



CARNEYSWEENEY

Land at Mounton Road, Chepstow



Environmental Statement Volume 3: Non-Technical Summary

On behalf of Barwood Development Securities Ltd
October 2025

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Site Description and Project Proposals	1
3	Planning Policy	4
4	Ecology	4
6	Landscape Character and Visual Amenity	6
7	Heritage.....	10

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared on behalf of Barwood Development Securities Ltd (Barwood Land) in support of an outline planning application with all matters reserved apart from the means of access (to be submitted in full) for the development of a sustainable mixed-use neighbourhood at Land at Mounton Road, Chepstow. The ES has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

2. Site Description and Proposals

- 2.1 The site covers an area of approximately 12.8ha and is located immediately to the west of Chepstow Town Centre. The site currently comprises agricultural land and is currently accessed from Mounton Road.
- 2.2 The site is bound by Mounton Road to the north, the A48 to the south, the A466 (Wye Valley Link Road) to the east and St Lawrence Lane to the west. Surrounding land uses to the north and east of the Site comprise predominantly residential dwellings. Open fields bound the site to the west, and St Lawrence House, a Grade II Listed Building is located on the site's northern boundary.
- 2.3 The site does not lie within any statutory designated sites relating to heritage or nature conservation. The site is currently within the locally designated Green Wedge (albeit this land is proposed to be removed from the designation and the site allocated for development within Monmouthshire County Council's forthcoming Local Development Plan).
- 2.4 The River Wye Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are located some distance to the east. The site is not located within a Phosphorus Sensitive Riverine SAC Catchment Area.
- 2.5 There are no designated heritage assets such as world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields within the site although St Lawrence House, a Grade II Listed Building is located adjacent to the north of the site (Cadw ID: 2606) and Mathern Conservation Area (which covers a very large area including the Wyelands Registered Park and Garden (RPG)) extends as far to the north as the southern edge of the A48 south of the site's southern boundary.
- 2.6 The site contains no statutory landscape designations and lies some 180m outside of the Wye Valley National Landscape (NL).
- 2.7 The site is sustainably located close to centres, employment opportunities, schools, healthcare and the range of facilities and services offered by Chepstow Town Centre.
- 2.8 The site comprises a mixture of Grades 3b, 3a and 2 agricultural land quality with Grades 2 and 3a being classified as 'best and most versatile'.

- 2.9 The site is located entirely within Flood Risk Zone 1 and is therefore considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial or coastal /tidal flooding, according to NRW's Flood Map for Planning.
- 2.10 The application proposals seek to deliver a new sustainable mixed-use neighbourhood comprising approximately 146 residential dwellings, a hotel, residential care home and a mobility hub (providing active and sustainable travel options and space for remote working) highway improvements and associated green infrastructure, open space and drainage attenuation.
- 2.11 The Parameter Plans and associated Illustrative Masterplan for the site seeks to provide a coherent and landscape led development which not only responds to the site's existing features, proximity to adjacent listed buildings, topography, ecological assets and constraints but it also responds to its location on the edge of the existing settlement of Chepstow and seeks to fully integrate within the setting.
- 2.12 The development proposals incorporate the following key design parameters and principles:
- Deliver a sustainable, inclusive, and vibrant mixed-use community that acts as a welcoming gateway to Chepstow and the Wye Valley National Landscape;
 - Design which respects the local landscape character, context and the site's sensitive edge-of-settlement location;
 - Integrate residential (including affordable housing), commercial, and green infrastructure harmoniously;
 - Include a hotel and care home to support local economic growth and provide vital community services.
 - Ensure a clear, navigable street hierarchy that blends movement, safety, and character.
 - A mobility hub and connected network of footpaths and cycleways that promote active travel;
 - Design public spaces to encourage social interaction, safety, and accessibility.
 - Use building typologies and materials that reflect the local vernacular and transition to the rural edge.
 - Carefully consider the scale and appearance of focal buildings, especially at the gateway.
 - Deliver a publicly accessible parkland that enhances recreation, wellbeing, biodiversity, and frames heritage assets.
 - Retain mature trees, protect hedgerows and woodlands, and use wildlife-friendly lighting.
 - Integrate infrastructure for future transport needs and safeguard land for potential upgrades.

