

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Conversion of Barn
At Coc Y North Lane, Rhiwderin, NP10 8RR



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1.0 Summary of the proposal

The proposed conversion seeks to transform the historically significant Barn at Coc Y North Lane, Rhiwderin, NP10 8RR, depicted as a homestead in the tithe plan of 1844, into a thoughtfully designed residential dwelling. In response to the pre-application advice and consultant feedback, the proposal aims to balance the restoration of the barn's heritage with contemporary living needs while respecting the rural character and environmental sensitivities of the site.

The Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared to provide a comprehensive rationale and justification for the proposed conversion of the barn into a residential dwelling. It serves to articulate the architectural vision, outline the design approach, and address key considerations related to access, sustainability, and compliance with planning policies.

2.0 The site

The proposed conversion site, identified as Barn at Coc Y North Lane, Rhiwderin, NP10 8RR, has a rich historical significance, reflected in its depiction as a homestead in the tithe plan of 1844. This historical documentation not only underscores the site's previous use as a dwelling but also provides valuable context for the proposed conversion project. The historical record supports the justification for returning the barn to its original residential function, aligning with the site's historical legacy.

Situated within the designated Countryside and part of the West of Rhiwderin Special Landscape Area, the site occupies a tranquil rural setting characterised by rolling hills and verdant fields. The location within the Special Landscape Area underscores the need for sensitive development practices that respect and enhance the area's scenic qualities and environmental integrity.



Figure 1 - Site location



Figure 2 - Location plan

2.1 Historic mapping

The historic mapping of the site provides valuable insights into the evolution of the building over time. The first map, dating back to the 1844 tithe plan, identifies the structure as a homestead with a substantial floor area of 290m². This indicates that the building was historically used as a dwelling, supporting its conversion back into residential use. Subsequent maps from 1900 and 1960 show a gradual reduction in the building's floor area, reflecting changes in its use or modifications to the structure over the years. The modern-day Ordnance Survey (OS) plan depicts the current floor area of the building at 80m², highlighting its diminished size compared to its historical footprint.

Policy H13 in the Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) sets guidelines for extensions to dwellings in the countryside, aiming to prevent the urbanization of rural areas. It stipulates that extensions should not exceed 30% of the original dwelling's volume, as it existed in 1948, provided the existing dwelling has a lawful residential use. This policy is crucial in maintaining the rural character and appearance of the surrounding area by limiting the size of extensions. The proposed extension for the project is just under 30% of the current building size, demonstrating compliance with the volume limitations outlined in Policy H13. This ensures that the development respects the historical context and architectural scale of the existing structure, mitigating any adverse impacts on the rural landscape.

