



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

**Siting of Two Detached Dwellinghouses
At Land between 2 & 12 Neath Road, Fforestgoch,
Rhos, Pontardawe**

**On behalf of
Mr. J. Bevan**

Our Ref: 1485.a
Date: January 2025
Prepared & Approved by: Richard Banks

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning has been instructed by Mr. J. Bevan to prepare a proportionate Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) to accompany an application seeking outline planning permission for the “*Siting of Two Detached Dwellinghouses*” at Land between 2 & 12 Neath Road, Fforestgoch, Rhos, Pontardawe.
- 1.2 This proportionate GIS has been prepared with full regard to the guidance as set out in Chapter 6 of *Planning Policy Wales* (Edition 12) (February 2024) and in particular the ‘**Stepwise Approach**’ detailed in Paragraph 6.4.21 and Figure 12, which is reproduced below.

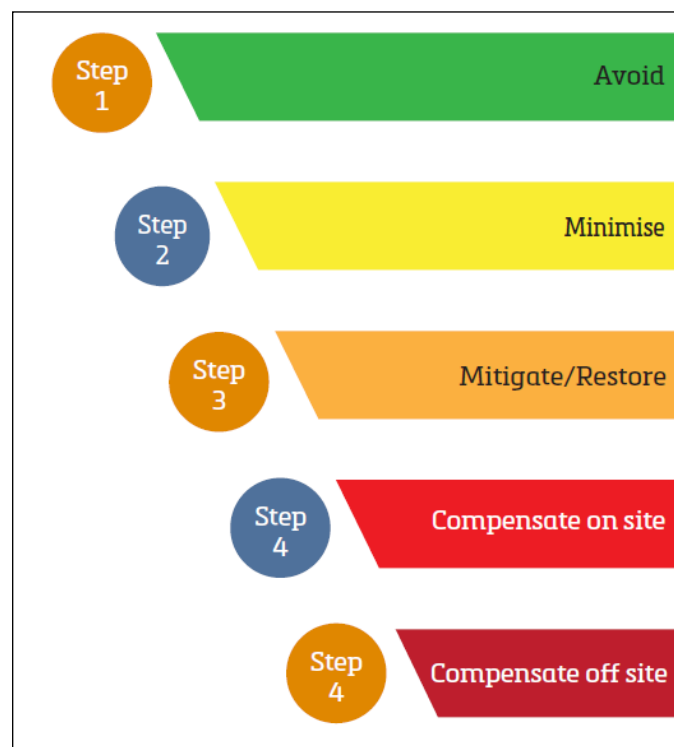


Figure 1 – PPW Stepwise Approach

- 1.3 This GIS has also, where relevant, given due consideration to the guidance and standards as set out in the document *Building with Nature - Standards Framework*, which are summarised as follows:

CORE Standards

- Standard 1** Optimises Multifunctionality and Connectivity
- Standard 2** Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency
- Standard 3** Maximises Environmental Net Gains
- Standard 4** Champions a Context Driven Approach
- Standard 5** Creates Distinctive Places
- Standard 6** Secures Effective Place-keeping

WELLBEING Standards

- Standard 7** Brings Nature Closer to People
- Standard 8** Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

WATER Standards

- Standard 9** Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management
- Standard 10** Brings Water Closer to People

WILDLIFE Standards

- Standard 11** Delivers Wildlife Enhancement
- Standard 12** Underpins Nature's Recovery

2.0 EXISTING SITE

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application site comprises of the roadside frontage of a grazing field which is set off the eastern flank of the A474 Neath Road at Fforestgoch. The land presents a level enclosure with the highway and is marked by a continuous hedgerow and agricultural gate for access to the field. It is set between residential properties which also front the main highway at this point, with further detached and established housing set directly opposite off the western flank of Neath Road.
- 2.1.2 The single field parcel has a frontage width with the road of some 35 metres and extends eastwards and back from the road to a depth of some 85 metres to reach an existing tree-lined boundary with the River Clydach. Further grazing fields are to be found off the opposite bank of the river channel, which is marked by a dense copse of mature trees along both banks making it inaccessible and inconspicuous from ground level. The entire field is irregular in shape and extends to an area of 0.3 hectares (0.75 acres) and is relatively level to gently sloping eastwards. The northern perimeter is marked by a post and wire fence which acts to separate the ownership of the enclosure from further grazing land to the north, and range of agricultural outbuildings set to the rear of No.2 Neath Road, being the detached house to the north of the site.
- 2.1.3 The Application Site is found with a dense band of uninterrupted mature trees forming a linear southern boundary, which act to separate the site from a pair of semi-detached houses at No.'s 12 and 14 Neath Road. The properties mark a row of established dwellings which run south, uniformly fronting Neath Road at this point. The opposite, western flank of the road exhibits a range of dwelling forms but mainly detached and comprising two-storey and dormer bungalow types. Each are set in modest to generous plot scales with vehicular accesses in the form of side driveways.
- 2.1.4 The site is identified by being edged in red on the plans below. Figure 1 illustrates its wider position with the settlement of Fforestgoch, whilst Figure 2 provides a detailed Ordnance Survey map extract with the site perimeters identified. Figure 3 provides a reproduction of the latest Google Earth aerial imagery, and in which the above physical features are highlighted.

