HENDERSON HERITAGE

Heritage Impact Assessment

Land adjacent to The Brow,
Wrexham Road, Overton on Dee,
LL13 0HG

Rafela and Sophie Fitzhugh

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Kirsty Henderson, BSc (Hons), PgDip, MRTPI, IHBC



The Brow

Executive Summary

This report is submitted in support of a full planning application for the erection of 1 no. dwelling (C3) and single detached garage, and associated access arrangements, drainage infrastructure works, and landscaping works at Land Adjacent to The Brow, Overton Road, Overton.

The Brow is a Grade II listed building, located on the south side of the A528 main road from Bangor to Overton. It is located on the western edge of Overton village, set back from the road in tree-lined grounds immediately above the steep slope of the Dee Valley. The Brow lies to the west of the Overton Conservation Area. The Brow has its own, generous, private grounds. It is not within the conservation area, but the eastern part of its land is. It is in the vicinity of several heritage assets, including listed buildings and other buildings that are considered non-designated heritage assets. Collectively these have group value that contribute to the wider area's historic character and interest.

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been written to identify the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage assets. This is in accordance with national and local planning guidance contained in the Welsh planning guidance on the historic environment and the local plan.

The Brow's significance is derived from its evidential, historic, aesthetic, and communal significance as a former small country house on an historic site, with a clearly articulated architectural vocabulary, formerly once part of the Bryn-y-Pys estate. It has a distinctive form and appearance as a small country house with its physical appearance that clearly identifies it as a good example. It forms a strong relationship with its garden and wider rural landscape setting, which contributes to views, vistas and setting; and its historical and aesthetic value, which helps define its sense of place. The entrance drive from the north to the south takes one directly to the Hall. Views to this wider borrowed, picturesque landscape from the house and grounds contributes to the understanding of its interest as a small country house, remodelled in the early 19th century, part of the picturesque ideal of the landed gentry.

The setting of The Brow to the west and east remains secluded, as it is set deep within its own grounds. It is not an integral component of the Bryn-y-Pys landscape park, nor of Overton village, but its setting to the west and south and associated garden and borrowed views were an important component when designing the orientation of the house, a factor that is just as relevant today.

Overton Conservation Area covers the A528, the main route through the village that includes High Street and Salop Road and development on the west side of High Street. It also includes Wrexham Road and Willow Street. The site itself is located to the east of the site within the present boundary of The Brow. The site backs onto the rear gardens of existing properties off Wrexham Road (No. 's 12 to 15) to the north, and the rear garden to the east of No. 6 Willow Street. The south of the site is undeveloped land consisting of trees and hedgerow.

Overton Conservation Area is subdivided into six character areas in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. Part of the site lies within the conservation area in Character Area: Willow Street, but part lies outside. Willow Street is described as the "less intensely developed part of the Conservation Area. Properties vary in size and age with most dating from the latter half of 20th Century, set within large grounds bounded by thick hedges and planting, with trees particularly important features of this area. The trees found in the garden areas, those to the rear of the Brow and to the rear of the Sundorne estate create an important backdrop framing views and giving this area of the village a quieter and rural character." Willow Street provides a positive, rather than critical, component to the character of the conservation area, forming part of the leafy village fringe.

The significance of The Brow, its grounds and its component parts, and the significance of this part of the Overton conservation area, has been carefully considered as part of the development proposal.

The proposed new detached house is of a similar size and scale to existing houses on Willow Street. Materials are like that in the local area, a mix of multi red brick blend and slate, using architectural detailing to break up the massing, which adds shadow and depth, in a contemporary, revivalist 'Victorian' character. The design is complementary to the architecture within the conservation area. The development respects the wider urban grain, plot ratio and size of building and development density within this part of the conservation area. The new dwelling sits quietly facing Willow Street and is positioned to the front of the site, with the rear garden facing The Brow. Its legibility and key point of access in the street scene, off Wrexham Road, is very low key.

The setting of a historic asset, in this case The Brow, includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. In this case, the significance of the designated heritage asset, The Brow, is high. Overton conservation area lies within the wider setting of The Brow. The significance of the conservation area is high, but in Willow Street, in the area in which the application site is located, and on the eastern fringe of The Brow's historic garden, the significance of this is moderate to low.

