# Supporting Planning Statement

Planning application for the change of use of land for car parking, minor alterations and associated landscaping to create 17 car parking spaces at Trevor Basin, New Road, Trevor, Wrexham

LL20 7TT

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# 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This supporting information has been prepared by the Canal & River Trust (the Trust) to accompany a planning application for the change of use of land for car parking, minor alterations and associated landscaping to create 17 car parking spaces at Trevor Basin, New Road, Trevor, Wrexham LL20 7TT.

1.2 The proposal is to create 17 new car parking spaces in this location to replace 17 existing car parking spaces located nearby, which are required to be made available through obligation of s106 Agreement NR/042504 associated with planning consent P/2021/0560 ('*Redevelopment of canal basin for use as a boat hire business including erection of 2 buildings and storage enclosure*').

1.3 The current location of the 17 car parking spaces is no longer available in perpetuity and therefore the car parking spaces must be relocated elsewhere to full the long-term obligation of the s106 Agreement. Therefore, this application seeks planning permission to create the car parking spaces in an alternative suitable location. Necessary changes to the s106 Agreement will be addressed separately with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC).

1.4 This statement addresses relevant planning matters including the reasons why planning permission should be granted. The statement is structured under the following headings as described below:

**Introduction**. Sets out the purpose of the statement, some background context and the full list of plans and documents.

**Application Documents**. Outlines the purpose of each technical document accompanying the planning application.

**Site Description**. Sets out a detailed description of land and physical features within the planning application site (the site).

**The Proposed Development.** Sets out a detailed description of the proposed works scheme that make up the scheme for which the Trust is seeking planning permission.

**Relevant Planning History**. Sets out the details of relevant planning history recently granted by Wrexham Country Borough Council (WCBC) in relation to various developments at Trevor Basin.

**Planning Policy Context**. Identifies the 'statutory development plan' for WCBC, establishes land designations within the application site and neighbouring land, sets out a comprehensive list of local planning policies relevant to the proposed development, relevant supplementary planning documents and relevant parts of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12).

**Planning Analysis**. Provides an analysis of compliance with the relevant planning policy and other material considerations of relevance to a decision on the planning application.

**Conclusions**. Provides a concise summary of the main points raised and justification for the proposed development.

1.5 In addition to this Planning Statement, the planning application includes the following documents, plans and drawings.

**Documents**

- Completed application form and signed certificates
- Heritage Impact Statement
- Ecological Assessment
- Habitat Regulations Assessment 'Phase 1 Screening'
- Green Infrastructure and Net Biodiversity Benefit Plan

**Plans**

- Location Plan
- Existing Site Plan
- Proposed Site Plan
- Proposed Sections
- Proposed Landscape Plan
- Supplementary Planting Site Plan
- Swept Path Drawings

# 2.0 Application Documents

2.1 A description of the application documents is set out below.

**Planning Statement:** addresses the relevant planning matters and relevant planning policy context, including an assessment to demonstrate that planning permission should be granted.

**Heritage Impact Statement:** provides an assessment of the significance of and impact upon any identified heritage assets as a result of the proposed development.

**Ecological Appraisal:** provides the results of ecological surveys carried out and an assessment of the potential effects of the proposal along with appropriate mitigation measures.

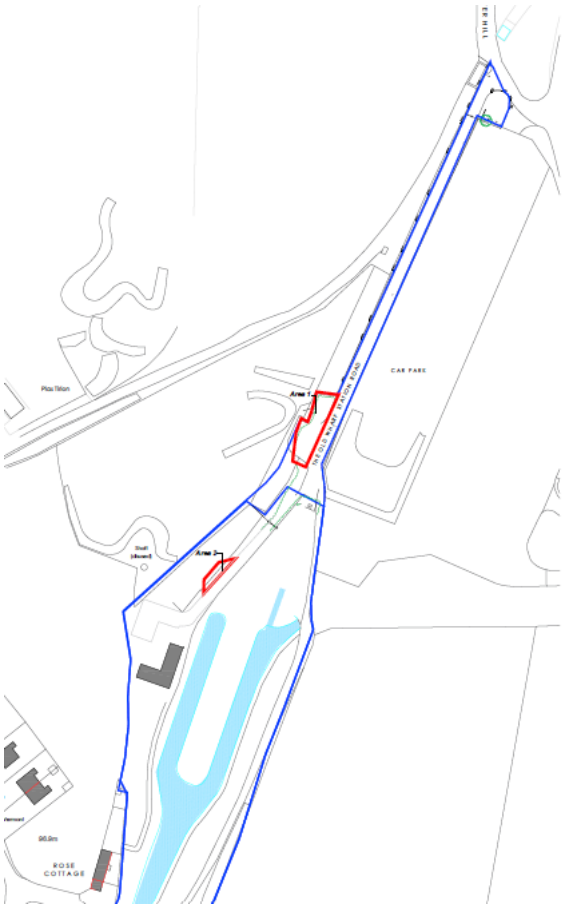
**Green Infrastructure and Net Gain Biodiversity Benefit Plan:** defines the measures required to protect and enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity within the site to achieve a net biodiversity benefit as a result of the proposed works.

