

Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity Enhancement Statement

Planning Application Reference: *P2026/0437*

1. Site Details

- **Site Address:** 3 Glantrwch, Ystalyfera, SA9 2AG
- **Local Planning Authority:** Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- **Proposed Development:** Small single-storey rear extension to a semi-detached property.

2. Site and Baseline Description

The application site consists of a two-storey, semi-detached residential property located within the settlement limits of Ystalyfera. The existing rear garden is an entirely modified, hard-surfaced environment, being 100% concrete slabbed/paved across the entire area.

- **Existing Green Infrastructure:** There is no existing green infrastructure, vegetation, grassed lawn, or canopy cover within the footprint of the proposed extension or across the broader rear curtilage. The current site provides negligible ecological value and zero surface water permeability.

3. Impact Assessment (The Step-Wise Approach)

In accordance with Paragraph 6.4.21 of Planning Policy Wales, a proportionate step-wise approach has been integrated into the design layout:

- **Avoid & Minimize:** The extension footprint is sited entirely on the existing low-value concrete slabs. No mature trees, hedgerows, native soils, or areas of natural vegetation will be lost or damaged during construction.
- **Mitigate & Compensate:** Because the baseline site consists entirely of sealed artificial surfaces, the construction of the extension will result in zero net loss of natural habitat.

4. Integrated Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity Enhancements

To satisfy the statutory duty for securing a **net benefit for biodiversity**, the scheme goes beyond mitigation by introducing structural ecosystem improvements directly to the site:

- **Habitat Creation (De-paving):** Approximately **40% of the existing concrete slabs will be permanently lifted and removed** from the rear garden area. This

will expose the underlying ground, reinstating natural, permeable soil structure to enhance urban drainage and local climate resilience.

- **Soft Landscaping & Planting:** The newly de-paved zones will be transformed into an active garden. It will be cultivated with a mixture of soft border planting, native perennial flowers, and wildlife-friendly shrubs designed to actively support pollinators (such as bees and butterflies).
- **Fauna Enhancement:** To provide immediate nesting opportunities for local bird populations, **1x integrated or surface-mounted bird nesting box** will be installed on the rear elevation of the new extension, positioned safely away from artificial lighting and predators close to the eaves.
- **Sustainable Water Management:** A **150-litre water butt** will be connected to the downpipe of the new single-storey extension roof to capture rainwater runoff, which will be retained on-site to irrigate the new soft-planted garden borders.

5. Conclusion

The proposed rear extension at 3 Glantrwch will not result in any adverse impacts on the local ecological network. By removing 40% of the existing hard-paving and replacing it with organic planting, the development delivers a measurable, functional, and highly proportionate **net benefit to the green infrastructure network** in Ystalyfera, fully conforming with Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan policies.