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GREAT CRESTED NEWT MANAGEMENT PLAN

At

Lower Park Farm
Parkside
Rossett
Wrexham
LL12 0BN

NGR: SJ 38503 54795

Prepared for:	Rossett Park Farming c/o Hourigan Planning Ltd.
Written by:	Daniel Smith, UES Ecologist
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Daniel Smith BSc MScRes, Ecologist for United Environmental Services (UES) Ltd. Daniel is licensed by Natural Resources Wales to disturb, take and handle great crested newts under licence number S093616/1.

It has been verified by Kathryn James BSc MRes MCIEEM, UES Senior Project Manager. Kathryn is licensed by Natural Resources Wales to disturb, take and handle great crested newts under licence number S094739/1.

1.2 Proposed development

The works onsite comprise two phases:

- Phase 1 was the creation of hardstanding and a 2m wide educational trail/agricultural track. Planning permission was granted retrospectively by Wrexham County Borough Council on 13th March 2025 (P/2024/1167) for this phase of the development.

- Phase 2 is for an extension to the existing car park, installation of a farm shop within a converted shipping container, outdoor seating area, and landscaping.

1.3 Objectives and scope

This great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* management plan has been produced in order to discharge condition 5 of planning permission P/2024/1167 (phase 1):

Within 3 months of the determination of this application, a Great Crested Newt Management Plan must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Management Plan should build upon the principles outlined in the Great Crested Newt Impact Assessment and include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- *Further details concerning management prescriptions*
- *Post construction monitoring plan*
- *Details regarding biosecurity measures.*

The Management Plan shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

This management plan has also been prepared in support of Phase 2 of the development.

2 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

2.1 Phase 1

Phase 1 comprises a compacted aggregate footpath, approximately 2 metres wide and 2.4km long, around the periphery of the agricultural pasture fields of Lower Park Farm. A small car park has also been constructed within the eastern section of the site for visitor parking and bale storage. The 2.4km footpath resulted in the loss of approximately 8m of native hedgerow and 0.76ha of modified grassland. See UES' January 2025 preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) for further information (report reference UES04733/01).

A GCN impact assessment was undertaken by UES on 30th October 2024. All ponds and aquatic features on site and within 250m of the site boundary were assessed for their potential to support GCNs using the habitat suitability index (HSI). See UES' January 2025 GCN impact assessment for further information (report reference UES04733/02).

Eleven ponds were identified within 250m of the proposed development site, the closest of which is located approximately 80m west of the trail (Pond 1). All ponds within 250m were assessed for their suitability to support GCNs using the HSI:

- Ponds 3 - 7 were assessed as 'good' suitability for GCNs
- Pond 2 was assessed as 'average' suitability for GCNs
- Ponds 9 - 11 were assessed as 'below average' suitability for GCNs
- Pond 1 was assessed as 'poor' suitability for GCNs

Although there are ponds suitable to support GCN in the wider landscape, given the small scale of the development, type of habitat impacted and the construction activities that were undertaken, it is considered unlikely GCN, and other amphibians were directly impacted by the development works. The majority of the impacted habitat was grazed pasture and no excavation works were undertaken to create the trail. In addition, the grass was mown prior to the aggregate application; therefore, it was broadly unsuitable to support GCN and other common amphibians at the time of works.

The development resulted in the loss of 8m of hedgerow and 0.76ha of pasture along the field boundaries. This is not considered to have caused any issues with habitat fragmentation, although it may have resulted in a minor impact on GCN foraging habitat within the local area. No aquatic habitat has been affected.

Native planting is due to be undertaken on site to compensate for the loss of potential GCN habitat as part of phase 1 of the development. See section 3 for further information.

2.2 Phase 2

The phase 2 development site is 0.12ha in size and is predominantly improved grassland with a small area of hardstanding along the eastern boundary, which will form the access point from the existing car park. A native hedgerow with mature trees runs along the northern boundary (outside of the development boundary). See UES' June 2025 PEA for further information (report reference UES04733/04).

The phase 2 development site has limited potential to support GCNs; there are no aquatic habitats onsite, and the terrestrial habitats onsite are broadly unsuitable for GCNs. Due the small scale of the proposed works, type of habitat due to be impacted and the proposed

construction techniques, it is considered unlikely GCN will be directly impacted by the development works.

Although no compensatory planting is required as part of phase 2, native hedgerow planting will be undertaken along the western development boundary and a wildflower grassland will be created to the south of site to provide an enhancement in habitats available to wildlife locally.