3. Planning Policy

- 3.1 In assessing the acceptability of the proposals in planning and environmental terms consideration has been given to the status and content of the Development Plan (i.e. Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021) and the Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) Local Development Plan (LDP) (February 2014)); MCC Replacement LDP; and other material considerations relevant to the development proposals.
- 3.2 It is material to note that the Land at Mounton Road, Chepstow is allocated under Policy HA3 within the Submission Draft MCC RLDP for residential led mixed use development to provide approximately 146 homes and commercial uses such as Class C1 hotel and Class C2 residential care home.

4. Ecology

- 4.1 An Ecological Impact Assessment was undertaken by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) on behalf of Barwood Development Securities Ltd to inform an outline planning submission for the proposed development of Land at Mounton Road, Chepstow (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').
- 4.2 The assessment details the potential ecological effects the development proposals may have on Important Ecological Features (IEFs) identified in association with the Site or its surroundings, includes a review of the current baseline conditions found within the area, and identifies measures to avoid, minimise, mitigate and/or compensate, where appropriate, for any significant adverse effects that may arise as part of the proposals.
- 4.3 To inform the assessment, a desk study, Extended Phase 1 habitat survey and further detailed surveys with respect to bats, badger (*Meles meles*), dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and reptiles were completed by EDP during 2024. The desk study identified six internationally important designations within 10km of the Site, including: the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC); Wye Valley Woodlands SAC; Severn Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA)/SAC/Ramsar; and Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC. A further five nationally important designations occur within 2km of the Site, including River Wye Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); River Wye (Lower Wye) SSSI; Pierce, Alcover and Piercefield Woods SSSI; Lower Wye Gorge SSSI; and Pennsylvania Fields, Sedbury SSSI. In addition, 16 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), one Wildlife Trust Reserve (WTR), one Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT) Nature Reserve and one Local Wildlife Site (LWS) occur within 2km of the Site.
- 4.4 With respect to habitats, the Site encompasses agricultural farmland predominantly comprising sheep-grazed, poor semi-improved grassland whose boundaries are delineated by native hedgerows, unvegetated fence lines and plantation and broadleaved semi-natural woodland, the latter of which overlaps with the boundaries of Restored Ancient Woodland. Overall, the majority of the Site comprises habitats which are of less than Local level importance, or of negligible importance, albeit with potential to support protected and notable species. The hedgerows and semi-natural broadleaved woodland are, however, judged to be of Local level importance whilst also comprising Priority Habitats for Wales.

- 4.5 With respect to the further detailed surveys, whilst no bat roosts were confirmed for the Site, several semi-mature/mature trees present within the Site are considered to have feature(s) capable of supporting roosting bats although no roosts have been found to date. More generally, habitats within the Site are also of value to the foraging/commuting bat assemblage. The Site also supports badger with further potential to support a breeding bird assemblage, common reptiles and amphibians, invertebrates and notable mammal species such as European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*). Dormouse has been confirmed present within the broadleaved plantation woodland along the western boundary of the Site.
- 4.6 Ecological considerations have been integral to the design of the proposed Illustrative Masterplan. Key ecological features such as the restored ancient woodland adjacent to the northern boundary of the Site and plantation woodland along its western boundary, will be retained in full and offset from proposed development through the inclusion of habitat buffers and/or significant areas of open green space which, combined with delivery of a sensitive landscape design will ensure the protection of such features from degradation and allow them to continue to function as key wildlife corridors for dormouse, bats, and other wildlife.
- 4.7 Whilst there will be the necessary loss of some valued habitats to facilitate development, including several trees and circa 195m of species-poor, defunct hedgerows, these have been minimised as far as possible through sensitive siting of the Site across predominantly species-poor grassland of limited ecological importance. Such losses will, however, reduce the quantum of habitats available to protected/priority species and potentially limit their dispersal across the Site and wider landscape, including nesting birds, dormouse and a foraging/commuting bat assemblage. Such losses are, however, to be mitigated for through the enhancement of retained habitats within the Site, combined with the creation of new habitat features of value to wildlife including; the provision of new tree, hedgerow, shrub, scrub and grassland planting within areas of open green space proposed across the southern and western extents of the Site; the provision of ecotone planting adjacent to retained woodland edges forming the northern and western boundaries of the Site; and the planting/seeding of sustainable drainage features across the site, utilising wetland species, increasing foraging opportunities for a bat assemblage; and the provision of shrub and ornamental planting of formal landscape areas to soften edges of built development and provide additional benefits to biodiversity. Such planting seeks to deliver greater benefits to protected/notable species and biodiversity more generally. New tree planting in particular is proposed at a minimum replacement ratio of 3:1 standard, broadleaved trees, in accordance with Planning Policy Wales 12. Both retained and newly created habitats in the Site will be subject to sensitive management and monitoring over the long-term to increase their resilience and mitigate long-term disturbance effects, with proposed measures to include: the implementation of a sensitive hay cutting regime across newly created areas of informal grassland and wildflower meadow planting, the management of retained hedgerows to maintain their condition and promote structural diversity; the management of newly created hedgerows and ecotone planting to achieve a continuous, dense and bushy structure; the selective removal of scrub around establishing young trees/shrubs to facilitate natural regeneration; and the provision of log piles and deadwood to maximise habitat structure and foraging availability for protected and notable species.