**Habitat Regulations Assessment 'screening':** provides an assessment to consider and conclude upon whether the proposed development has a likely significant effect on any European/Ramsar site either alone or in combination with any other project.

# 3.0 Site Description

3.1 The application site ('the site') consists of two parcels of land situated within close proximity of one another, which are located towards the north of Trevor Basin on a private vehicular access drive, off Tower Hill, on land adjacent to the existing main Trevor Basin visitor car park.

3.2 The image below illustrates the extent of the site in two parts, edged in red and remaining Trust landownership in blue.




3.3 The site is currently being used, on a temporary basis, as the compound and storage area in association with construction works to build-out planning consent P/2021/0560 for '*Redevelopment of canal basin for use as a boat hire business including erection of 2 buildings and storage enclosure'*. The current temporary compound use will be removed when construction works finish.

3.4 Land within the site currently has a surface finish suitable to accommodate the vehicular parking and manoeuvrability requirements associated with its use as a construction compound.

3.5 The larger of the two areas of land edged red on the above plan (shown on Drawing 2025 38 102 'Proposed Parking Section Details Plan – Section BB') consists of a 'no-dig' construction method to protect tree roots, which involves creating a suitable sub-base filled with angular stone to level out any undulations, laying a Type 1 MOT sub-base. The surface finish consists of a porous geotextile fabric (Geogrid Callweb - cellular confinement system) to separate the granular stone surface finish material. All of which is fully permeable to accommodate surface water drainage. A bullnose kerb provides a suitable interface between the existing road and the site. To rear boarding pegged into the ground and timber sleepers provides robust strength and an adequate finish.

3.6 There are established trees located beyond the north and west boundary to the rear edge and an open frontage facing out onto the private vehicular access driveway.

3.7 The image below shows the current appearance of this part of the site as described above.



3.8 The smaller of the two areas of land shown edged red on the above location plan image (shown on Drawing 2025 38 102 'Proposed Parking Section Details Plan – Section AA') currently consists of an MOT Type 3 sub-base on geotextile Terram and has a timber sleeper boarder to the rear edge. There is a further final surface finish to be added to this part of the site, which is described in *The Proposed Development* section below.

3.9 There are established trees located beyond the north and west boundary to the rear edge and an open frontage facing out onto the private vehicular access driveway.

3.10 The image below shows the current appearance of this part of the site as described above (finished surface to be added).




3.11 In a wider context the site is located within the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, also partly within and partly on the very edge of the designated Conservation Area.

3.12 In 2009 the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Trevor Basin and eleven miles of the Llangollen Canal between Chirk and Horseshoe Falls were inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS). The WHS recognises the worldwide importance of the landscape character and heritage value of the canal, basin, and aqueduct.

3.13 Trevor Basin and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct are a popular tourist destination. There are high visitor numbers to this location for tourism, leisure, and recreational purposes. Water based activities and use of the adjacent towpath and surrounding land are very popular.

# 4.0 The Proposed Development

4.1 The proposed development is for the change of use, minor alterations and landscaping to create 17 new car parking spaces on the site. The proposed car parking spaces are required to replace 17 existing car parking spaces located nearby in the existing main Trevor Basin visitor car park, which are allocated through the obligation of s106 Agreement NR/042504 associated with planning consent P/2021/0560 ('*Redevelopment of canal basin for use as a boat hire business including erection of 2 buildings and storage enclosure'*).

4.2 Relocating the 17 car parking spaces is necessary because the current location is no longer available in perpetuity, as required by the s106, and therefore the car parking must be relocated elsewhere to fulfil the long-term obligation of the s106 Agreement. This application seeks planning permission to create the car parking spaces in an alternative suitable location.

4.3 Planning permission is sought for the permanent change of use of the land and requires some minor alterations to parts of the site. The larger of the two red line boundary areas has a sub-base and finished surface that is suitable for vehicles to park and manoeuvre (as described in section *3.0 Site Description*) but requires a timber sleeper edging along the rear boundary of the site. Also, it is proposed to introduce a native shrub species soft landscaping scheme to the rear edge of the site (excluding frontage).

4.4 The smaller of the two red boundary areas requires the addition of a permeable crushed stone gravel surface finish to match the surface of the adjacent existing road.