3 BIOSECURITY MEASURES

Prior to accessing the site and before leaving the site, the following biosecurity prevention measures will be implemented during construction:

- All footwear and outerwear must be cleaned to remove any organic material, for example leaves and soil. Clean brushes to be carried for this purpose.
- Following the removal of organic material all footwear must be sprayed or dipped in disinfectant until it runs off. See disinfection procedure, below.
- Mud and other organic material to be cleaned from vehicle tyres, wheels and wheel arches prior to arrival on site.
- Clean and disinfect tools and equipment before accessing site.
- No soil or substrate will be introduced onto the site from areas which contain or are likely to contain invasive species or diseases.

Disinfection procedure

1. Brush off all debris, plant fragments including wood chippings, and all organic material e.g. soil.
2. Rinse with water.
3. Disinfect by spraying with a solution of Virkon disinfectant, (10mg/ml or as printed instructions, if for example using tablets) until the spray runs off. Boots should be stood in a bucket or other container of solution, especially prior to going on site. Spraying should take place away from vegetation.
4. Leave for at least 1 minute
5. Rinse with clean water, brought to site for this purpose.

Virkon solution should ideally be kept and flushed into a sink or drain with water. If on site disposal is required, the solution should be disposed of on a large hardstanding area away from vegetation.

4 LANDSCAPING AND HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Each habitat on site will require a certain level of establishment, maintenance and monitoring to ensure that they are providing the ecosystem function required of them. Section 3.1 details the habitats being retained or created, and specific management measures for each habitat. The management responsibilities and mechanisms to ensure compliance are explained in section 3.2, and finally the management measures are summarised in the management schedule in section 3.3.

4.1 Habitat creation and management

4.1.1 Native hedgerow planting

26.54m of compensatory hedgerow planting is due to be undertaken onsite in accordance with planning permission P/2024/1167. This hedgerow planting was originally due to be undertaken along the western development boundary of Phase 1. However, given that the planting works have not yet been undertaken (due to seasonal constraints) this hedgerow will instead be delivered along the western development boundary of Phase 2.

A further 8.46m of native hedgerow planting will also be undertaken as part of Phase 2 to create a 35m hedgerow in total along the western development boundary. Hedgerow planting will be undertaken in winter 2025 / 2026. The species and composition of the newly planted hedgerow is detailed below:

- Up to 85% blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*.
- 5-15% hazel *Corylus avellana* and field maple *Acer campestre*.
- 0-5% of holly *Ilex aquifolium*, field rose *Rosa arvensis*, gooseberry *Ribes uva-crispa*, bird cherry *Prunus padus* and dog rose *Rosa canina*.

Hedgerow planting will be undertaken in the winter when shrubs are dormant as this will help to reduce damage and increase establishment rates. The hedgerow will be planted between November and March (inclusive). Newly planted shrubs will be staked to aid growth, and they will be protected from deer, squirrel or rabbit damage using biodegradable spirals or guards. Hedgerows will be maintained to encourage thickening growth and to reach the desired height of 3m gradually, by increasing the cutting height of the hedge by small amounts each year. Incremental height increase is the key to the hedge management cycle, sympathetically allowing a hedgerow to progress slowly through its natural growth cycle without putting it under damaging stress. It also promotes a dense healthy hedgerow. Using this approach, a hedgerow may take many tens of years to complete a full cycle of growth, and at all times during this remain dense, healthy and functional. The hedgerow will be maintained in accordance with the Hedgelink - Hedgerow Management Cycle, stages 1-10, with the aim to keep the hedgerow healthy at all times by allowing it to cycle between points 3 and 8. Side trimming of hedgerows in an 'A' profile to a promote healthy hedgerow base should be undertaken in January or February. Hedgerows will be cut along one side annually, alternating between the two sides of the hedgerow each year, so that each side of the hedgerow being cut every two years. All hedgerow cuttings to be collected and removed.

All pruning should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season and should be avoided from March to August inclusive. If any specialist works are required, an approved arboriculturist should be appointed.

A mix of species will be chosen to maximise the biodiversity value of the hedge by increasing structural diversity and increasing the range of foraging opportunities for a variety of taxa. The variety of native species proposed will ensure foraging opportunities are provided for a wide variety of invertebrates (larval stages, nectar feeders and pollinators), birds and small mammals (from the fruit and nut bearing species) and for bats, birds and other mammals from the invertebrates that will be attracted to the hedge.