Whilst the setting of The Brow will change slightly as the garden area will be smaller than existing, the subdivision of the plot does not unacceptably impact on the setting of The Brow because of the distance away from the house and its orientation of key views. The degree of change to the setting of the designated heritage asset of high sensitivity, The Brow, would be low, as would the level of harm to significance. It would not attract important weight, and as such there is no degree of harm to significance and on balance, because of its location as a secondary and incidental element of the grounds of The Brow, close to the built up area of Willow Street, where part of the original grounds have already been built upon, preserves the setting of this heritage asset. Its special interest and setting would not be compromised by this development.

The degree of change within the conservation area, in an area of relatively moderate to low sensitivity, would be low. It would be largely unseen. Notwithstanding that, the design and plot ratio is like other plots within this part of the conservation area. As such it preserves this part of the conservation area's special architectural and historic interest.

The proposed development would leave a reasonable proportion of the garden undeveloped to the west, nearest The Brow, and with appropriate landscaping and tree planting, it will enhance the sylvan nature of the site. This will assist in the provision of a visual breathing space between The Brow and the new dwelling. The proposal is typical of the general presentation of buildings along this part of Willow Street and the feeling of spaciousness on each plot.

The carefully considered bespoke design aims to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Overton conservation area, whilst complimenting and not competing with the spacious setting of the character of The Brow.

As such, the application should be supported.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report is submitted in support of a full planning application for the erection of 1 no. dwelling (C3) and single detached garage, and associated access arrangements, drainage infrastructure works, and landscaping works at Land Adjacent to The Brow, Overton Road, Overton.

1.2 The purpose of the assessment is to identify the significance of the heritage assets affected, and to consider and describe the effects of the proposals to them. This includes direct and indirect impacts up the building and its setting and how the proposals will preserve the setting of the listed building and to preserve and enhance the special architectural interest of the conservation area. It identifies mitigating measures, where necessary, to address this impact.

1.3 This document has been prepared following various site visits, the most recent in May 2024, and historical research. It is to be read in conjunction with other associated documents in relation to the planning and listed building consent applications.

2.0 Relevant Conservation Planning Policy and Guidance

2.1 Under Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities must give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. Under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities must, in the exercising of planning functions in conservation areas, pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, when assessing planning applications.

2.2 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 enables Welsh authorities to give more effective protection to the historic environment by further improve procedures for its sustainable management and to provide further transparency on decision making. This is read in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment.

2.3 National guidance is within Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024): Chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places. This places great emphasis on protecting the natural and built environment for historic, scenic aesthetic and nature reasons, recognising that they give places their unique identity and distinctiveness. This includes the protection of historic buildings, preserving sites on the register of historic parks and gardens and the character and appearance of conservation areas and setting, based on their significance and the impact of changes.

2.4 Historic assets are described within PPW as historic buildings, parks, gardens, landscapes, townscapes, and archaeological sites. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.

2.5 Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment, (2017), sets out national planning policy in respect to the conservation of the historic environment. It states that the planning system should look “to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets.” The impact of any planning decisions that change the historic environment in terms of its significance and heritage values where they contribute to the character of place must be fully considered by the decision maker. Section 7 states in 1.7 that “In policy terms, the historic environment is defined as 6: “All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.

2.6 The historic environment is in described in Wales Technical Advice Note 24: Historic Environment, (2017) as “All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.” A historic asset is: “An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.”

2.7 Setting is not a heritage designation. However, “the setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. Setting is not a historic asset but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset.” TAN 24 (paragraph 1.25)

2.8 The definition of significance in relation to heritage policy is defined in Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales (Cadw, 2011). “To identify the heritage values of an asset, its history, fabric, and character must first be understood. The relative significance of the different values then needs to be considered. It will be necessary to compare the values of the asset under consideration with others in the locality, region or even nationally, depending on its importance.” Other relevant Cadw guidance is contained in the ‘Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, Cadw (May 2017), ‘Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, Cadw (May 2017). Managing Change to Listed Building in Wales (2017).

2.9 There is a balanced view required on use, viability, and conservation. If harm is identified, the degree must be given sufficient weight and balanced against the public benefits generated by the proposals. In the Bramshill case in the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Lindblom stated “what amounts to "substantial harm" or "less than substantial harm" in a particular case will always depend on the circumstances. Whether there will be such "harm", and, if so, whether it will be "substantial", are matters of fact and planning judgment.”

