LandStudio



VETS CLINIC EXTENSION,CAIA ROAD

Net Benefit for Biodiversity

February 2026

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	The Old Rectory St Marys Hill Chester CH1 2DW		www.landstudio-uk.com
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VETS CLINIC EXTENSION, CAIA ROAD, WREXHAM

Introduction

Land Studio have been appointed by the Animal Trust to provide a Net Benefit for Biodiversity Statement (NBBS) relating to a proposed extension of an existing development at The Animal Trust, 31 Caia Road, Wrexham, LL13 8DS. Refer to Figure 1.

The site has obtained planning, reference P/2025/0682; which was granted on 07/11/2025. This document is in response to planning condition 7.

Site Context

The site currently comprises of the existing vet clinic building, associated hardstanding including car parking and footpaths, and boundary habitats consisting of modified grassland, hedgerows, trees and ornamental shrubs.

Proposed Development

The proposed development includes the erection of an extension to the existing building on the existing hardstanding car park, installation of solar panels on the new roof, new car parking, reconfiguration of the existing car park and associated landscaping works. Refer to Figure 2.

Impact of Development on Biodiversity

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of species-poor modified grassland to facilitate the minor extension to the car park.

The proposed building impacts areas of existing hardstanding/ paving that surround the property, thus there are no impacts on existing habitats and therefore no direct impact of existing green infrastructure.



Figure 1: Aerial View Of Existing Site

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General Approach to NBB

National Planning Policy in Wales requires that every development delivers a net benefit for biodiversity. It states that development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity. In doing so planning authorities must take account of and promote the resilience of ecosystems (Planning Policy Wales (12), 2024, and Annex 11/10/23, Updated National Planning Policy Wales).

A net benefit means that a development must ensure the post-development state should be better for biodiversity than pre-development. Benefits should be in addition to any mitigation or compensation required for habitat loss. Improvements should ideally be on-site and long-term. Off-site improvements are acceptable if on-site is not feasible

Unlike in England, where developments must meet 10% gain for biodiversity, Welsh planning policy does not specify how much benefit should be delivered, or how long it should be maintained – it is up to each local planning authority to decide what is appropriate and proportionate to the scale of the development. However, biodiversity benefits should promote ecosystem resilience, in line with the Section 6 Biodiversity Duty (The Environment (Wales) Act 2016). In practice, this means that a planning application must consider the DECCA framework to assesses the possible effects of the proposed development on the Diversity, Extent, Condition, Connectivity and Adaptability of ecosystems within and beyond the site and look to improve them as part of the Net Benefit for Biodiversity.

Designing for NBB

1. Pre-development, projects need to integrate biodiversity improvements from the earliest design stages and establish the pre-development biodiversity state.

2. Site design and layout should prioritise preserving valuable existing habitats, must consider long-term habitat management and enhance ecosystem connectivity with the adjacent environment where possible.

3. Construction and Operational measures may be required to safeguard retained and created habitats and the protected species which may be present.

4. Long-term management and monitoring of habitats can include management plans, replacing failed introductions such as young trees, and maintenance of bat and bird nesting boxes.

Proposed Ecological Enhancements

To offset the loss due to the proposed new car parking area and provide ecological enhancement the following is proposed

- Five native trees will be planted within the site
- Retained area of grassland enhanced with management
- Additional wildlife features including a hibernaculum and bird nesting boxes will be provided in the retained boundary habitats.

The post-development soft and hard landscaping can be seen on the Proposed Block Plan L (04) 003 Rev P04 (Prince Architects, 2025). This is included within the Appendices of this report for information.

Measures to Provide a Net Benefit for Biodiversity

The proposed development incorporates proportionate biodiversity enhancement measures in accordance with planning policy in Wales.

Whilst a small area of species-poor grassland will be lost to facilitate the minor car park extension, the development has been designed to retain existing boundary habitats and deliver targeted enhancements to provide a net benefit for biodiversity.

- Diversity

Existing boundary habitats, which provide nesting, foraging and commuting opportunities for wildlife, will be retained and protected during construction.

To increase on-site botanical diversity, five native trees comprising three Silver Birch (Betula pendula) and two Rowan (Sorbus aucuparia) will be planted. These species have been selected to complement the existing Holly (Ilex aquifolium) hedgerow and mature Common Walnut (Juglans regia) and Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) trees present on site. The introduction of additional native species will enhance structural and species diversity and increase the range of available food resources (e.g. berries, seeds and invertebrate prey).

The location of these can be seen in Figure 2.

- Extent

Although the development footprint results in a minor reduction in grassland extent to the north of the site, this will be offset through new native tree planting positioned along the northern boundary adjacent to the car park extension. Over time, these trees will provide increased vertical structure and canopy cover, delivering habitat of greater ecological value than the small area of grassland lost.