4.1.2 Wildflower meadow

To increase botanical diversity and connectivity, a 2m wide wildflower strip will be created alongside the trail as part of phase 1. In addition, 0.12ha of wildflower grassland will be created to the south of the development site as part of phase 2. The grasslands will be seeded with a wildflower mix suitable for use in an improved field with nutrient rich soils and will be fenced off from the pasture fields in order to prevent grazing.

The initial sowing and ground works should be carried out by a suitably experienced contractor and may take place in spring (March to June) or autumn (mid-August to October). The sowing and associated ground preparation works will be undertaken as detailed within the landscaping specification prepared for the site.

In the first year, the likely flush of weeds should not be cut until mid-late summer. The first cut should be undertaken from early August; mown vegetation should be left in situ for 48 hours, before being collected and disposed of at a licensed tip. The cuttings must not be left, as this will increase the level of nutrients within the soil and prohibit the establishment of the wildflower grassland. The grassland can then be mown regularly until late March, with competitive weeds removed as needed over this period.

From the second year onwards, the grassland can be subject to a summer hay cut in August, following which cuttings should be left to dry and shed seed for 1-7 days before being removed. The grassland can then be mown regularly as considered necessary until spring, from which time no cutting or grazing should occur until the August hay cut.

Any litter or debris should be removed from the area prior to cutting and underneath these materials should be checked for sheltering wildlife.

The provision of wildflower grassland will provide immediate benefits for wildlife in the form of foraging, breeding and sheltering opportunities. In the longer term, the grassland will also be colonised naturally by additional native plant species.

4.2 Responsibilities, monitoring and remedial measures

The responsibility for ensuring that the initial habitat creation works lies with the landowner / developer and the contractors appointed to carry out those works at the time of the development. They will be responsible for ensuring that the habitat creation works are carried out to in accordance with this document.

Subsequent management of the habitats on site will be the responsibility of the landowner. They must ensure that the ongoing measures detailed within this management plan are implemented. An annual meeting must be held to discuss these issues and whether any remedial works are necessary to restore the habitats to a satisfactory standard. This meeting should be held from late summer to winter, so that the habitats can be assessed when in flower (e.g. wildflower grassland) and to allow for the required remedial works to be arranged.

The landowner will also be responsible for instructing a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE) to undertake monitoring surveys in years 1, 3 and 5. The SQE will prepare a monitoring report following each survey, which will be submitted to the landowner detailing if the habitats are achieving their target diversity and condition. These reports will be submitted to the LPA by the landowner to ensure that the conditions of the planning permission are being met. If habitats are not achieving their target condition, the management strategy will be reviewed and amended where necessary and a meeting will be arranged with the management company.

4.3 Management schedule

The below table summarises the management requirements and responsibilities detailed in the previous sections. This table should be read in conjunction with the previous sections, which include more detail which should not be overlooked. Given the low impact to GCN, this management plan should be implemented for a period of five years.

Table 1 – Management schedule

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	TIMINGS
Initial works – carried out by the landowner or appointed contractors		
Hedgerow planting	Planting of new hedgerows.	During the development, although planting between October and April is preferred.
Sowing of wildflower grassland	Preparatory ground works and sowing to be carried out by appropriately experienced contractor.	March to April, or September to October.
Establishment – carried out by the landowner		
Tree / hedge plant establishment assessment	Inspection of newly planted trees / hedgerows to monitor establishment after first growing season. Any trees deemed not to be in sufficient health / sufficiently well-established are to be replaced by the planting contractor.	After first full growing season, in late summer when leaves are still present to provide indication of tree health.
Weed suppression of sown grasslands	To decrease competition for target wildflower species: prolific weeds (thistles, docks and dominant grasses)	The first April after sowing.
Initial mowing of wildflower grasslands	To prevent nutrient enrichment. Sward is to be cut down to 40 – 75mm. Cuttings are to be left *in situ* for 48 hours, then collected and disposed of appropriately.	End of October after first year of sowing; this will allow flowers to set seed and amphibians to move towards hibernation sites.
Ongoing management – carried out by the landowner for a period of at least five years		
Initial pruning of hedgerows	To establish dense, bushy growth.	Two years after planting. January to February.
Subsequent pruning of hedgerows.	To establish dense, bushy growth. Pruning should aim to achieve a height of around 3m and a width of around 2m.	Once every three years following the initial pruning. January to February.

