

Green Infrastructure Statement

Proposed A3 Use and Beer Garden – Former Barclays Bank, 9 The Parade, Neath, SA11 1RB

As part of the proposed change of use of the ground floor to a bar and restaurant, and the creation of a beer garden to the rear of the site, the scheme will incorporate elements of green infrastructure to enhance biodiversity and improve environmental quality.

Step 1: Site Context

The application site is a ground floor unit within a Grade II listed building located in Neath town centre. The proposal includes the change of use from a former bank (A2) to a bar and restaurant (A3), with the creation of a new external beer garden to the rear. The surrounding context is predominantly urban and built-up with limited existing green infrastructure.

Step 2: Proposed Green Infrastructure Interventions

To contribute positively to the local environment and urban ecology, the following measures will be implemented within the proposed beer garden:

- **Planters with Wildflowers:**
Strategically placed raised planters will be introduced, containing a diverse mix of native wildflowers and pollinator-friendly species such as cornflowers, oxeye daisies, and red clover.
- **Biodiversity Support:**
These species have been selected to support bees, butterflies, and other invertebrates, aligning with wider ecological goals and the enhancement of biodiversity in urban areas.

Step 3: Sustainability and Surface Water Consideration

- **Drainage Support:**
The use of planters and soft landscaping will aid in the reduction of surface water runoff, offering an alternative to entirely impermeable surfacing.
- **Low-Maintenance and Sustainable Design:**
The planting design will use low-water-demand species and peat-free compost, reducing long-term environmental impact and maintenance needs.

Step 4: Visual Amenity and Community Value

- The introduction of green features within the beer garden will enhance the visual character of the rear space, providing a more welcoming and attractive setting for patrons.

- These enhancements contribute to a healthier, more engaging environment for customers and staff alike, supporting wellbeing and placemaking objectives.

Step 5: Management and Maintenance

- The planters will be maintained by the operator of the premises.
- A routine maintenance schedule will include:
 - Seasonal replanting
 - Watering (if needed during dry periods)
 - Weeding and removal of invasive species
 - Litter and waste control around planted areas

Ecology Enhancement Measures

In addition to planting, the scheme will incorporate **one bird box and one bat box**, discreetly installed under the eaves on the rear elevation of the building. These features will provide nesting and roosting opportunities, supporting local wildlife and further enhancing site biodiversity.

Conclusion

This scheme delivers small-scale but meaningful contributions to Neath's green infrastructure by introducing biodiversity features, soft landscaping, and ecological enhancements in an urban context. The inclusion of native planting, bird and bat boxes, and sustainable maintenance practices demonstrates a thoughtful approach to the environment and aligns with local and national policy objectives for sustainable development, urban greening, and wildlife support.