- 4.8 Detailed specifications for new planting and other habitat creation can be provided with a future, detailed Soft Landscaping Scheme secured by planning condition. In addition, measures to restore and enhance existing habitats, to ensure the successful establishment of new habitats created, and to maintain the value of all ecological features in the long-term, will be delivered through a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), which can be secured by planning condition. A sustainable drainage strategy incorporating wet areas for biodiversity, together with a sensitive lighting strategy to minimise impacts upon nocturnal wildlife, will also be implemented. Overall, those habitat creation/enhancement measures discussed above are considered sufficient to compensate for the small scale of habitat losses anticipated, whilst ensuring the enhancement of retained habitats to maximise habitat function and connectivity across the Site for populations of protected species. The design process has therefore followed the stepwise mitigation hierarchy set out in Planning Policy Wales 12, ensuring the avoidance of key habitats alongside the minimisation of habitat loss and fragmentation.
- 4.9 In addition to the above, the protection of IEFs throughout the construction phase will be delivered through the implementation of sensitive working methodologies and timings and pollution prevention considerations via the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP). Detailed measures to protect habitats and species during the construction phase will further be set out within an Ecological Construction Method Statement (ECMS) which can be secured through an appropriately worded pre-commencement condition attached to any future planning consent. In general, the ECMS will include mechanisms to ensure the sensitive siting of work compound(s) and storage areas, including the storage of any fuel, chemicals, plant or machinery, sensitive clearance of the Site to avoid harm/injury and the use of artificial lighting (including security lighting). This will be delivered alongside a European Protected Species licence in respect of dormouse given this species' confirmed presence onsite and, where necessary for legal compliance, a wildlife licence in respect of badger.
- 4.10 Overall and in consideration of the IEFs identified for the Site, together with those mitigation measures inherent within the Illustrative Masterplan (including retention of valued habitats) and additional mitigation measures for protection of habitats/species, combined with the enhancement/creation of habitats (to be delivered through a sensitively designed landscape strategy, CEMP, ECMS, LEMP and relevant wildlife licences), it is concluded that there will be no residual significant effects upon biodiversity from development of the Site. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the proposals will conform to the respective legislative protection afforded to these IEFs, in addition to national and local planning policy requirements.

5. Landscape and Visual

- 5.1 This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) outlines the findings of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) for the proposed residential and mixed-use development at Land at Mounton Road, Chepstow (hereafter referred to as the Site). The assessment evaluates the likely significant effects of the scheme on the surrounding landscape character and visual amenity, reviewing baseline conditions, mitigation, and residual effects.