Ongoing management of wildflower grasslands	Removal of litter or debris from mowing area and checking for sheltering wildlife underneath. Sward is to be cut down to 40 – 75mm. Cuttings are to be left *in situ* for 48 hours, then collected and disposed of appropriately. During each cut, the sward should be monitored for establishing weeds, including brambles, and these should be uprooted, cut back or use of appropriate herbicide.	August to October, annually.
Annual management meetings (landowner)	To discuss the establishment and condition of habitats, and whether any remedial actions are required to restore habitats.	End of summer to winter, annually.
Monitoring survey and report (SQE)	To assess the condition of habitats and determine whether any remedial actions are required in order for the habitat to achieve their desired species diversity and condition.	Survey to be undertaken in June or July.

5 CONCLUSION

Once implemented, the landscaping and habitat enhancements will provide a biologically diverse landscape. The bottom-up approach to improving the biodiversity on site will ensure that the habitats on site can support a range of invertebrate species and provide other food sources, which will then in turn benefit fauna further up the food chain.

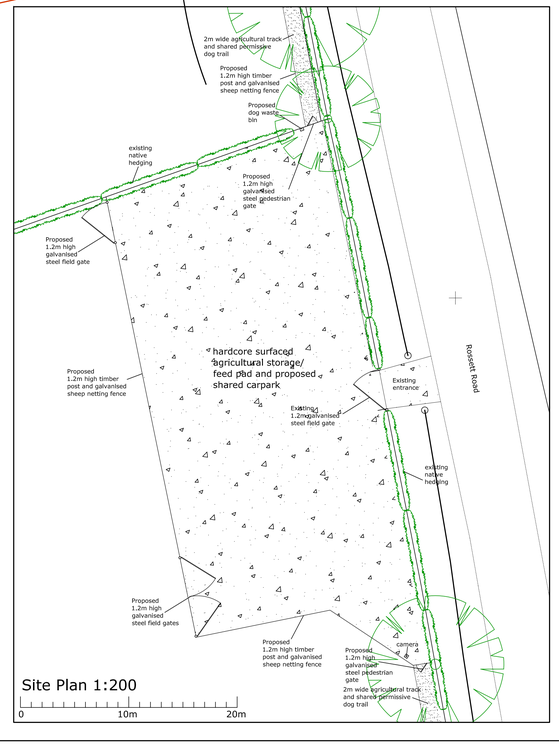
The site layout and landscape design include the retention of linear green corridors around site and native hedgerow planting and wildflower meadows, which will provide commuting, foraging, and sheltering opportunities for amphibians. These habitats will be subject to ongoing management as part of the operational phase of the development, and as such, will secure suitable habitat for amphibians onsite in the long term.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Phase 1 site plan

Park Lane
Cwrt Lon y Parc
Lower Parkside Cottages
16.5m
2m wide agricultural track and shared permissive dog trail
Track
Laburnum Cottage
LB
Meadows End Cottage
Denvor Cottage
Daisy Lane
11.9m
Drain
Lower Parks Farm Cottages
Slurry Lagoon
Lower Parks Farm
Pond
Rossett Road
Drain
10.4m
B 5102
Path (um)
Parkside
Slurry Bed
Tanks
agricultural storage/ feed pad and proposed shared carpark
Pond
Track
Path (um)
Path (um)
Path (um)