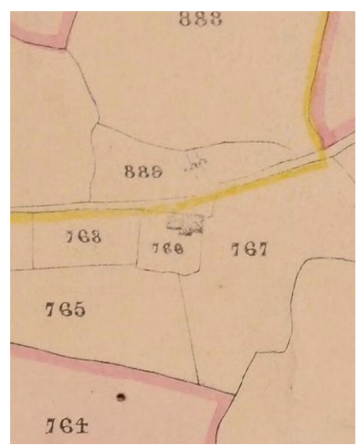


Figure 3 - Tithe map 1844
Building footprint 290m²

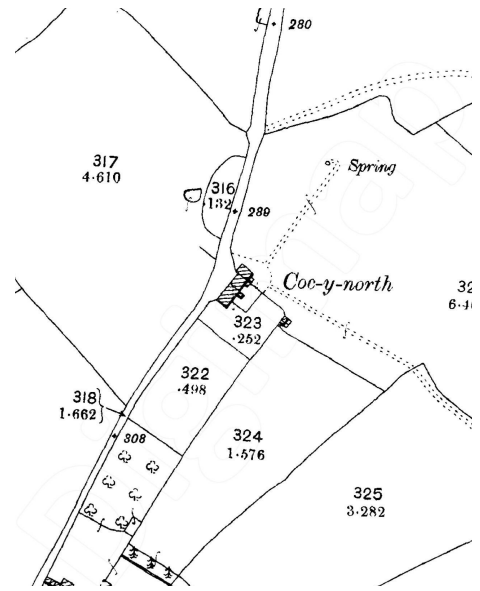


Figure 4 - Historic map 1900
Building footprint 175m²

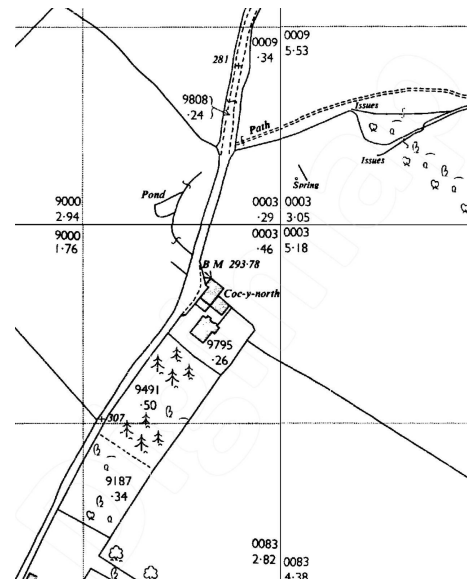


Figure 5 - Historic map 1960
Building footprint 165m²



Figure 6 - Modern day OS plan
Building footprint 80m²

3.0 The Scheme

Central to the scheme is the restoration of the barn's original character and architectural features. Working closely with conservation specialists and structural engineers, the project will undertake comprehensive surveys to assess the building's structural integrity and historical fabric. Careful attention will be given to preserving the barn's distinctive elements, including its timber trusses, stone walls, and traditional roofline, ensuring a seamless transition from past to present.

The design and access statement has been developed from an early stage to align with the pre-application advice sought, demonstrating our commitment to collaboration with the council.

Drawing from the Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) and Technical Advice Notes (TANs) issued by the Welsh Assembly Government, we have taken great care to work within the various planning regulations to ensure our design embodies principles of good design and sustainability.

At the heart of our approach lies the adherence to TAN 12 and the Newport LDP, which serve as guiding frameworks for our design decisions. Section 4 of TAN 12 delineates key considerations for achieving character-driven design solutions. These encompass Landscape Design, Scale, Amount, Layout of Development, and Appearance, each playing a pivotal role in shaping our proposal to harmonise with its context, and discussed over the next pages in more detail.

4.0 Character

The character of the proposed conversion, is deeply rooted in the rustic charm of its original features and the surrounding countryside. The stone walls and gable ends of the existing barn forms the cornerstone of the conversion's character, embodying the timeless appeal of rural architecture. These weathered elements evoke a sense of history and authenticity.

There is currently a metal sheet roof on the barn, this will be replaced with a slate roof as part of the proposal which will enhance the appearance of the building, and help blend it into the landscape.

In extending the structure, careful attention has been paid to maintaining architectural continuity and preserving the essence of the original building. The new extension has been thoughtfully designed to harmonise seamlessly with the existing structure, ensuring that its appearance is in keeping with the rustic character of the rural landscape. By utilising locally sourced materials such as stone, slate, and timber, the conversion honors the vernacular traditions of the region, and enhances the natural beauty and heritage of its surroundings.



Figure 1 - Existing rear elevation

5.0 Landscape Design

The landscape design is driven by a commitment to preserving the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the surrounding countryside while enhancing the livability of the site. In collaboration with landscape architect Gill Mackley from Mackley Davies, a comprehensive soft landscaping scheme has been meticulously crafted to complement the rural character of the property and promote biodiversity.

Central to the landscape design is the integration of a species-rich seed mix lawn, carefully curated to foster a thriving ecosystem and support local wildlife populations. The close-mown grass amenity area provides a backdrop for outdoor activities while maintaining a harmonious balance between cultivated spaces and natural habitats. Native hedgerows and specimen trees are strategically planted throughout the site to create visual interest, define boundaries, and enhance the sense of enclosure, contributing to the overall scenic quality of the landscape.