Existing Site Photos

VETS CLINIC EXTENSION, CAIA ROAD, WREXHAM

Dimensions are to be checked on site. Do not scale from drawings. Report discrepancies to the Architect.



Figure 2: Biodiversity Enhancement Locations

VETS CLINIC EXTENSION, CAIA ROAD, WREXHAM

- Condition

The proposed native tree planting will diversify the age and structural profile of vegetation across the site, contributing to a more resilient and functionally valuable habitat mosaic.

Retained grassland areas will be managed sensitively, with overseeding (where appropriate) using a species-diverse grassland mix. A varied cutting regime will be implemented to promote a range of sward heights, encouraging greater botanical diversity and improving the condition of the grassland and therefor its suitability for invertebrates and foraging birds.

Retained boundary habitats are to be protected throughout the construction phase of the development, and a sensitive lighting scheme should be in place.

- Connectivity

The layout has been designed to safeguard existing boundary vegetation, which forms the primary ecological corridor through and around the site. The proposed tree planting will reinforce this boundary structure, strengthen habitat connectivity and facilitating wildlife movement across the local landscape.

- Adaptability and Resilience

The retention of established boundary habitats, combined with the introduction of additional native tree species, will enhance the site's ecological resilience. The measures will improve habitat heterogeneity and provide resources across seasons, supporting local wildlife populations in the context of climate change and environmental pressures. In addition to planting proposals, the following biodiversity enhancements will be incorporated:

- One hibernaculum, comprising log and brash piles capped with turf, will be created within northern shrub planting to provide refuge opportunities for amphibians, small mammals and invertebrates. Approximate location indicated in Figure 2.

- Two bird nesting boxes will be installed on retained boundary trees. Boxes will be positioned at a minimum height of 2m above ground level and oriented away from direct south-facing aspects to reduce overheating risk. Approximate location indicated in Figure 2.

Summary

The proposed development has been designed to retain existing boundary habitats of ecological value and to incorporate proportionate biodiversity enhancements in accordance with Welsh planning policy.

Although a small area of species-poor grassland will be lost to facilitate the minor car park extension, this is offset through the planting of five native trees, enhancement of retained grassland with management, and the provision of additional wildlife features including a hibernaculum and bird nesting boxes.

These measures will increase habitat diversity, improve structural complexity, strengthen ecological connectivity and enhance the availability of nesting, foraging and refuge opportunities on site. When considered in the context of the limited scale of habitat loss and the small-scale nature of the proposal, the development will deliver a demonstrable and proportionate net benefit for biodiversity.

References

- Annex to Heads of Planning Letter Dated 11 October 2023: Addressing the Nature Emergency through the Planning System: Updated National Planning Policy for Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales.
- Welsh Government. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
- Welsh Government. February 2024. Planning Policy Wales, edition 12.
- CIEEM, September 2022. Welsh Government's Approach to Net Benefits for Biodiversity and the DECCA Framework in the Terrestrial Planning System.



Typical Hibernaculum



Typical Bird Boxes

Dimensions are to be checked on site. Do not scale from drawings. Report discrepancies to the Architect.



Existing Block / Roof Plan

Prince Architects
25 Wendover Avenue
Liverpool
L17 4LG
0151 7271384
ben@princearchitects.co.uk
www.princearchitects.co.uk

Project:	Client:	Title:
Vets Clinic Wrexham Extension & Refurb	Animal Trust	Existing Block & Roof Plan

Size:	Proj. No:	Dwg No:	Rev:	Purpose:
A3	21.003	L(04)002	P01	Planning
	Scale: 1:200	Date: March '23	Drawn / Chk: BP	

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Proposed new Tree Planting: 3no Silver Birch, 2no. Rowan, min 12-14cm girth, root balled

Grass bank

12 spaces on re-graded bank.

1m high solid timber fence on dwarf wall to perimeter of parking bays.

3no. cycle spaces.

600

1,200

1,000

600

Lower pitched roof

Grassed area

Upper pitched roof

Grassed area

Upper flat roof

2,300

5,800

Existing timber fence retained.

Existing staircase

Upper pitched roof

Lower mono-pitched roof

New 2.1m "ColourFence" with Trellis, to recreation area / Bin Store.

Ground level re-graded to create level threshold.

10,400

7,600

600x600 roof window

Proposed Solar Panels (1m x 2m)

Proposed Solar Panels (1m x 2m)

5,800

Proposed Extension

Fall arrest system for roof access.

Proposed Extension

2no. Staff spaces.

11 spaces included 2 x accessible.

Existing boundary hedges retained.

Proposed Block / Roof Plan

N

Revisions:
May '23: P02 - Solar Array on new roof updated.
July '25: P03 - Extension reduced and external layout updated to suit.
Sept '25: P04 - Tree Planting added.
Oct '25: P05 - Dimensions to cycle stands added.

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