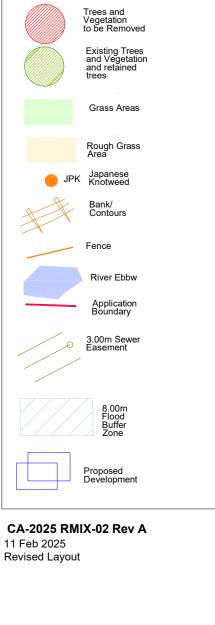
The Statement undertakes the Step system showing the Avoidance and Mitigation measures undertaken, Compensation made on Site. Long term management for the successful landscape establishment will ensure biodiversity objectives are met.

Overall the proposals, considering the location of the Site in this retail area of Pontyminster and the Site's current low ecological value with limited diversity, will provide a biodiversity net gain.



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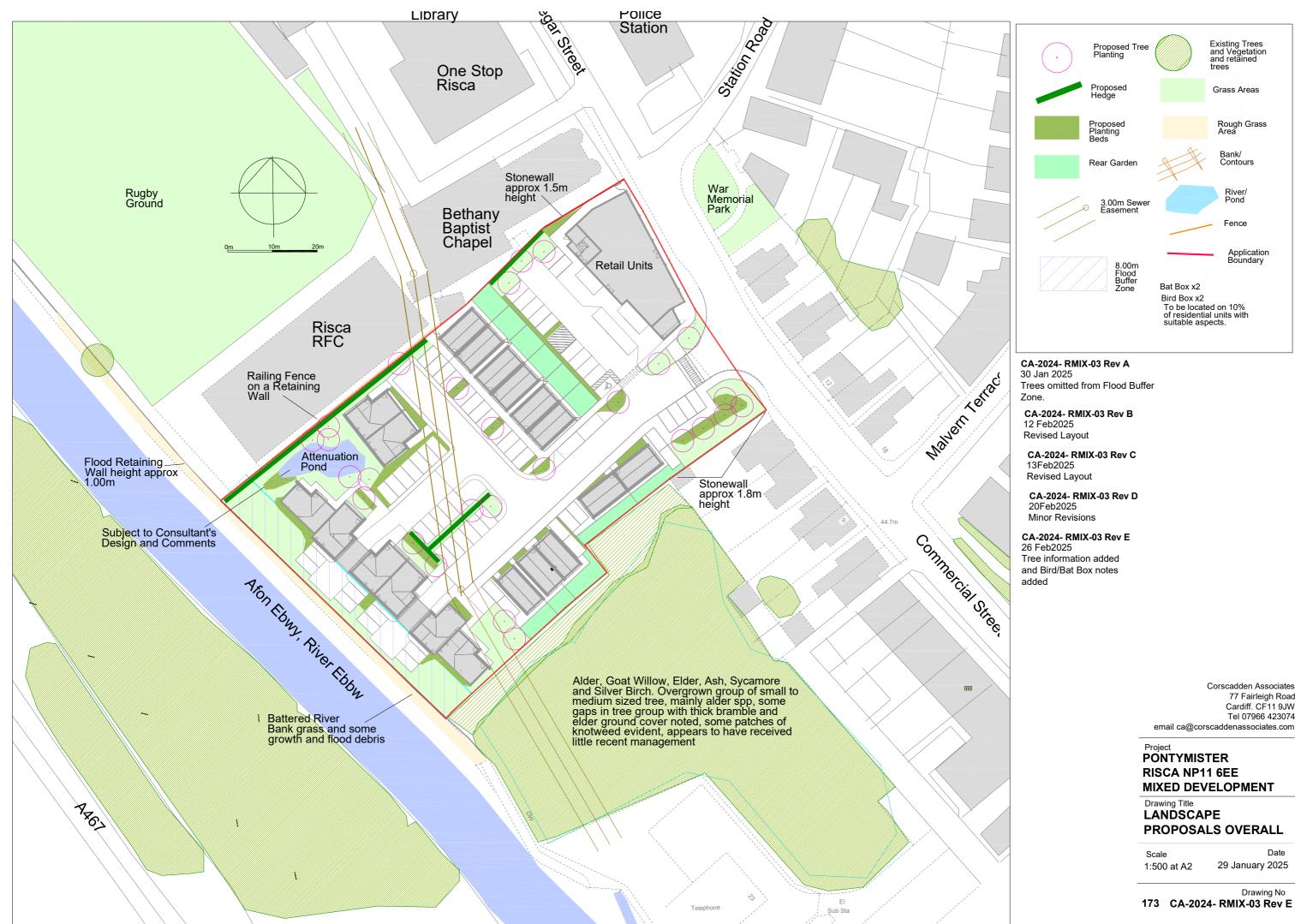
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#### Project PONTYMISTER RISCA : NP11 6EE MIXED DEVELOPMENT

#### Drawing Title EXISTING FEATURES AND OVERLAY

Scale 1:500 at A2 Date 26 Jan 2025

Drawing No



Corscadden Associates 77 Fairleigh Road Cardiff. CF11 9JW Tel 07966 423074



Green Infrastructure Corridors- trees, hedgerows,grasslands, woods

Blue Infrastructure Corridors- river ponds & streams



Site

# Public Right of Way (PROW)

Route with Public Access

The Site lies on the valley floor of the River Ebbw where there are a number of linear features the A467, River Ebbw, Railway line and Brecon & Monmouthshire Canal and National Cycle Route 47 all of which have linear bands of vegetation along them forming ecological corridors. The A467 and River Ebbw have combined vegetation lines in places. Commercial Street another linear feature to the north of the Site with fragmented vegetation in this section of the street at St Margaret's Church, the war memorial and a large open space. Tredegar park The woodlands, trees, hedgerows and fields on the south west valley sides form links to the river and A 467. The Site has planting is a combination of trees, hedgerows and planting beds parts of all boundaries and introducing internal planting to increase the ecological value of the Site. It forms fragmented ecological links to the river on the west and north west and south east boundaries. To the north there are only fragmented groups of vegetation which form weak links through nearby Tredegar Park to the railway vegetation lines. The Site lies on the valley floor of the River

lines.

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Project

## PONTYMISTER **RISCA NP11 6EE** MIXED DEVELOPMENT Drawing Title

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE** 

Scale as given

Date February 2025

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Drawing No CA-2025- RMIX-04