The landscape design also serves as a vital buffer, effectively screening the new hardscaped areas and ensuring privacy for residents while seamlessly blending the built environment with the natural surroundings. Emphasis is placed on sustainability and ecological sensitivity, with measures in place to mitigate potential environmental impacts and promote responsible land stewardship. By embracing the principles of landscape architecture, the design not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the property but also fosters a deeper connection to the land, fostering a sense of place and belonging for generations to come.

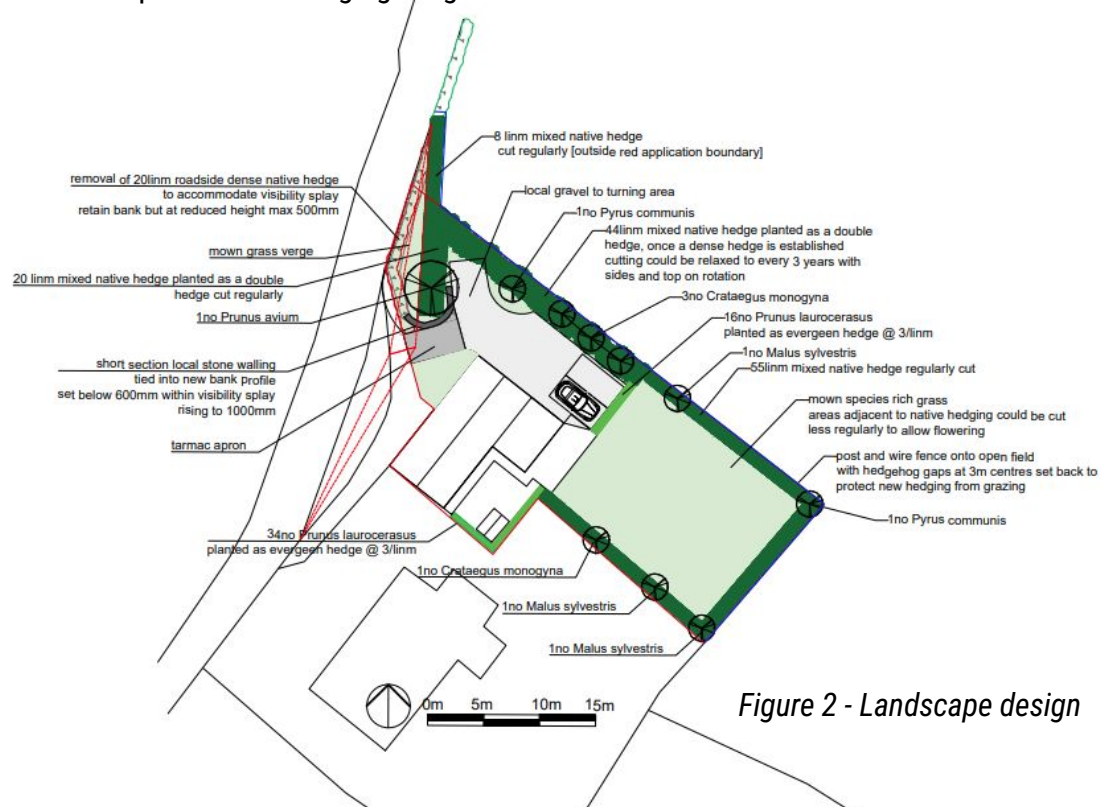


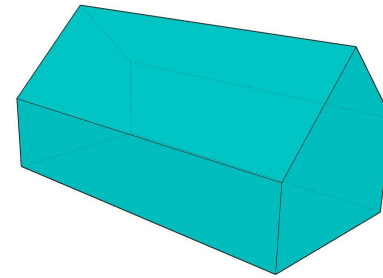
Figure 2 - Landscape design

6.0 Scale & Amount

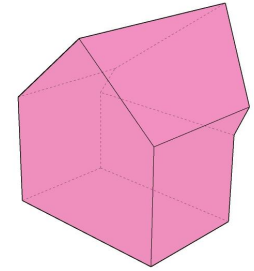
The proposed extension has been carefully designed to adhere to the guidelines outlined in Policy H13 of the Newport Local Development Plan (LDP), which governs extensions to dwellings in the countryside.