2.10 In terms of assessing setting, case law has determined that preserve means to not cause harm to the setting, rather than to not change the setting. If there is harm, whatever magnitude, then the harm, must be evaluated in terms of assessing and mitigating positive and negative impacts in a holistic and balanced manner. This is to establish an overall conclusion on the level of harm, the weight that could be attributed to each element, seasonal effects and non-visual impacts and mitigating measures including public benefit.

2.11 Relevant local plan policies are in the Adopted Wrexham Local Development Plan (2013-2028). Strategic Objective Policy SO9: Historic and Cultural Environment and Policy SP15: Historic and Cultural Environment are relevant. These policies reflect national planning policy in the preservation and enhancement of the building environment.

2.12 Other relevant Cadw guidance is contained in the ‘Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, Cadw (May 2017), ‘Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, Cadw (May 2017). Also of relevance is WCBC Overton Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, adopted 2010.

3.0 The application site and identified heritage assets.

3.1 The application site is The Brow, located on the south side of Overton Road, Overton on Dee. Overton is approximately 7 miles southeast of Wrexham and approximately 2.5 miles from Bangor on Dee. The Brow is located on the north-west side of Overton village, and is adjacent, but not within the Overton Conservation Area. The application site is partially within the Overton Conservation Area, with the land historically connected to The Brow.

3.2 Overton sits on top of a steep wooded bank high above the River Dee with many private residences to the western side commanding fine views across the wooded and agricultural landscapes of the Dee Valley and long distance views west to the Berwyn Mountains.

3.3 The designated heritage assets that are relevant in considering the proposed development are identified below:

- Listed Building: The Brow (Grade II, listed 1994)
- Conservation Area: Overton, designated 1971 and amended 1999.



Fig 1. Location (Google Maps)

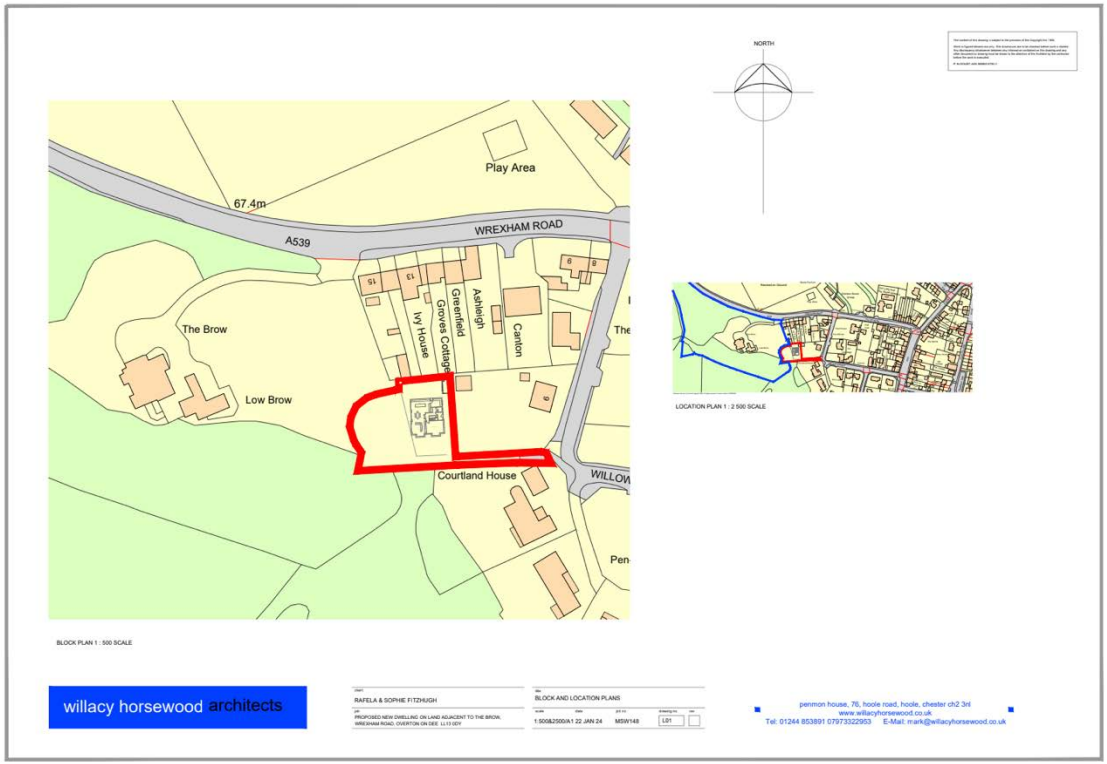


Fig 2. Location and site plan (Copyright: Willacy Horsewood Architects)

