



Project

Commemorative
Woodland Site, Erddig

Location

Erddig, Wrexham

Client

National Trust Cymru

Principal contractor

Natural Resources Wales

Powers involvement

Topographical survey of fields
for redevelopment into a
woodland site

Project completion

June 2022

Erddig Hall is a unique place, where time stands still but is filled with life. Erddig Hall is a Grade I listed National Trust Property in Wrexham, North Wales. The building was built in the 17th century and added to in the 18th century, and it sits on 1,900 acres of land. National Trust Cymru is planning a commemorative woodland site, to remember those lost to Covid-19. The Powers team was brought onto the project to provide National Trust Cymru with an accurate topographical survey of the proposed woodland site.

Commemorative Woodland Site, Erddig



THE PROJECT

Owned by The National Trust, Erddig Hall has a long and vibrant history. It is a well-visited tourist destination, which showcases its spectacular gardens and hosts a variety of activities and entertainment for families.

National Trust Cymru is working at Erddig in partnership with Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Government, to create a commemorative woodland site to remember those lost and affected by Covid-19. There are also two other commemorative woodland sites being developed in Wales.

The commemorative woodland project forms part of the Welsh Government's National Forest Programme. It will have a 'resilience' theme and will be crucial to both nature's recovery (restoring natural ecosystems that have been damaged or destroyed) and to help combat the current climate problem. The tree species chosen will also be resilient to the threats posed by pests, and diseases. The National Trust intends to create other animal habitats including pondscapes, hedgerows, and meadows.

OUR INVOLVEMENT

Powers was approached by National Trust Cymru's team to conduct a topographic survey of the surrounding fields. The topographic survey provided the team at National Trust Cymru with vital information, about the ideal locations to plant saplings in the field.

THE CHALLENGES

For National Trust Cymru to be able to turn this green belt site into a woodland paradise, a topographical survey of the area was required to capture all the correct spatial data to plan the woodland.

The site comprises of a 9-hectare block of land. It is a combination of three fields, with dips and hollows in the ground, that can hold large bodies of water and houses a large ephemeral pond.

The fields are predominantly flat floodplain land (located next to a river or stream), which includes an oxbow lake (a U-shaped lake, that is freestanding) and river channels, that support alder carr (waterlogged wooded terrain, populated with

alder trees) and standing water. As there are large bodies of water on the land, understanding the drainage of the fields and the impact of planting a new woodland was vital. Having the Powers team complete a topographic survey of the field meant National Trust Cymru was able to identify any dips in the contours of the land and understand how the water flows in and around the existing ponds, to make use of the land's natural drainage. National Trust Cymru was also keen on adding access for the public to use. Due to the fields currently being used as grazing for cows and bulls, there is no usable public access. The topographic survey provided by Powers was also able to identify areas around the proposed woodland site that would be suitable to grant public access. The topographic plan would also be used to create the site map to show visitors where they could go in the new woodland.

THE OUTCOME

As the new commemorative woodlands mature, they will serve as both a symbol of Wales's resiliency throughout the pandemic, and of regeneration and rejuvenation. They will serve as memorials where friends, family, and the public can commemorate loved ones who have passed away and reflect on the pandemic and the profound effect it has had on people.

National Trust Cymru plan on holding planting days to invite people to help create the new woodland area. National Trust Cymru hope the woodland site will be open to the public in 2023, but it will take several years for the trees to fully mature.

To ensure that the woodlands offer opportunities for enjoyment, education, and exercise, as well as, in this case, a space for reflection to remember those lost to Covid-19, community engagement will be at the forefront of the establishment of National Forest areas.



We are proud to say Erddig has been selected as one of the locations chosen by the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales to have a new commemorative woodland in remembrance of those lost during Covid-19. This project is extremely meaningful and having the Powers team on site conducting a topographic survey has helped us to determine the lay of the land and create a planting scheme for where the new trees will go. The Powers team was great at communicating without team, and carried out the work quickly and effectively.

Victoria Warland
National Trust Cymru