According to Policy H13, extensions to dwellings beyond defined settlement boundaries must meet specific criteria to be considered permissible. Firstly, the volume of the extension should not exceed 30% of the original dwelling's volume, ensuring that any alterations remain proportionate and sympathetic to the rural context.

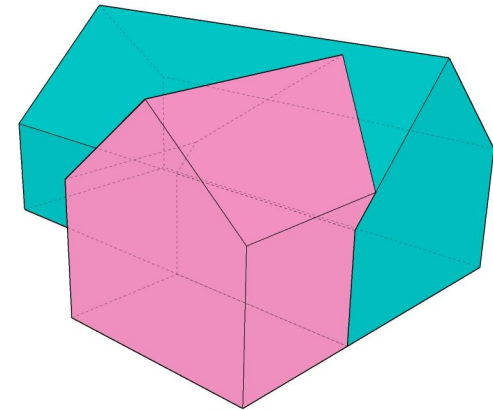
In adherence to these guidelines, the proposed extension to the existing barn represents a modest addition, with a volume of 108m³, while the existing barn boasts a volume of 372m³. This calculated approach ensures that the proposed extension remains within the prescribed limits outlined in Policy H13, mitigating the risk of overdevelopment and safeguarding the rural character of the surrounding landscape.



Existing volume 372m³



Proposed volume 108m³



Total volume 480m³

Figure 3 - 3D massing

7.0 Layout of Development

The proposed development embraces a thoughtful layout design that harmonises modern living requirements with the rustic charm of the existing barn structure. Spanning across two levels, the dwelling has been designed to optimise functionality, accessibility, and aesthetic appeal.

Upon entry through the south-east facing side of the extension, residents are greeted with a seamless transition into the heart of the home: an open-plan kitchen and dining area. This not only enhances social interaction but also maximises natural light, creating an inviting atmosphere for daily activities. From the kitchen, an unobstructed view extends into the adjoining living room, fostering connectivity and a sense of spaciousness.

Accessibility is a key consideration of the ground floor design, with level access provided throughout. The ground floor configuration includes a strategically positioned downstairs toilet for convenience. Upstairs there are three bedrooms, a family shower room, and an ensuite. The integration of rooflights in the bedrooms ensures privacy for the occupants and the adjacent bungalow.

Outdoor living is seamlessly integrated into the layout, with a patio area adjoining the main entrance and a purpose-built garden shed designed to discreetly store outdoor equipment. Careful attention has been paid to privacy concerns, with the layout strategically positioned to mitigate overlooking onto neighboring properties, facilitated by the absence of windows in the new first-floor gable.

