Scheme of Net Biodiversity Benefit

Application Ref: P/2025/0672
Proposal: Conversion into 2 dwellings with access changes, driveway formation, staircases, boundary wall removal, tree removal and new planting.

Baseline Biodiversity Assessment

Baseline habitat includes:

- 3 small/medium deciduous trees.
- Domestic garden lawn and shrub beds.
- Boundary hedges/fences supporting low-level commuting/foraging wildlife.
- No evidence of priority species or protected species roosts observed from layout and site usage.

Baseline biodiversity value = moderate–low, typical of suburban garden plots.

Biodiversity Losses from Development

The following losses occur:

- Removal of 3 existing trees, reducing foliage, nesting, and invertebrate habitat.
- Expansion of hard surfacing (driveway + 4 parking bays).
- Small localised loss of grassland where new metal staircases meet garden.

Residual loss after avoidance/minimisation remains minor, but must be offset.

Biodiversity Enhancement Measures to Deliver Net Benefit

The following measures exceed the lost value and deliver a measurable biodiversity gain:

Hedgerow & Shrub Enhancement - Native hedgerow planting added to garden boundaries using diverse species to increase nectar, berries and shelter.

Pollinator & Habitat Enhancements

A minimum 20 m^2 wildflower/pollinator area per garden installing, if required:

- 2 bird nest boxes
- 1 bat box

- 1 insect/bug hotel

Soil & Drainage Improvements

- Permeable garden pathways and soak-in areas.
- Reduction in runoff via ACO drainage and permeable zones.

Garden Management for Biodiversity

- No pesticides, minimal disturbance to nesting birds, lighting controlled by downward-facing luminaires.
- Retention of log piles / stone refuges.

Quantitative Biodiversity Outcome (Qualitative Wales-Appropriate Method

Wales does not use England's BNG metric, but PPW12 requires evidence that benefits exceed losses.

Here, replacement and enhancement exceed loss as follows:

Feature Lost	**Feature Gained**	**Outcome**
3 trees removed	3 higher-value native trees planted	Neutral → Net Gain
Grass area lost to driveway	Wildflower beds + hedgerow	Net Gain
Minor habitat disturbance	Bird box, bat box, insect hotel	Net Gain
Increase in hardstanding	Permeable paths + SuDS	Compensation + Gain

Overall Result:

The scheme achieves a clear net biodiversity benefit compared to baseline conditions.

Monitoring & Maintenance

- Planting inspected after 12 months and again at 5 years.
- Any shrub/tree failure over 30% replaced.
- Nest/bat boxes maintained and cleared annually (outside nesting season) if required.
- Wildflower beds maintained by annual late-winter cut.

Conclusion

The development, while requiring essential tree removal and introducing new hard surfacing, delivers significantly enhanced biodiversity through replacement planting, habitat creation, pollinator areas, and wildlife infrastructure.

The scheme meets the requirement for a Net Benefit for Biodiversity under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and PPW12.