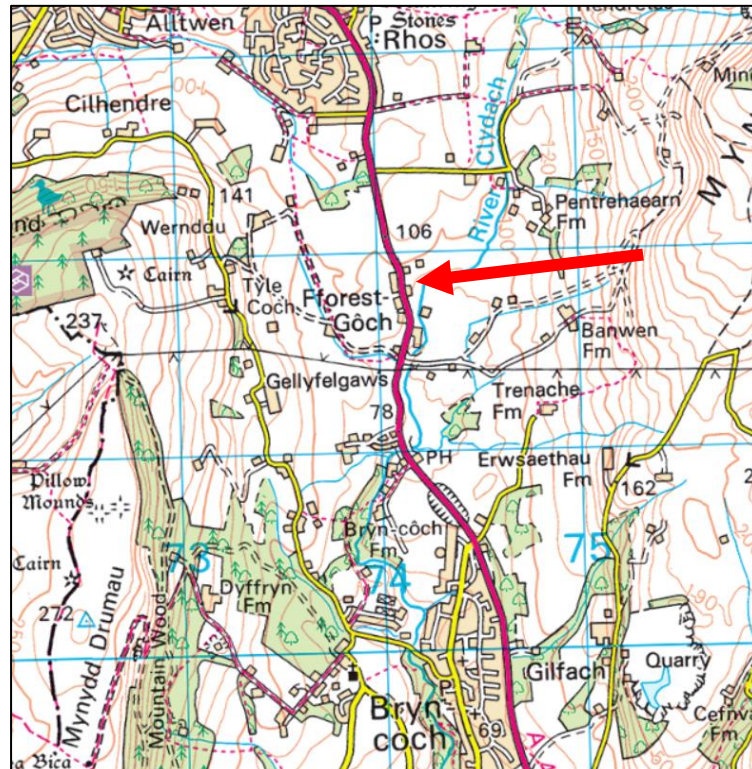


Figure 1 – OS Explorer Map of Fforestgoch with site highlighted

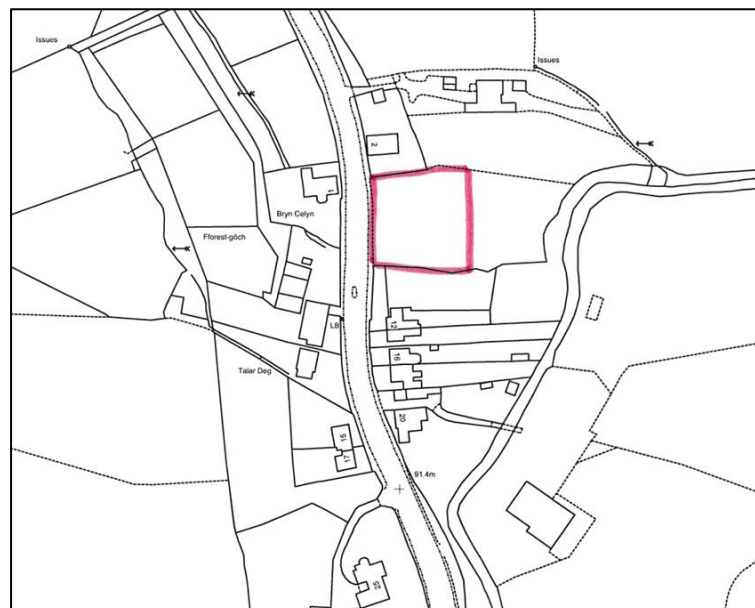


Figure 2 - OS Plan – precise boundaries of Site are shown edged in red



Figure 3 – Google Earth imagery – July 2024

2.1.5 The land contains semi-improved pasture which has been consistently grazed over generations. The perimeters are well defined, with the enclosure being irregular in shape with high, mature deciduous hedgerows and trees to two developed perimeters, with the northern boundary well defined with a continuous fence line.