Site Plan 1:1000
0 20m 40m 60m 80m 100m



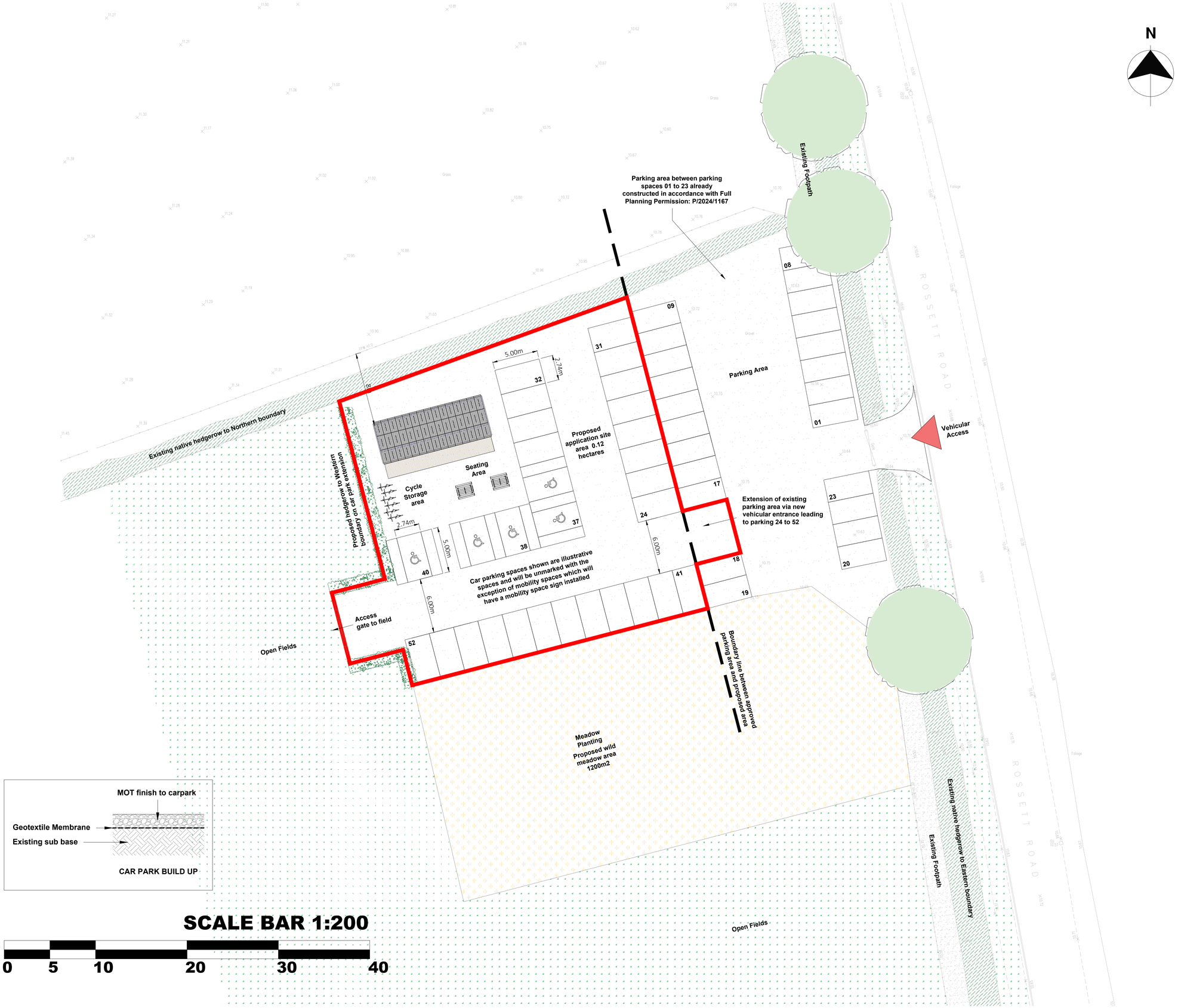
Site Plan 1:200
0 10m 20m

Revision:
i 01-08-24 SB Site plan revised
ii 06-08-24 SB Area eged red revised

Title: Proposed Site Plan Lower Park Farm, Parkside, Wrexham, LL12 0BN		
Client: OS Planning		
Scale: 1:1000, 1:200@A0	Drawing number: 1270-02	
Date: 30/07/24	Drawn by: SB	Revision: i i

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Appendix 2 – Phase 2 site plan



Notes

This drawing is not to be used on site unless issued for construction.

Do not scale, use figured dimensions only. All dimensions to be verified on site prior to the commencement of any work or the production of any fabrication drawings.

All setting out is to be checked and confirmed on site.

All levels are to be checked and confirmed on site.

All discrepancies to be reported to the Architect.

All building work is to comply with the full planning approval, including satisfaction of any stipulated conditions to the satisfaction of the Local Authority Planning Department.

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all related Architect's and Engineer's drawings and any other relevant information.

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No.	Revision/Issue	Date:
P5	Additional turning area added, red edge revised, meadow plating revised to suit.	18.06.25
P4	Amendments made to drawing description.	27.05.25
P3	Amendments made to suit Marc H & Client's comments.	23.05.25
P2	Amendments made to suit Marc H & Client's comments.	22.05.25
P1	Amendments made to suit Marc H comments.	17.05.25
P0	Client Proposal.	17.05.25

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Project Details:

Extension to existing car park, installation of a farm shop within a converted shipping container, outdoor seating area, cycle parking, planting and landscaping

The Tail Trail, Rossett Road, Holt, Wrexham

Status: As Proposed	**Sheet No:** Planning Drawings 140525-002-P5
Date: May 2025	
Scale: 1:200 Site Plan @ A1	**Drawn By:** TW