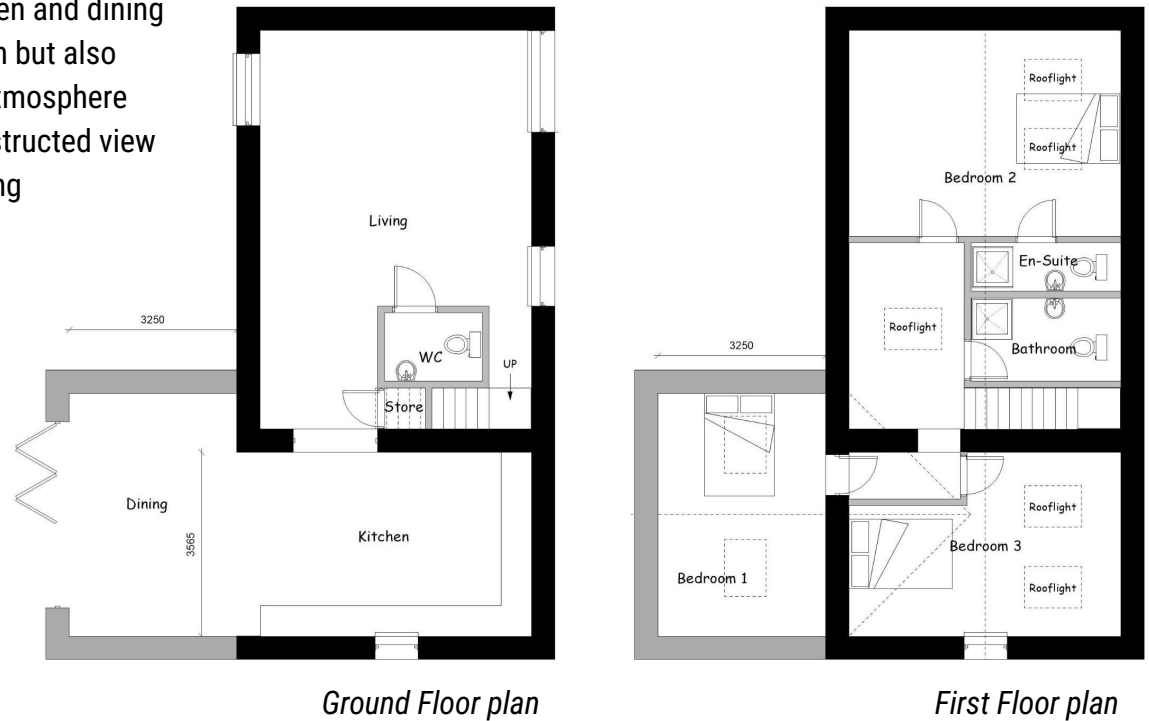


Figure 4 - Proposed Floor plans

8.0 Appearance

The proposed design encapsulates an aesthetic that is appropriate with the rural landscape. Drawing inspiration from traditional rural architecture, the appearance of the dwelling reflects a blend of heritage elements and modern sensibilities.

Exterior Facade:

The exterior facade pays homage to the vernacular architecture of rural buildings, featuring exposed stone walls and gable ends that evoke a timeless charm. Made from locally sourced materials, the facade is authentic and establishes a visual connection with the surrounding countryside.

Roofing:

A traditional slate roof will be installed. The roofline maintains a low profile, ensuring compatibility with the scale and character of neighboring buildings while enhancing the overall silhouette of the dwelling.

Materials and Finishes:

Natural materials such as stone, slate, and timber have been selected to enhance the visual appeal of the dwelling. Each element is chosen for its ability to age gracefully over time, gradually acquiring patina and character that further enriches the aesthetic narrative of the structure.

Fenestration and Openings:

Traditional-style windows with wooden frames will maintain continuity with the architectural style of historic farm buildings. The existing openings have been utilised to maintain the structure and appearance of the existing building.