2.2 EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

2.2.1 The application site is graphically illustrated in the following photographs, which evidence that the site comprises a well maintained parcel of grazing land, from which the landowner also derives an annual silage crop.

2.2.2 The northern and eastern side perimeters are flanked by dense copses of deciduous trees which act to provide a definite boundary to adjoining residential properties. The

roadside frontage is marked by a gappy deciduous hedgerow set either side of an agricultural gateway access point.



Photo 1 – viewing Site off eastern perimeter Neath Road set between established properties and side perimeter tree lines



Photo 2 – extent of A road carriageway with site frontage shown lying adjoining continuous lines of adjacent hedgerows



Photo 3 – view of site frontage with dense band of trees to southern perimeter and agricultural gate access at mid frontage position. Semi-mature grassland covers the majority of the site



Photo 4 – view of site from access onto Neath Road looking right / north and view of roadside gappy hedgerow

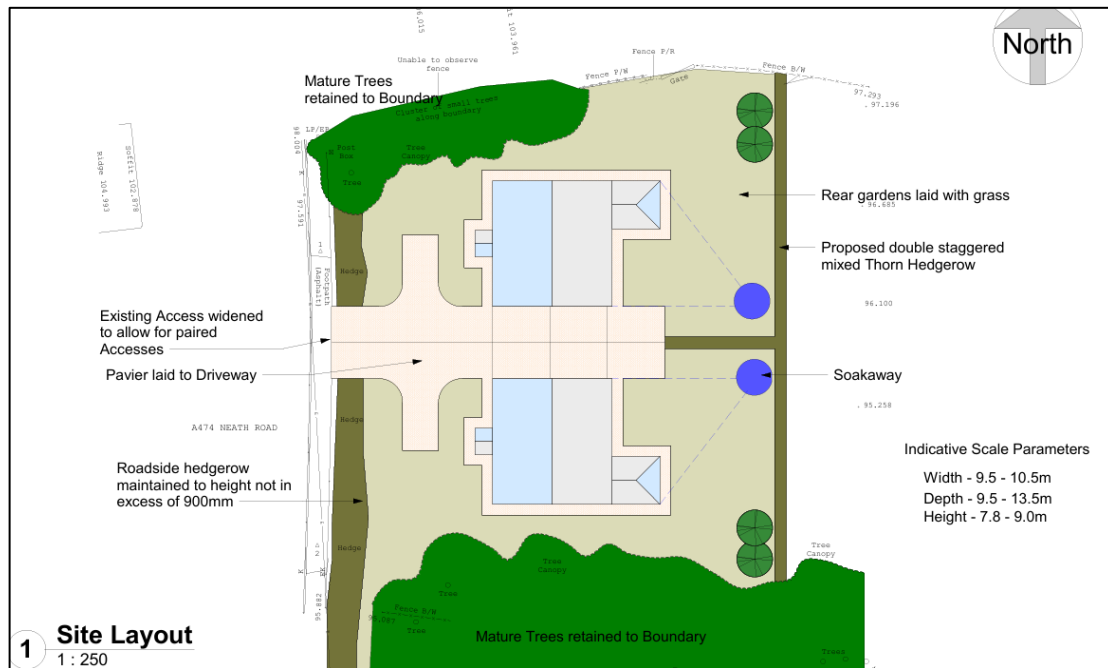


Figure 5 – proposed site layout plan

3.1.3 Both proposed dwellinghouses will be two-storey in form, set orientated to front the main highway. Both will be equipped with traditional rear garden areas extending to a minimum depth of 10 metres, with a new rear boundary provided comprising of a native hedgerow. This new hedgerow will provide a sense of new green infrastructure and encourage ecological connectivity between the existing vegetation present off both the northern and southern side perimeters of the site.

3.2 PROPOSED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

3.2.1 The scheme will provide extensive landscaping and ecological enhancement, being part of promoting biodiversity as part of a future applications for Approval of Reserved Matters and SAB Consent. The above site layout plan, both point to the retention of all existing perimeter vegetation, which in turn will ensure that **ecological connectivity around the site is retained**.