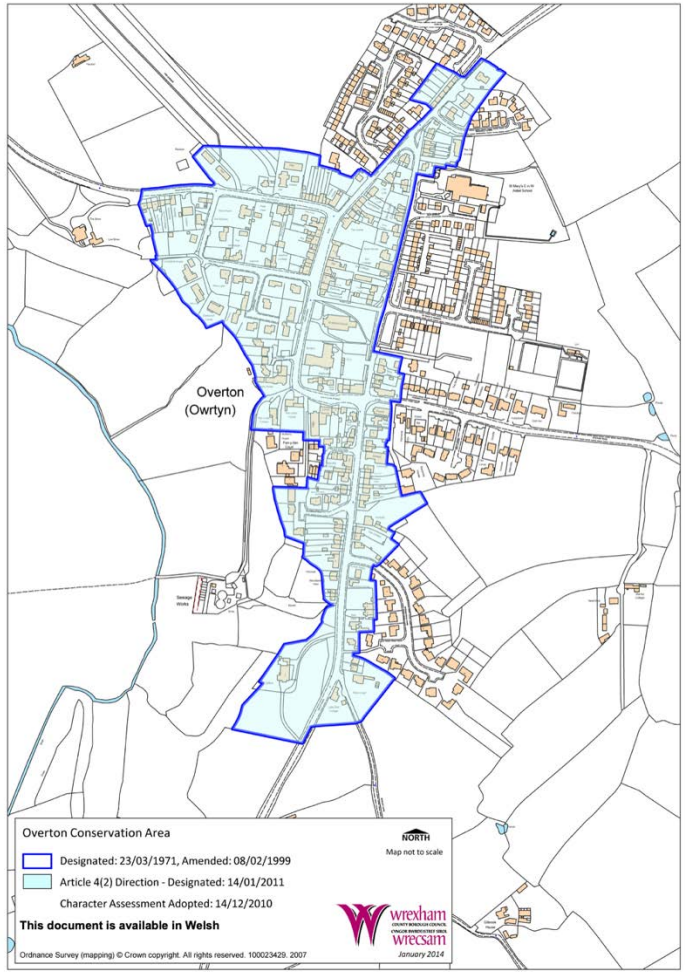


Fig 3. Overton Conservation Area boundary (Copyright: Wrexham County Borough Council)

4.0 Historical context and heritage assets

4.1 Overton is understood to have physical evidence of Saxon occupation, where Saxon coffin lids were discovered in the churchyard grounds. Following the Norman Conquest, the village was bequeathed to Robert Fitzhugh. The area see sawed between Welsh and English control through the subsequent centuries, with village growth curtailed following Owain Glyndwr's revolt in the early 15th century. The street pattern is believed to be part medieval in origin, the wide high street used for medieval markets, with burgage plots adjacent, which continue to the north of the village along Wrexham Road.

4.2 During the 18th and 19th century, the village prospered, partly under the Bryn-y-Pys Estate in Overton on Dee, Maelor Saesneg. This has its origins dating from the 1500's. Bryn-y-Pys was the former boyhood home of Arthur, Duke of Wellington, and was in the Price and Peel family for generations. The house, located approximately 1.5km to the north-east of the village of Overton, was the seat of Francis Price in 1728. It was rebuilt as a country mansion in an Italian style in a picturesque parkland landscape, in around 1739 by Francis Parry Price Esq. (1699 – 1747). He was the father of Richard Parry Price (1736 – 1782) of Bryn-y-Pys, High Sheriff of Flintshire in 1866, who married Dorothy Bryne, daughter of Sir John Bryne, Baronet de Tabley. Their son, Francis Parry Price, of Bryn-y-Pys (1761 – 1787) married Francisca Wright (1755 – 1844) in 1783. Their son was Francis Richard Parry Price Esq. (1785 - 1853) of Bryn-y-Pys, and Lord of the Manor of Birkenhead (1820's), who erected St. Mary's Church in Birkenhead.

4.3 The Bryn-y-Pys estate was sold by Francis Richard Price c.1850 to Edmund Ethelston (Edmund Peel) (1826 – 1903) in 1848. He was the eldest son of Rev. Charles Wickstead Ethelston of Wickstead Hall, Cheshire, and Anne Peel, daughter of Robert Peel of Wallington Hall, Norfolk. In 1851 he adopted the surname Peel and made Bryn-y-Pys his main residence. The Peels were one of the leading families of the Maelor area.