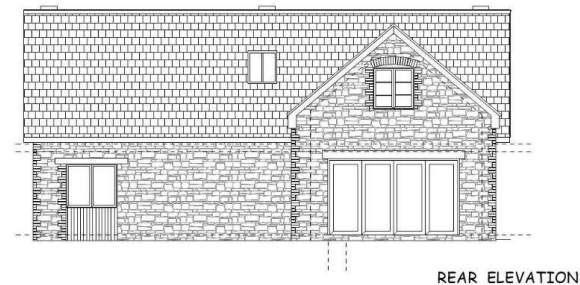
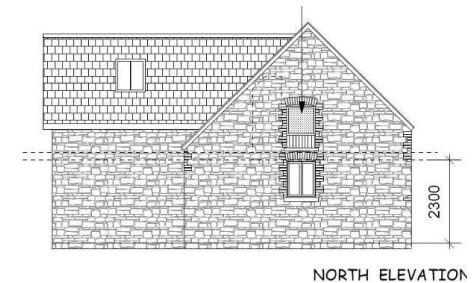
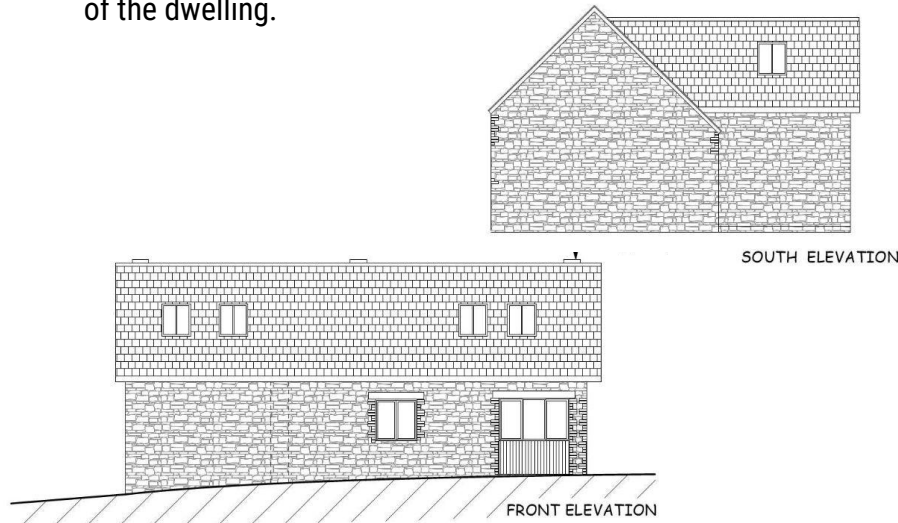


Figure 5 - Proposed Elevations

9.0 Access & Movement

Site Access:

The site benefits from a well-defined access point, with a dedicated driveway leading from Coc Y North Lane to the main entrance of the dwelling. The driveway is designed to accommodate 3 vehicles comfortably, and has turning head that would allow cars to enter and leave in a forward gear.

Pedestrian Access:

Pedestrian pathways are strategically incorporated into the design, offering safe and convenient access throughout the property. A clear pedestrian route guides residents and visitors from the driveway to the main entrance, ensuring ease of movement and enhancing overall accessibility.

Internal Circulation:

Internally, the layout is carefully configured to optimise circulation and promote functional efficiency. The open-plan design fosters fluid movement between living spaces, eliminating barriers and facilitating seamless interaction within the home. Level access throughout the ground floor ensures inclusivity and ease of mobility for occupants of all ages and abilities.