4.5 The image below illustrates the proposed site layout.



# 5.0 Relevant Planning Policy Context

*Local Planning Policy*

5.1 The Statutory Development Plan is made up of planning policies in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

5.2 The site is shown on the UDP Policies Map to include the following designations:

- Green Barrier
- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site boundary
- Site of Nature Conservation and Geological Importance
- Conservation Area

5.3 Land adjacent to the south and east of the site is designated as:

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

5.4 Furthermore, the site is also located close to the River Dee Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and within the buffer zone of the River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which are located on land to the south.

5.5 Relevant planning policies from the UDP, which relate to the proposed development and development on sites within the above designations are set out below:

Part 1: The Strategy policies

- Policy PS1: Location of new development
- Policy PS2: No detrimental effect
- Policy PS3: Previous developed land
- Policy PS4: Settlement pattern and character

Part 2: Specific Policies

- GDP1: Development Objectives
- EC1: Green Barriers
- EC4: Trees and Development
- EC6: Biodiversity Conservation
- EC7: Conservation Areas
- CF7: Informal Recreation
- T8: Parking
- T9: Access

5.6 In addition, there are also a series of Local Planning Guidance Notes to be read in association with local planning policies from the WCBC Development Plan. The Local Planning Guidance Notes relevant to the proposed development in this location are:

- Local Planning Guidance Note 7: Landscape and Development
- Local Planning Guidance Note 17: Trees and Development
- Local Planning Guidance Note 32: Biodiversity and Development
- Local Planning Guidance Note 33: Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site

5.7 Also relevant within the local context is:

- The Trevor Basin Masterplan (2020), which was endorsed by WCBC in November 2020.

*National Planning Policy*

5.8 National planning policy is currently provided by the Welsh Government in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12 (PPW). National policies relevant to the proposed development in this location are set out in the PPW in:

- Paragraph 3.10. Placemaking in Action
- Paragraph 3.38. Placemaking in Rural Areas
- Paragraph 5.5.3. Tourism
- Paragraph 6.1.7. Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Paragraph 6.1.22. World Heritage Sites
- Paragraph 6.3.7. Landscape
- Paragraphs 6.4.24 & 6.4.39. Biodiversity and Ecological Networks

5.9 Additionally, Future Wales: The National Plan 2040, was adopted in 2021, it is a national framework for planning change and development in Wales over the next two decades. The development plan sets a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system.

5.10 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 policies relevant to the proposed development in this location are:

- Policy 1: Where will Wales Grow
- Policy 9: Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure
- Policy 12: Regional Connectivity
- Policy 20: National Growth Area – Wrexham and Deeside

# 6.0 Relevant Planning History

6.1 A search of the WCBC online planning history database and the Trust's own planning history database has identified the following relevant planning history.

6.2 In 2017, the Trust secured planning permission for the use of nearby land off Tower Hill as a car park to be used in association with the Trevor Basin Visitor Centre and the World Heritage Site.

- **P/2017/0888**: Change of use of land for car parking at Land north off Tower Hill, Trevor. Granted by WCBC on 14.12.2017.

6.3 In 2022, the Trust secured planning permission for a new small-scale development at Trevor Basin to facilitate relocating the existing boat hire business premises within the site.

- **P/2021/0560:** *Redevelopment of canal basin for use as boat hire business including erection of 2 buildings and storage enclosure* at Trevor Basin, New Road, Trevor. Granted by WCBC on 06/07/2022.

6.4 In 2024, the Trust secured a Certificate of Lawful Use of Proposed Development for a replacement of the existing footbridge within Trevor Basin.

- **P/2023/0812:** *Lawful development certificate for proposed construction of lift bridge* on land south of Scotch Hall Bridge, Trevor. Granted by WCBC on 28/02/2024.

6.5 In 2025, the Trust secured planning permission to construct a new improved pedestrian access route from Trevor Basin to the lower part of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

- **P/2024/1180:** *Improvements to public footpath below Pontcysyllte Aqueduct including realigned footpath, new steps and landings, new railings and handrails and landscaping* on land below Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

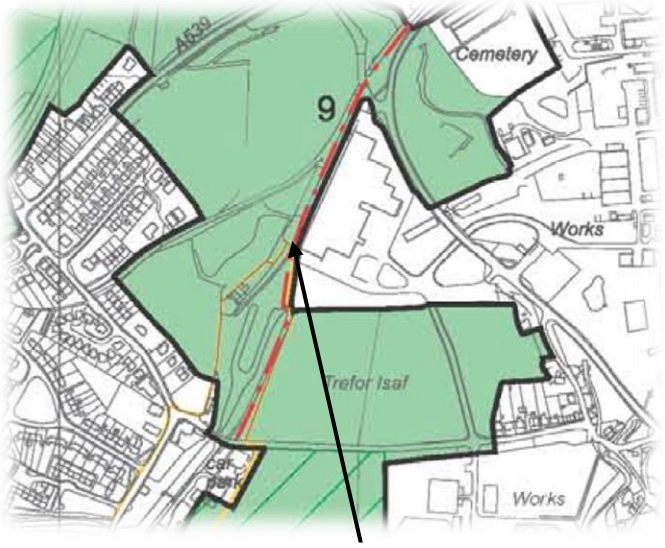
# 7.0 Planning Analysis

7.1 Having regard to the proposed development, its location and the relevant planning policy context, it is considered that the key matters to address in this application are:

- Location of development
- Enhancing the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site
- Heritage
- Ecology
- Visual Amenity
- Trees & Landscaping
- Vehicular Access

**Location of development**

7.2 The site is located within a designated Green Barrier but is on the very edge of an identified Settlement Limit. The image below illustrates the location of the site in context with the Green Barrier designation and adjacent Settlement Limit.




Site location

7.3 Within the UDP Part 1 the Council sets out its strategic policies PS1 – PS4, which are relevant to the location and impact of new development. PS1 – PS4 are set out below.

- ***'Policy PS1:*** *New development for housing, employment, and community services will be directed to within defined settlement limits/employment areas.*
- ***Policy PS2:*** *Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.*
- ***Policy PS3:*** *Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value.*

- ***PS4:*** *Development should maintain the existing settlement pattern integrated within the and character and be integrated with the existing transport network to help reduce the overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car.'*

7.4 In terms of Policy PS2, the proposed development is small scale and does not involve much by the way of physical intervention, which therefore has minimal visual impact in context with the established character of the area and quality of the natural environment.

7.5 In terms of Policy PS3, the site is located on previously developed land, which is not utilised for any other purpose.

7.6 In terms of Policy PS4, the proposed development is not incongruous within the established settlement pattern and is located directly within the existing transport network.

7.7 Furthermore, in terms of Policy PS1, it is considered that the proposed development sits outside the scope of 'housing, employment and community services'. Therefore, UDP (Part 2) Policy EC1 (Green Barriers), which is relevant to the location of new development for outdoor sports and recreation facilities, is relevant. It is stated in Policy EC1 that:

*'Within Green Barriers, development will only be granted planning permission if it is for agriculture, forestry, essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and other uses of land which maintain the openness of the Green Barrier and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it*.'

7.8 With regard to Policy EC1, the proposed development is directly linked to the established hire boat business operating from Trevor Basin, which is an 'essential facility for outdoor sport and recreation' associated with the well-established recreational activity and tourism in this area.

7.9 Creating a new improved facility for recreational activity and tourism within Trevor Basin demonstrates commitment to improve the quality on offer for visitors to the wider World Heritage Site. The proposed car parking is an essential requirement for the hire boat business to operate in this location and therefore complies with the objectives of Policy EC1.

7.10 PPW is also relevant, in paragraph 3.41 it is stated that:

'*An essential component for a sustainable place is where development is to be located. Development plans will provide the basis for this by identifying areas and sites for new development.*'

7.11 PPW, paragraph 3.55 is also relevant, in which it is stated that:

*'Previously developed (also referred to as brownfield) land should, wherever possible, be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development. In settlements, such land should generally be considered suitable for appropriate development where its re-use will promote sustainability principles, and any constraints can be overcome.'*

7.12 The location of the proposed development in a sustainable location and on previously developed land, which is considered acceptable in terms of the relevant national planning policies above.

**Enhancing the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site**

7.13 The aim of the proposed development is directly linked to the Trust's wider aspirations to help improve the quality of Trevor Basin as a recreational and tourist destination within the World Heritage Site.

7.14 It is considered that UDP Policy CF7 (Informal Recreation) is relevant to the proposed development in this location, in which it recognised that the canal and WHS are valuable local water attractions, which can be enhanced through 'small-scale developments' related to the recreational use of the canal. It is stated in UDP Policy CF7 that:

*'The Llangollen Canal, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Trevor Wharf are valuable local water recreation attractions that could be enhanced by small-scale developments directly related to the recreational use of the canal'*

7.15 Also, Local Plan Policy BE2 (Trevor Basin Masterplan Area) is relevant to this proposed development, in which it is stated that:

*'The Trevor Basin Masterplan Area, as shown on the proposals map, is identified for mixed use tourism led regeneration including land which is allocated for housing development (see policy H1). Development proposals which contribute to the delivery of the Trevor Basin Masterplan, and which have no adverse impact upon the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site or its setting, will be supported.'*

7.16 The Trevor Basin Masterplan (2020), sets out a preferred option for development of the Trevor Basin Area that will improve facilities and linkages to surrounding areas, safeguarding the future of the WHS as a multifunctional visitor attraction. It is stated that the preferred masterplan options are:

- *'A primary arrival space with car parking and a Welcome Centre or 'Hub' building*
- *Rewilding the former manufacturing site*
- *Creation of a Treetops Walk*
- *Enhanced public realm and repurposed buildings and spaces*
- *A woodland activity & education centre*
- *A glamping / camping site*
- *Dee Valley walks and a new river bridge*
- *Potential mixed-use development area and development plot'*

7.17 Also, PPW paragraph 5.5.3 is relevant, in which it is stated that:

*'In rural areas, tourism-related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy and diverse economy. In addition to more traditional forms of rural tourism, planning authorities should plan positively for active, green and cultural tourism where they are appropriate. Development should be sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment.'*

7.18 It is considered that the proposed development is compliant with UDP Policy CF7, the Trevor Basin Masterplan 2020 and information provided in Guidance Note 33, in that it will contribute towards enhancing the County Borough's tourism, culture and leisure offer by assisting with introducing an improved small-scale facility for visitors to Trevor Basin and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, including the repurposing of an existing previous developed space within Trevor Basin.

7.19 The proposed development also complies with the relevant parts of PPW referenced above by providing an enhanced facility for visitors to the World Heritage Site. Given its location and purpose, the proposed education space facility is considered to be a 'tourism-related' development, which will contribute towards the economic, social and recreational needs of local communities and visitors.

**Heritage**

7.20 The site is located within the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site and partly within the designated conservation area, which are widely recognised for their special historic characteristics. UDP Policy EC7 is relevant to protecting land within conservation areas from harmful development, in which it is stated that:

*'Within, and in close proximity to, conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and/or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area'*

7.21 WCBC Local Guidance Note 33 (Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal World Heritage Site) is also relevant in the consideration of planning applications within the World Heritage Site boundary. In paragraph 5.2, it is stated that:

*'The following objectives are taken from page 79 of the Pontcysyllte World Heritage Site Management Plan (2007 – 2012):*

- *To manage the World Heritage Site and Buffer Zone in a sustainable manner to conserve, enhance and present the Outstanding Universal Value of the site locally and internationally.*
- *To balance the needs of protection, conservation and access, the interests of the local community and the achievement of sustainable growth.*
- *To engage with and deliver benefits to the local communities around the site.*
- *To attract visitors to the area; and*
- *To generate income that adds value to the local economy or is reinvested in the running of the site.'*

7.22 Guidance Note 33, Table 1 (Typical Development Scenarios) sets out typical examples of possible appropriate forms of development and guidance criteria in relation to those developments in the WHS. Table 1 is set out on the following page.

**Table 1 – Typical Development Scenarios**

| Development Scenario | Development Type | Detailed Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Any development within the WHS, or immediately adjacent to it. | ● Typically small scale<br>● Householder (residential extensions and conservatories)<br>● Changes of use<br>● Minor tourist development (toilets, small parking areas, picnic areas). | ● Minor tourist development for essential small scale facilities could be appropriate in the open countryside where the openness of the countryside is maintained.<br>● Design siting and materials important.<br>● Statement required to state how the development contributes to the WHS's character. |

7.23 Additionally, national planning policies in PPW are also relevant to proposed development in this location. In PPW paragraph 3.38, it is stated that:

*'The countryside must be conserved and, where possible, enhanced for the sake of its ecological, geological, physiographic, historical, archaeological, cultural and agricultural value and for its landscape and natural resources. However, the need to conserve these attributes should be balanced against the economic, social and recreational needs of local communities and visitors. To achieve this, rural places should foster adaptability and resilience to help maintain vibrancy of communities and availability of services.'*

7.24 Also, PPW paragraph 5.5.3 is relevant, in which it is stated that:

*'In rural areas, tourism-related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy and diverse economy. In addition to more traditional forms of rural tourism, planning authorities should plan positively for active, green and cultural tourism where they are appropriate. Development should be sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment.'*

7.25 The Trust has prepared a Heritage Impact Statement to accompany the application, which has been prepared in accordance with Section 6.1 of *Planning Policy Wales* (Ed. 12, 2024) and paragraph 1.15 of *Technical Advice Note 24* (2017), as well as relevant Cadw guidance.

7.26 The Heritage Impact Statement sets out the historical context of the site including all designated historic assets and the site history, other relevant features (such as the existing building in situ) are established, the relevant planning policy context is identified alongside pre-application engagement with local stakeholders, and an assessment of the 'impact' is provided. In the concluding paragraphs of the Heritage Impact Statement, the following is established, which is considered suitably demonstrate that the proposed development is compliant with the relevant planning policy context.