4.4 It was around 1848 that Bryn- y-Pys Hall was remodelled, but largely retaining the Georgian massing and proportions. In 1851, and following the death of his first wife, he married Henrietta Margaret Williams, daughter of Sir John Hay Williams, 2nd Bart. of Bodelwyddan Castle. He was High Sheriff of Montgomery in 1868 and Flintshire in 1870. In 1873 Peel owned 5779 acres in Wales, and appointed John Douglas in the late 19th century, the eminent Cheshire architect to design lodges in the distinct vernacular revival style for Bryn-y-Pys. Bryn-y-Pys Hall was demolished in 1956 following the death of Major Hugh Peel, Edmund's son, in 1950.

4.5 In the 18th and 19th centuries, Overton saw the erection of a variety of properties, from small brick terraced cottages along Salop Road to larger three storey buildings on High Street, with some extending westwards along Wrexham Road. The early 19th Century also saw the erection of substantial middle class housing with Pen Dyffryn, Fairfield, Pen Y Llan, and Ty Gwernen, all constructed from 1800 to 1830.

4.6 According to the listing description, the Brow was built c.1820. However, as the listing attests, a building called The Brow was built earlier. In 1806 'Overton Brow' is described as near the village of Overton, on the banks of the Dee "and commands an extensive and picturesque view of the Welsh Hills, over a delightful and extensive country'. In that year it was to be let; having "two good parlours, kitchen, pantry, scullery, brewhouse, cellars and seven excellent lodging rooms; plus, servants' rooms, also a good malt-kiln, stabling &c and excellent garden". It (Chester Courant 11/2/1806).

4.7 There were many books dedicated to the practical considerations of the 19th century house – either pattern books on design and construction of cottages, villas etc, or books on the internal plan and layout, which would proffer advice on aspect, light, the use of bay windows, service and communication routes, and the arrangement of furniture. In addition to this there was the consideration of the house within its landscape. This may include a picturesque composition, influenced by Humphrey Repton (1752 – 1818), one of the great English landscape designers of the 18th century, seen as the successor to Capability Brown.

4.8 On the 17th and 18th August 1818 all the valuable household furniture, the property of the late Mr. M. Mayor, were to be auctioned (Chester Chronicle 14 August 1818). In 1824 it is recorded that Dr. Henry Parker and his new wife Marianne, the eldest sister of Charles Darwin, lived there. They had 5 children and live-in servant staff. According to records, it was Dr. Parker that remodelled the house in a Regency style in the 1820's, befitting of its picturesque setting.

4.9 The Tithe Map for Overton, dated 1838 records that Dr. Henry Parker occupied Plots 599 – 605. Plot 605, of which the application site forms part and is arrowed in red, is described as 'Croft',and used for pasture. This stretches from the outbuilding to the east of the house to Willow Street. The Tithe Map also shows that the house and the application site, was accessed directly north of the house off Wrexham Road.