3.2.2 Furthermore, new planting is proposed, not just within the residential plots themselves, but in the form of new hedgerows and individual tree sapling planting, to the newly formed rear, eastern perimeter of the site.

New Hedgrow Planting

3.2.3 As mentioned previously, the existing specimens within the site boundaries will be retained in full, and further enhanced with native species (not varietals), to the new eastern perimeter, and thus contribute towards a final mix of approximately:

- 15% Holly *Ilex aquifolium*
- 15% Hazel *Corylus avellanara*
- 15% Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*
- 15% Goat willow *Salix caprea*
- 10% Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*
- 10% Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
- 10% Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*
- 5% Elder *Sambucus nigra*
- 5% Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*

3.2.4 All hedgerows will be of staggered double row planting.

Bulb Planting

3.2.5 Swathes will be planted along the base of all the identified hedgerows, as well as plants that have visually attractive and easily recognisable flowers. The following species will be planted:

- Wood anemone *Anemone nemorsa*
- Winter Aconite *Eranthis hyemalis*
- Wild Daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*
- Snowdrop *Galanthus nivalis*
- Ramsons *Allium ursinum*
- Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*.

New Tree Planting

3.2.6 As per the Indicative Site Layout Plan, it is proposed that at least four new standard trees of locally native species would be included alongside the new/infill hedgerow planting.

3.2.7 The proposed native trees will be planted prior to occupation, with suitable species being:

- *Rowan*
- *Silver Birch*
- *Wild Cherry*
- *Elder*
- *Crabapple*

Bird Box Provision

3.2.8 It is also proposed that two bird boxes would be provided per dwelling, with integrated models to be used where possible, that will ensure provision for the full lifespan of the development. Each building will include:

- One woodcrete bird box with 32mm entrance holes such as *1MR Schwegler Avianex* or *Vivara Pro WoodStone 32mm Nest Box* for various species; and
- One house sparrow nest box such as the *CJ Wildlife WoodStone Build-in House Sparrow Nest*.

Bat Box Provision

3.2.9 It is also propose that one bat box will be built into an external wall of each new dwelling. This will be located just below the apex on a gable wall, away from light spill originating from windows.

3.2.10 A suitable model would be a larger cavity bat box such as the *Schwegler Bat Tube 1FR* or *1WI*.

Wildlife Hotels

3.2.11 Finally, it is propsoed that '*Wildlife Hotels*', in the form of Insect and Hedgehog Hotels will be located around the site, at appropriate locations in order to encourage biodiversity.