*'Whilst the proposed development is located within the boundary of the World Heritage Site and partly within the designated Conservation Area, it is perceived, based on their proximity and scale, that there would be no direct impact on the canal structures or their settings. This type of development should be viewed as an enhancement, especially if it serves a wider public benefit of providing safer and more convenient access to the facilities that are designed to enhance the experience of visiting the World Heritage Site.'*

**Ecology**

7.27 The proposed development is taking place on previously developed land, which currently has a hardstanding surface and is being used as a compound area for construction works. Land adjacent to the site consists of an established vehicular access across the frontage and well-established trees to the rear.

7.28 Therefore, UDP Policy EC6 (Biodiversity Conservation) is relevant to the proposed development in this location, in which it is stated that:

*'Development either within or close to sites of biodiversity interest will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the need for the development outweighs the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site. Where such development is permitted, damage should be kept to a minimum, and compensatory measures should be provided. Measures to improve the biodiversity value of sites and enhance their natural conservation interest and landscape quality including the establishment of local nature reserves, will be supported.'*

7.29 Policy in PPW is also relevant to new development in this location, in paragraph 6.4.11 it is stated that:

*'Planning authorities must follow a step- wise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for. Enhancement must be secured by delivering a biodiversity benefit primarily on site or immediately adjacent to the site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.'*

7.30 WCBC Local Guidance Note 32 (Biodiversity and Development) is also a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications when assessing proposed external environments and landscaping as part of a scheme.

7.31 In Local Guidance Note 32, it is stated that:

*'The planning system has a central role to play through resisting development proposals that may irreversibly damage important habitats or species, by enhancing biodiversity through incorporating mitigation and enhancements and by securing long-term favourable management of biodiversity rich sites. Whilst protecting priority species is important, if biodiversity is to be genuinely enhanced, the conservation of all wildlife and habitats needs to be at the centre of development and planning decision making.*

*Whilst protecting priority species is important, if biodiversity is to be genuinely enhanced, the conservation of all wildlife and habitats needs to be at the centre of development and planning decision making.*

*Establishing a good evidence base is essential when determining planning applications. This is achieved through the submission of an ecological assessment. An ecological assessment will be required to accompany planning applications that:*

*Affect:*

- *Woodland, hedgerow and/or trees;*
- *Areas of open green space (including scrub land);*

- *Water courses and bodies (including ponds, ditches, rivers);*
- *Any site or building with a known protected species, or with a likelihood of presence;*
- *Any site of nature conservation importance such as County Wildlife Sites;*
- *Industrial archaeology - lime kilns, chimneys etc.'*

7.32 To address the baseline ecological conditions on site, assess any impact as a result of the proposed and consider biodiversity benefits, an Ecological Assessment and a Green Infrastructure and Net Biodiversity Benefit Plan have been prepared and are submitted in full as part of this planning application.

7.33 In summary, it is concluded in the Ecological Assessment, that:

*'Overall, the proposed development will result in no harm to designated sites and no net loss of habitats. The scheme will result in an overall long term biodiversity benefit. The mitigation strategy is aimed at minimising habitat loss and avoiding harm to protected and notable species, by replacing lost habitat, along with enhancement of habitats, as detailed in the Net Biodiversity Benefit Plan.'*

7.34 In the Green Infrastructure and Net Biodiversity Benefit Plan it describes each component of green infrastructure within and surrounding the site and how the step-wise approach has been applied in the design of the project and approach to implementation and biodiversity net benefit. It also describes how protection, mitigation and restoration measures will be carried out within the site and surrounding areas within Trust ownership, Enhancement measures will be limited to Trust-owned land, to ensure success of implementation and longevity of management.

7.35 In summary, it is concluded in the Green Infrastructure and Net Biodiversity Benefit Plan that:

*'This report defines the measures required to protect and enhance GI and biodiversity within the application site and to achieve a net biodiversity benefit as a result of the proposed works. The measures proposed are proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed works and will ensure the ecological continuity of the habitats and species within the site and surrounding area.'*

7.36 In light of the conclusions set out in the Ecological Assessment and the Green Infrastructure and Net Biodiversity Benefit Plan, including the implementation of any established recommendations, it is considered that the proposed development is compliant with the objectives of all relevant local and national planning policies referenced above.

7.37 The site is also located close to the River Dee 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI) and is within the buffer zone of the River Dee 'Special Area of Conservation' (SAC), which are located on land to the south along the river corridor.

7.38 A Stage 1 Habitat Regulations Assessment 'screening' process has been carried out, to establish whether the project is likely to have a significant effect on any European/Ramsar site either alone or in combination with any other project. The Stage 1 Habitat Regulations Assessment is submitted in full with this application. In the summary it is concluded that:

*'There are no impact pathways identified as having a risk of a significant adverse effect on the conservation objectives for the FOI, therefore Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment is not required.'*

7.39 In light of this conclusion and the implementation of any recommendations set out in the assessment report, it is considered that the proposed development is compliant with the objectives of the relevant local planning policy context referenced above.