Baseline: Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

- 5.2 The Site extends to approximately 12 hectares (ha) and consists mainly of five fields used as pastureland on the western edge of Chepstow. Its topography is generally undulating, sloping gently from the north-east toward the south-west.
- 5.3 The area is not located within any national landscape designation, but the Wye Valley National Landscape (NL) lies approximately 100m to the west of the Site. Locally, the Site is designated as a Green Wedge. However, the assessment concluded that developing the Site would represent a 'rounding off' of the existing settlement, would not compromise the function of the Green Wedge in preventing the coalescence of Chepstow and Pwllmeyric, and that the Site could be removed from this designation.
- 5.4 Published assessments by LANDMAP assign a 'High' overall value to the Visual and Sensory, Historic Landscape, and Geological layers covering the Site. The Site's character is significantly influenced by the nearby urban edges of Chepstow and the busy 'A' roads (A466 and A48) that align its boundaries, which greatly detract from its sense of tranquillity. The Site is noted for its historic context (influenced by the adjacent Grade II listed St Lawrence House) and its potential to support ecosystems in its western tree belts. Overall, the Site Character is judged to have a medium overall sensitivity to change.
- 5.5 Visual Amenity views toward the Site are generally contained or filtered by existing large boundary vegetation, woodland belts, topography, and built form.
- 5.6 Key receptor groups considered in the baseline include:
 - Major Road Users (A466, A48): These receptors have a low sensitivity due to the fast moving, transitional nature of travel. They experience clear, open views adjacent to the Site along the eastern boundary (A466);
 - Minor Road Users (Mounton Road, St Lawrence Lane): These receptors have a medium sensitivity. Views are often limited by walls, hedgerows, and vegetation;
 - Residential Properties: Properties immediately adjacent to the A466/St Lawrence Road (medium sensitivity) and those along Mounton Road (high sensitivity, including St Lawrence House) currently experience clear or semi-rural views toward the Site; and
 - Wye Valley National Landscape Receptors (e.g., Public Right of Way (PRoW) users): These receptors are assigned high to very high sensitivity. However, views into the Site are extremely limited and filtered due to distance, intervening topography, and extensive woodland.

The Proposed Development and Mitigation

- 5.7 The proposed development seeks outline planning permission for up to 146 dwellings, a hotel, a residential care home, a mobility hub, and associated infrastructure and Green Infrastructure (GI).

5.8 The scheme adopts a landscape-led approach, with primary mitigation measures integrated into the design to reduce potential adverse effects:

- Avoidance and Retention: Existing valuable features, particularly the boundary vegetation and trees (including the western woodland buffer), are retained and protected to safeguard habitats and visual amenity;
- Layout: Development is focused in the eastern parts of the Site;
- New Planting: Mitigation includes new native tree and shrub planting. Specifically, additional planting is proposed in the western areas to further filter views, particularly from the NL; and
- Green Infrastructure (GI): The scheme incorporates tree-lined streets, Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) features (such as rain gardens and swales), and enhanced Public Open Space (POS).

The Assessment of Effects and Significance

5.9 The assessment considers effects during construction (temporary), early operation (Year 1, before planting matures), and long-term operation (Year 15, when planting is mature).

Construction Phase (Temporary Effects)

5.10 Construction activities involving earthworks, large machinery, and vehicle movements lead to a substantial and abrupt change to the Site.

5.11 Significant Adverse Effects are predicted for receptors in immediate proximity to the Site:

- Landscape Character of the Site: This will experience a Major adverse effect due to the fundamental transformation from agricultural to a construction environment. This is considered significant;
- Residential Properties along Mounon Road (High Sensitivity): These properties will experience a Major adverse effect due to the high magnitude of change seen from their elevated positions overlooking the Site;
- Residential Properties along the A466 and St Lawrence Road (Medium Sensitivity): These will experience a Major/Moderate adverse effect due to their proximity and the scale of construction activity adjacent to them; and
- Road and Cycle Users at Close Quarters: Users of the A48 (Photoviewpoint (PVP) 3), A466 (PVP 4), and Mounon Road (PVP 5), and the adjacent National Cycle Route (NCR), experience Major/Moderate adverse effects where they are immediately adjacent to the construction zone, driven by the very high magnitude of change at these specific points.

