

From the underground heat pumps to the solar panels on the roof, it has clearly strived to create the greenest development possible

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Living Planet Centre: WWF-UK Headquarters

Rufford House, Brewery Road, Woking



The Living Planet Centre is at the forefront of sustainable design and construction, creating a harmonious link between the urban and the rural

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The World Wildlife Fund was so keen to get its sustainable design spot on that it selected its architects before it had even found a site for its new headquarters.

With the Hopkins practice on board, a brownfield site in Woking, already earmarked for development, was selected for the WWF-UK to work from and showcase its global operations. A former tarmac car park is now the conservation body's new home; its 'flying carpet' building, which levitates above the car park, houses an inspiring and innovative working environment.

The importance of sustainability to the WWF is at the heart of every facet of its new HQ. From the underground heat pumps to the solar panels on the roof, it has clearly strived to create the greenest

development possible. The building achieves BREEAM 'Outstanding' status through, amongst other factors, the use of mixed-mode ventilation, ground source boreholes, earth ducts and night-time purge cooling. A full carbon audit was undertaken throughout the design and construction process.

The staff are also key components of the worthy environmental credentials: there are six workstations for every 10 people and the only reserved car parking spaces are for disabled drivers. The centre shows that through the smart use of design, materials and technology it is possible to create a state-of-the-art building with minimal environmental impact.

The transparency with which the WWF displays its

building is to be admired and is an indication of how proud it is of its HQ. The wonderful visitor and education centre opens its doors to all comers and the public is invited to find out more about the story of this building, and what makes it one of the greenest in the UK, through behind-the-scenes tours.

There is much to appreciate in this project: The comfort with which it sits in its surroundings; the strong external form; its response to civic responsibility by inviting all interested parties in and its remarkable environmental performance.

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Client:
WWF-UK
Owner:
WWF-UK
Occupier:
WWF-UK
Project manager:
King Sturge
Quantity surveyor:
Gardiner & Theobald
Brief consultant:
Alexi Marmot Associates
Architect:
Hopkins Architects
Interior designer:
Hopkins Architects
M&E engineer:
Atelier Ten
Structural engineer:
Expedition Engineering
Contractor:
Wilmott Dixon