**Visual Amenity**

7.40 The proposed development will have minimal impact in visual terms when compared to the existing appearance of the site. The only physical features will be low-level timber sleepers and soft landscaping to the rear edges of the site. The proposed use for car parking does not introduce a new and incongruous land use in this location that would be visually detrimental to the character of the area.

7.41 In terms of visual amenity, it is considered that UDP Policy GDP1 (Development Objectives) is relevant to new development proposals, in which it is stated that, new development should.....

*Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality'*

7.42 National planning policy in PPW is also relevant to this proposal, in paragraph 3.10 it is stated that:

*'In areas recognised for their particular landscape, townscape, cultural or historic character and value it can be appropriate to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. It is of particular importance that in those areas, the impact of development on the existing character, the scale and siting of new development, and the use of appropriate building materials (including where possible sustainably produced materials from local sources) is considered.'*

7.43 The proposed development will have minimal visual and physical impact. It will not therefore have a detrimental impact upon the character of the area when viewed in context with the hire boat business and its associated operational activities required for operation such as car parking and manoeuvrability, which is considered to comply with the objectives of the relevant local and national planning policies referenced above.

**Trees & Landscaping**

7.44 The site has an open frontage facing onto a private vehicular access but there are some establish trees located beyond the rear boundary. The proposed development does involve some new landscaping to the rear of the site to create a softer high-quality buffer between hard and soft surface finishes.

7.45 UDP Policy EC4 (Trees) is relevant to any development proposals in this location, in which it is stated that:

*'Development proposals should provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees and orchards, woodland, wildlife and other natural landscapes and water features, and include new planting in order to enhance the character of the*

*landscape and townscape. Development which results in the loss or significant damage to valuable trees, important hedgerows or ancient woodland sites will not be permitted.'*

7.46 WCBC Local Guidance Note 7 (Landscape and Development) is also a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications when assessing proposed external environments and landscaping as part of a scheme.

7.47 In Local Guidance Note 7, it is stated that:

'*Careful and early consideration of design issues, and the provision of adequate landscape information, as described in this leaflet, can help to avoid costly delays at a later stage. In assessing the landscape implications of planning applications the site context, proposed layout, future uses and maintenance all need to be taken into account.*

*There is a diverse landscape character and settlement pattern within the County Borough, with rural landscapes of particularly high quality or special historic landscape interest designated as Special Landscape Areas in Wrexham's Unitary Development Plan. In these areas it is especially important for any development to fit in with its surroundings. Planning officers can advise applicants on appropriate and acceptable solutions for any rural or urban situation before an application is submitted.'*

7.48 Furthermore, WCBC Local Guidance Note 17 (Trees and Development) is also a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications, which impact on trees, in which it is stated that:

*'A) Development which would result in damage and/or inappropriate felling of significant trees (i.e. BS 5837 Category A & B trees) and hedgerows will not normally be permitted. Planning conditions and Tree Preservation Orders will be used to safeguard trees in appropriate cases.*

*B) Development proposed near to existing trees, woodlands or hedgerows must be in accordance with the design and protection principles set out in this Local Planning Guidance Note and British Standard 5837: 2012 "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction" (or any subsequent revisions).'*

7.49 National planning policy in PPW is also relevant to this proposal, in paragraph 6.4.39 it is stated that:

*'Protection should be given to trees and hedgerows where they have ecological value and contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality.'*

7.50 As part of the current temporary use of the site as a construction site compound a careful approach has been taken to surface treatment. The site currently has a surface finish suitable to accommodate the vehicular parking and manoeuvrability requirements that also protects localised tree root systems. This consists of a 'no-dig' construction method to protect tree roots, which involves creating a suitable sub-base to level out any undulations, laying a geotextile fabric (cellular confinement system) to separate the granular stone surface finish infill material. All of which is fully permeable to accommodate surface water drainage.

7.51 The proposed introduction of soft landscaping, which will consist of a native shrub species, to the rear edges of the site (excluding frontage) will soften the appearance of the hard surfaces and timber sleeper edge for improved visual appearance.

7.52 It is considered that the approach to landscaping on site and the existing 'no-dig' construction methodology of the established surface treatment to protect tree roots is compliant with objectives of local and national planning policies through a balance of enhancement and protection of the natural environment.

**Vehicular Access**

7.53 The proposal is to create 17 new car parking spaces in this location to replace 17 existing car parking spaces located nearby, which are required to be made available through obligation of s106 Agreement NR/042504 associated with planning consent P/2021/0560 ('*Redevelopment of canal basin for use as a boat hire business including erection of 2 buildings and storage enclosure'*).