5.12 Effects on the Wider Landscape Character (including within the existing settlement and rural areas outside the NL) are assessed as not significant during construction, being generally Moderate or

Moderate/Minor adverse. Crucially, the effects on the overall Wye Valley NL character are deemed negligible adverse and not significant.

Operational Phase (Year 1)

5.13 In the early operational phase (Year 1), before new planting is established, the conversion from greenfield to mixed-use remains clearly visible. The effects identified as significant during construction generally persist:

- Landscape Character of the Site: Major/Moderate adverse effect. This remains significant;
- Residential Properties along Mounton Road: Major adverse effect. This remains significant;
- Residential Properties along A466: Major/Moderate adverse effect. This remains significant; and
- Road Users (A466, Mounton Road) at close proximity (PVPs 4 and 5): Major/Moderate adverse effects remain significant.

Long-Term Residual Effects (Year 15)

5.14 The assessment concludes that by Year 15, following the maturation of mitigation planting and the resulting integration of the built form, no residual significant effects are anticipated.

- The effect on the Landscape Character of the Site reduces to Moderate adverse and is judged not significant in EIA terms, as the built form is softened and beneficial landscape characteristics mature;
- Effects on the Wye Valley NL character and its visual amenity remain minimal, assessed as negligible adverse and not significant;
- For residential properties along Mounton Road, the effect reduces to Major/Moderate adverse. While technically still a notable level of effect due to high receptor sensitivity, it is judged not significant in the context of EIA. This determination is based on the principle that views from private residences are not protected by the planning system, and the design successfully mitigated potentially worse impacts by locating open space adjacent to the properties; and
- For major visual receptors, such as those along the A466 (PVP 4) and Mounton Road (PVP 5), the effects reduce to Moderate adverse and are judged not significant, reflecting the integration of the scheme into the settlement edge and the low sensitivity of these transient receptors.

5.15 The LVIA overall concludes that while construction and early operation will cause temporary significant adverse effects locally, the landscape-led design and embedded mitigation measures successfully reduce all effects to non-significant levels by Year 15, ensuring the development becomes a well-integrated addition to the Chepstow settlement edge.

6. Heritage

- 6.1 Best practice guidance (issued by Cadw) has been employed to identify the nature and magnitude of any impacts on 'historic assets' arising from the approval and implementation of the proposed development. In that respect, desk and field-based studies have confirmed that the site does not contain any 'designated' assets (such as scheduled monuments) and neither is any part of the site located within the boundary of a designated 'area' such as a conservation area or a Registered Park and Garden (RPG).

- 6.2 However, whilst this means that the proposed development of the site would not give rise to any 'direct' impacts on the physical form or fabric of a designated asset, the presence of a number of listed buildings and RPGs/conservation areas in the landscape surrounding the site is such that the proposals for development could generate 'indirect' impacts in terms of the setting of those assets.

- 6.3 The application of Cadw's guidance on the identification of 'setting effects' in respect of historic assets has concluded that only the Grade II listed St. Lawrence House (to the north of the site) would be adversely affected by the proposed development and (even then) to just a small degree. This in large part reflects the fact that the site represents part of the estate associated with this country house from around the turn of the 19th/20th centuries, with the development retaining and enhancing the aspects which contribute most to its significance and focusing development on the areas contributing the least.

- 6.4 Appropriate consideration has been given to the setting of historic assets located further away from the site to the south and west, including the RPGs associated with Wyelands and Mounon House (respectively) and the Mathern Conservation Area which extends to contain the Wyelands RPG. Application of the setting guidance issued by Cadw has confirmed that none of these designated historic assets would be affected by the proposals for development of the site as a result of their spatial separation, the absence of relationships contributing to their significance and the careful design of the illustrative masterplan.

- 6.5 The small loss of significance predicted in respect of St. Lawrence House has to be weighed against the public benefits which the approval and implementation of the proposed development would bring forward and deliver. There is no reason to believe that the balancing exercise could not and would not be struck in favour of the proposed development, especially in view of the site's inclusion as a draft allocation within the current iteration of the emerging Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan (RDLP).