3.2.12 Examples of the Bird Boxes, Bat Boxes and Wildlife Hotels are to be found in the overleaf.

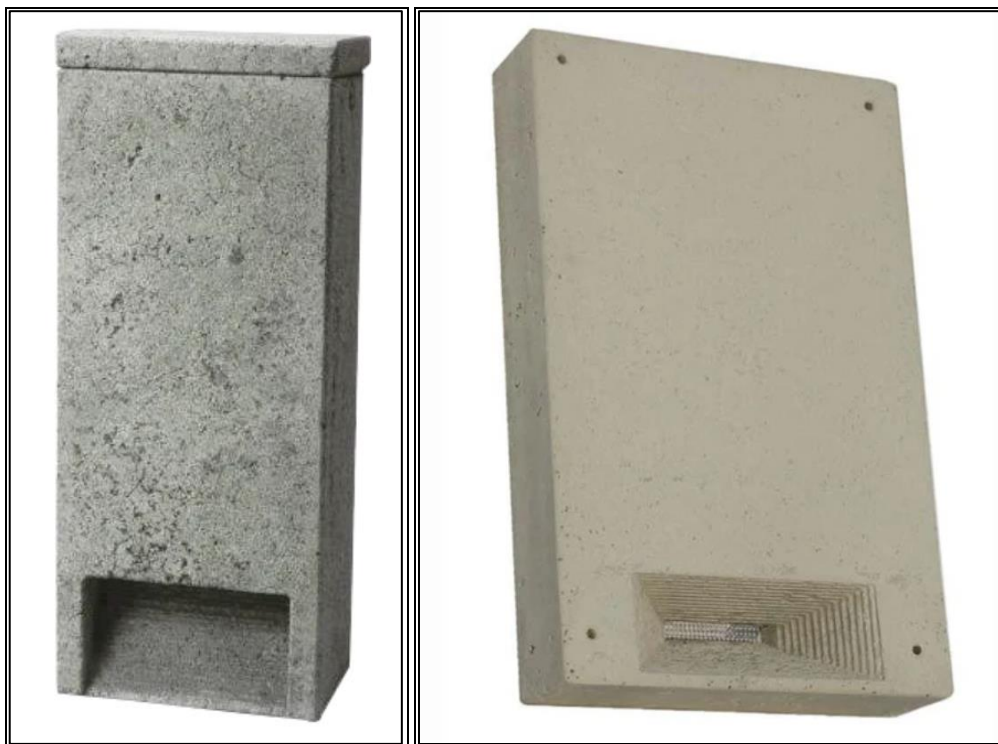


Figure 7 – Schwegler Bat Tube 1FR or 1WI.



Figure 8 – 1MR Schwegler Avianex and CJ Wildlife WoodStone Build-in House Sparrow Nest

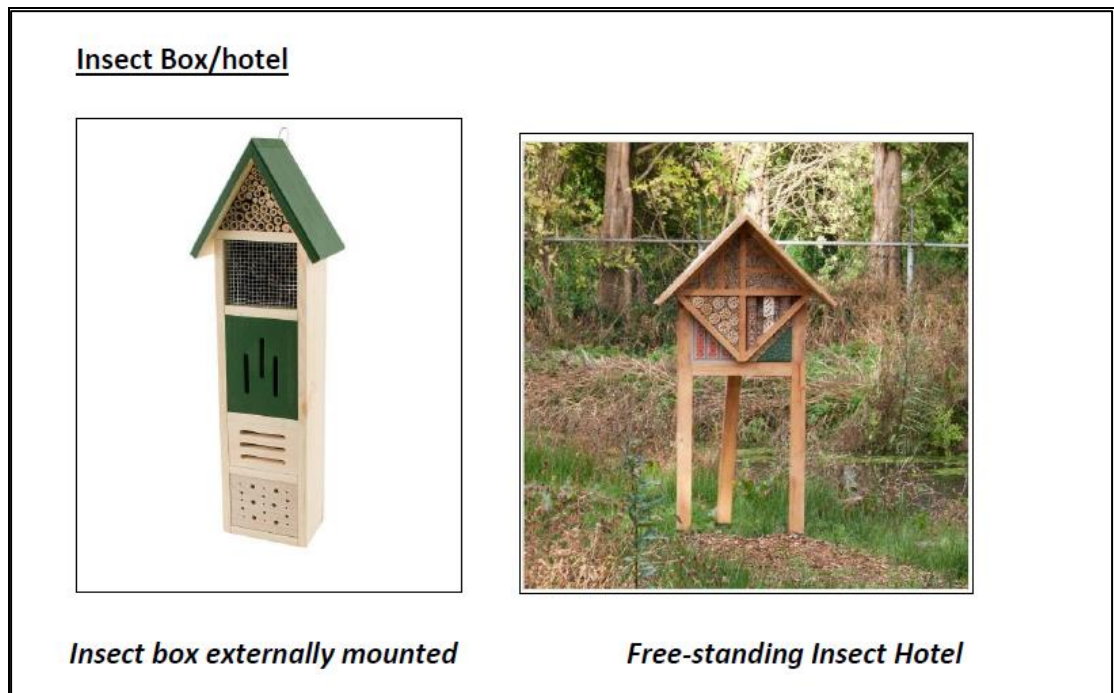


Figure 9 – Insect Box and Hotel

Brick built Hedgehog home - <https://wildlifegadgetman.com/project-wildpatch/how-to-guides/make-a-hedgehog-home-using-bricks/>



Figure 10 – Hedgehog Homes

4.0 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement provides an illustration of the current Green Infrastructure present on the application site, those features to be retained as part of the proposed development, as well as the extensive proposed new biodiversity enhancements to be included as part of it.
- 4.2 As detailed herein, the current Green Infrastructure assets of the site are highlighted, with the perimeter vegetation to be retained in full, and the sub-optimal semi-improved grassland to be lost to the development. Further native planting is proposed in the form of tree and hedgerow planting around the site.
- 4.3 Bird boxes, bat boxes, hedgehog hotels and insect hotels are also included as part of the development proposals to increase the biodiversity level of the site.
- 4.4 In response to the above required balance, the loss of any existing Green Infrastructure has been **minimised** wherever possible, with such losses being **mitigated** and **compensated** through the provision of on-site additional Green Infrastructure assets.