7.54 The current location of the 17 car parking spaces is no longer available in perpetuity and therefore the car parking must be relocated elsewhere to full the long-term obligation of the s106 Agreement.

7.55 Therefore, a proposed new location has been identified, which is closer to and more obviously connected to the boat hire business premises than the currently approved location in the main Trevor Basin visitor car park.

7.56 UDP policies T8 (Parking) and T9 (Access) are relevant to the safe and efficient operation of the transport network.

7.57 It is stated in Policy T8 that:

*'Development granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby, in accordance with the Council's current parking standards. Special regard will be paid to the following factors, as appropriate.*

*a) The availability of public transport nearby*
*b) Proximity to public car parking*
*c) Proximity to local services and facilities*
*d) Road safety hazards and amenity considerations arising from on-street parking in the vicinity of the site.'*

7.58 It is stated in Policy T9 that:

'*Development proposals will be required to provide walking and cycling routes, where feasible and appropriate, that link with existing or proposed walking and cycling routes and integrate with the public transport system.'*

7.59 The proposed location of the 17 car parking spaces is an improvement, resulting in a more cohesive relationship with more direct connectivity to the hire boat business premises. It is demonstrated, with swept path analysis drawings submitted with the application, that adequate vehicular manoeuvrability can be achieved and there will be no harmful impact upon how the 'shared surface' access road will be safely used by pedestrians. As the car parking spaces are being relocated, it does not result in any additional pressure on the local highway network or local car parking facilities.

7.60 It is considered that the proposed development is compliant with the objectives of UDP policies T8 and T9.

# 8.0 Conclusion

8.1 The site is located within a designated Green Barrier but is on the very edge of an identified Settlement Limit, it is within a sustainable location and is on previously developed land that is directly linked to the established hire boat business operating from Trevor Basin, which is an 'essential facility for outdoor sport and recreation' associated with the well-established recreational activity and tourism in this area. It is considered that the location of development is compliant with the objectives of local planning policies PS1 – PS4 and EC1, and the relevant national planning policy context.

8.2 It is considered that the proposed development is compliant with UDP Policy CF7, the Trevor Basin Masterplan 2020, information provided in Guidance Note 33 and relevant national planning policy context in that it will contribute towards enhancing the County Borough's tourism, culture and leisure offer by assisting with introducing an improved small-scale facility for visitors to Trevor Basin and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, including the repurposing of an existing previous developed space within Trevor Basin.

8.3 The Heritage Impact Statement sets out the historical context of the site including all designated historic assets and the site history, other relevant features (such as the existing building in situ) are established, the relevant planning policy context is identified alongside pre-application engagement with local stakeholders, and an assessment of the 'impact' is provided, which concludes that there no harmful impact upon the identified heritage assets or their setting, which demonstrates that the proposed development is compliant with relevant local planning policy EC7, Local Guidance Note 33 (Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal World Heritage Site) and the relevant national planning policy context.

8.4 In light of the conclusions set out in the Ecological Assessment, the Green Infrastructure and Net Biodiversity Benefit Plan and the Habitat Regulation Assessment 'screening', including the implementation of any established recommendations, it is considered that the proposed development is compliant with the objectives of local planning policy EC6, Local Guidance Note 32 (Biodiversity and Development) and the relevant national planning policy context.

8.5 The proposed development will have minimal visual and physical impact. It will not therefore have a detrimental impact upon the character of the area when viewed in context with the hire boat business and its associated operational activities required for operation such as vehicle parking and manoeuvrability, which is considered to comply with the objectives of local planning policy GDP1 and the relevant national planning policy context.

8.6 The proposed introduction of soft landscaping, which will consist of a native shrub species, to the rear edges of the site (excluding frontage) will soften the appearance of the hard surfaces and timber sleeper edge for improved visual appearance. It is considered that the approach to landscaping on site and the existing 'no-dig' construction methodology of the established surface treatment to protect tree roots is compliant with objectives of local planning policy EC4, Local Guidance Note 7

(Landscape and Development) and the relevant national planning policies context through a balance of enhancement and protection of the natural environment.

8.7 The proposed location of the 17 car parking spaces is an improvement, resulting in a more cohesive relationship with more direct connectivity to the hire boat business premises. It is demonstrated, with swept path analysis drawings submitted with the application, that adequate vehicular manoeuvrability can be achieved and there will be no harmful impact upon how the 'shared surface' access road will be safely used by pedestrians. As the car parking spaces are being relocated, it does not result in any additional pressure on the local highway network or local car parking facilities. It is considered that the proposed development is compliant with the objectives of local planning policies T8 and T9.

8.8 Having regard to the above analysis, the Trust respectfully requests that the WCBC grants planning permission for the proposed development.