Biodiversity Statement

Proposed Commercial Development
For land at Wynnstay Technology Park,
Ruabon, Nr Wrexham, LL14 6EN

Planning Ref: P/2022/0306
Our Ref: 21/2210

Sean Caddick Architectural
13 Belvidere Walk
Shrewsbury
SY2 5LT

Issue – May 2024

1 Introduction

Background

Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) has given planning consent (Ref. P/2022/0306) for the erection of 6No. Industrial Units (Class B1) on the site of Wynnstay Technology Park, Llangollen Road, Ruabon, Wrexham, LL14 6EN. The site sits south west of Wrexham town centre and to the East of Hampden Way.

Condition 17 of the consent is as follows:
'*No development shall commence until a detailed plan to provide net benefit for biodiversity (NBB) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The measures shall be fully implemented as approved prior to the first beneficial use of the development and shall be retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development*'.

This Statement (along with the Landscaping plan) seeks to provide the information required to discharge this condition.

The site has been cleared for some time with no buildings or other structures. It comprises of an area of grassland and gravel covered by trees which is surrounded by fences, a bank and trees.

An Ecologocal Appraisal was carried out by Greenscape Environmental Ltd in October 2019 for this site and the proposed residential development.

This Biodiversity Statement includes the following:

1. Identification of locations and opportunities for potential ecological enhancements.
2. Demonstration of how net benefit for biodiversity (and ecosystem resilience) will be secured and maintained. Full details of the recommended ecological enhancements.

The existing site is bounded on the East and West by existing trees, the main site area is scrub land with no ecological benefit.

The Proposals

The area of land to the North of the proposed development is subject to planning for residential development, with the associated green infrastructure improvements.

Within the site is proposed to erection of 6No. Industrial Units (Class B1)

As defined within the Tree Condition Report by Forester & Arborist Services Ltd there are 3 trees to be retained on Western boundary.

Biodiversity Enhancement

Introduction

Technical Advice Note 5 (Nature Conservation and Planning) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2009)4 and Wrexham County Borough Council (2011)5 seek developments to achieve net biodiversity gain. The requirement to secure and maintain net benefit for biodiversity (NBB) (through enhancements) was reinforced in a letter issued by the Chief Planner (Welsh Government) to all planning departments in October 2019. NBB has been defined as '*the concept that development should leave biodiversity and ecosystems in a better state than before, through securing long term, measurable and demonstrable benefit, primarily on site*.'6

This was reiterated in a letter from the Minister for Climate Change to the Heads of Planning dated October 2023. An Annex7 attached to this letter provided text to update Planning Policy Wales (PPW). Subsequently, Chapter 6 of PPW has been updated as of 11/10/23 which provides '*further clarity .... on securing net benefit for biodiversity through the application of the step-wise approach, including the acknowledgement of off-site compensation measures as a last resort, and, the need to consider enhancement and long-term management at each step.*'

WCBC (2011) lists '*examples of how enhancements could be achieved on development sites*'. The options provided include planting native trees of local provenance and provision of bird-boxes. CIEEM (2022) states that '*a key requirement is that the measures put forward are suitable in the local context of the site*'8.

The following enhancement measures are proposed:

- Three grassed areas of flowering wild meadow mixture.
- Two areas of broadleaved woodland.

Assessment of Required Level of Provision

The buildings and associated structures have previously been demolished. The whole site was cleared at the same time. Ecological enhancement measures have previously been agreed in relation to these works. This assessment therefore relates to the site in its existing state and in relation to the new buildings and car park to be constructed.

Construction of the new buildings and car park can be categorised as a small/ low impact proposal. Development of this site would not result in a significant impact on any valued ecological resource at this location.

NBB provision '*should be proportional to the extent and impact of development*' (CIEEM 2022). The proposed enhancements will therefore target a priority species known to be present in the area as well as increasing the general biodiversity value of the site.

Biodiversity Enhancement Recommendations

Creation of the 'Meadow Lawn'

The three small areas of grassland located either side of the vehicular access off Henblas Road will be sown with the Meadowmania '*British Native Meadow Wildflower Seeds for Meadow Lawns*'15. This mix contains 12 native species of wildflower and seven native grasses. It is designed to create a diverse lawn that can tolerate close mowing to a height of 5 cm for most of the year. The mowing should be stopped for a period during the summer to allow for flowering. Flowering can be from May to September but mowing does not need to be stopped for this entire period.

The seed should be sown in the spring (March-May) or the autumn (late August to October). Advice will be obtained from the supplier on ground preparation, how and when to sow. As it is a relatively small area it may be most appropriate to sow by hand. The recommended sowing rate is 4g/m2.

An appropriate management regime will be reviewed after the grassland has established. It is likely that a greater amount of management will be required during the establishment phase. Advice on appropriate management would also be sought from the supplier.

Planting Native Trees

New trees are to be planted to the East and West boundaries to replace those proposed for removal. They should be positioned so as to not interfere with the new boundary fence and the visibility splays.

The trees should be checked annually by the owners. Any losses will be replaced. Some maintenance including possibly watering, may need to be undertaken during establishment.

The trees will be planted between November and March. They will be planted in accordance with the advice provided by the Woodland Trust

Maintenance and Monitoring

The importance of securing long-term management/ maintenance and monitoring is central to the NBB approach (*e.g.,* CIEEM 2022). This should also be proportional to the scale and impact of the development.

The newly planted trees and Meadow Lawn should be checked annually by the owners. The trees may need some aftercare until they are properly established and any losses will be replaced. Aftercare of the Meadow Lawn should be in accordance with the supplier's instructions.