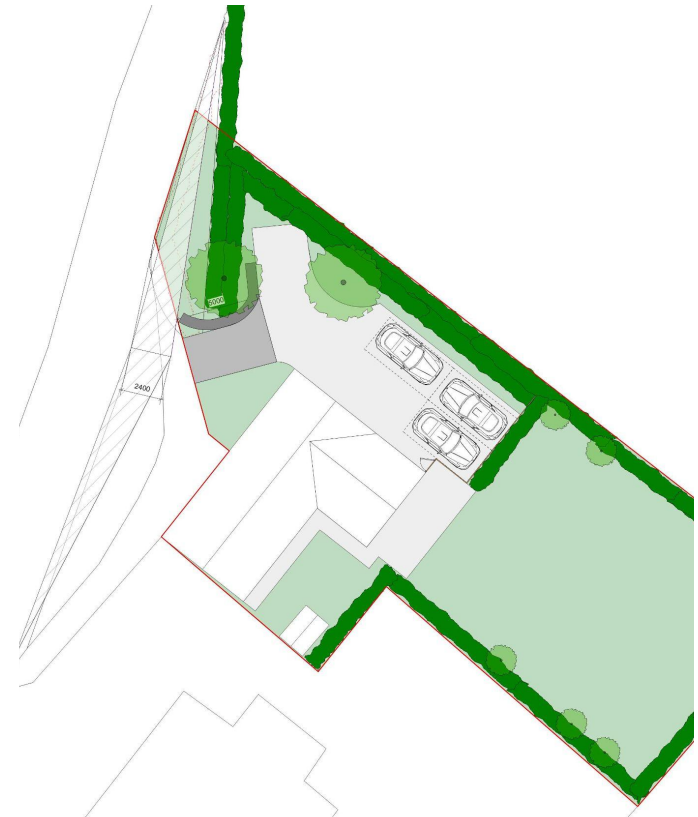


Figure 6 - Existing access and parking

10.0 Environmental Sustainability

The proposed house will adhere to the guidelines outlined in the building regulations, focusing on energy efficiency measures to minimise its impact on the environment and promote sustainable living. The architectural design will incorporate high levels of insulation in walls, roofs, and floors, ensuring minimal heat loss and maximising energy efficiency. Windows will be fitted with double or triple glazing and low emissivity coatings to enhance thermal performance. The building will feature energy-efficient lighting fixtures, including LED bulbs, to reduce electricity usage.

In addition, the development will employ water-efficient strategies to minimise water consumption and encourage responsible usage. Water-saving fixtures such as low-flow toilets, taps, and showerheads will be installed throughout the building. The implementation of rainwater harvesting systems will allow for the collection and storage of rainwater, which can be used for non-potable purposes like irrigating landscaped areas. These measures aim to reduce the demand for potable water and conserve this valuable resource.

To further enhance sustainability, the building will be equipped with energy-efficient appliances and systems. High-efficiency heating and ventilation systems will be installed, utilising advanced technologies to optimise energy performance while ensuring resident comfort. Careful selection of energy-efficient kitchen appliances, including refrigerators, dishwashers, and washing machines, will minimise electricity and water consumption. Smart technologies like programmable thermostats and occupancy sensors may also be incorporated to optimise energy usage and provide users with enhanced control.

In addition to energy efficiency, the project incorporates landscape design elements that promote biodiversity and habitat preservation. Native planting schemes and thoughtful landscaping choices contribute to the enhancement of ecological diversity, fostering a harmonious relationship between the built environment and the natural landscape. By creating green spaces and incorporating sustainable landscaping principles, the development aims to enrich the local environment while fostering a sense of ecological awareness among residents.

11.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the pre-application advice highlighted several key concerns that have been carefully considered and overcome as part of the preparation of this application.

Firstly, the volume of the proposed extension raised considerations regarding compliance with policy H13 of the Newport LDP, which limits extensions to dwellings in the countryside to 30% of the original dwelling's volume. The scale of the proposal has carefully reduced to ensure adherence to this policy.

Secondly, the impact of the development on the surrounding rural character and landscape was a significant concern. To mitigate this, the design has been refined to harmonise with the existing environment through a carefully selection of materials and modest amounts of glazing. Additionally, landscaping measures have been implemented to preserve the natural aesthetics and minimise the proposals visual impact.

Thirdly, traffic and access implications along Coc-Y North Lane were thoroughly evaluated. Measures have been proposed to address potential safety issues and minimise the impact of increased traffic movements on neighboring properties, The speed survey undertaken highlighted that the lane is not busy, and due to the small scale of the proposal, the additional car journey are unlikely to have a negative impact.

Environmental sustainability has been a central consideration throughout the development process. Energy-efficient design features and waste management strategies have been integrated into the proposal to minimise environmental impact and contribute to carbon reduction goals.

Lastly, ensuring the preservation of residential amenity for neighboring properties has been a priority. Design elements such as the placement of windows, landscaping for privacy, and the inclusion of outdoor storage facilities have been carefully considered to mitigate any adverse effects on neighboring residents.

We have taken on board the advice received in the pre app and used it to help shape the scheme, ensuring that the proposed development aligns with local planning policies and best practices while respecting the character and integrity of the surrounding rural landscape.