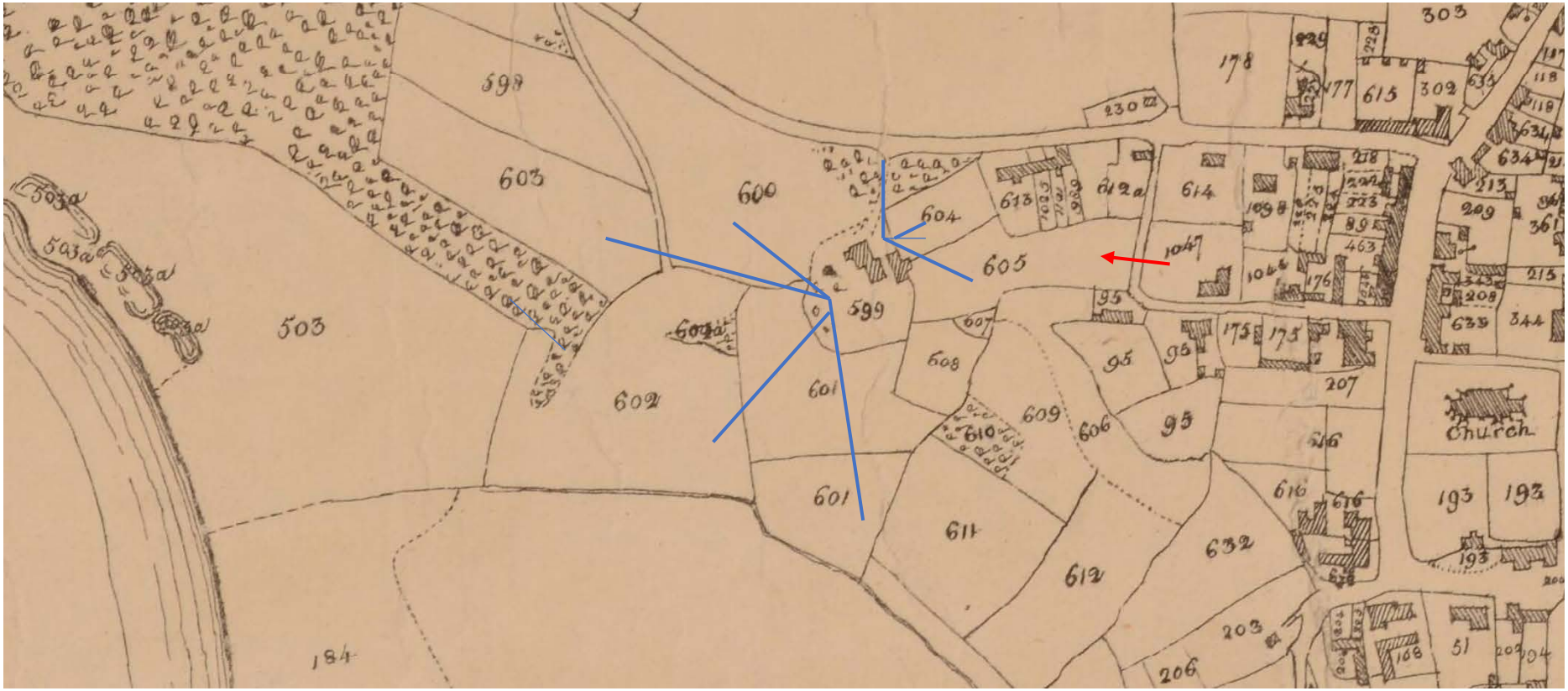


Fig 4. The Tithe Map for Overton, dated 1838. The tihte apportionments record that Dr. Henry Parker ocuupied Plots 599 – 605 (lines radiating from The Brow are in blue). Plot 599 (The Brow) is described as 'House and garden', Plot 600 and 601 are 'Browbank', Plot 602 is 'Lower and Rough in Browbank', Plot 603 is Middle bank, Plot 604 is garden and Plot 605, of which the application site forms part and is arrowed in red, is described as 'Croft',and used for pasture.

4.10 The Brow was advertised be let, unfurnished, in 1847, and in 1848 it was described as “a beautiful villa residence”. An extension probably solved the family’s needs and was designed and built by Edward Haycock (1791-1870), architect, of Shrewsbury in 1850. The Haycocks were a family of builders and architects, active between 1750 – 1882. They built many buildings in and around Shrewsbury. These include the Prison, the former Cross Houses Workhouse (later a hospital), Lord Hill’s Column, the Music Hall, the Salop Infirmary, and several churches, including St George’s, Frankwell; Holy Trinity, Belle Vue; Holy Trinity, Meole Brace; and All Saints, Castlefields.

4.11 Dr. Parker died in 1856, and Marianne two years later. The house was then re-let. In February 1866 it is recorded that a Mrs Lloyd was resident at The Brow, and two months later, her household furniture and miscellaneous effects were to be sold at auction. (Chester Chronicle 14/4//1866). In 1871 Mrs. Letitia Lloyd lived there. She was a lady of society, welcoming visitors including Lady Williams, widow of the late Sir Hugh Williams Bart of Bodelwyddan Castle and the sister of Sir Watkin W. Wynn, MP, of Wynnstay. Lady Williams, tragically died suddenly at The Brow in 1878.

4.12 The Ordnance Survey maps of 1872-3 shows a tree lined route from the house to the Bryn-y-Pys chapel. It shows how the land was laid out at that time. It shows that Plot 605 continues to be used for pasture, with trees lining its southern and eastern boundary to Willow Street. It shows what appears to be a formal walled garden to the north east of the outbuilding. The garden was laid out based on how The Brow and outbuildings are orientated, the character of the soil, the outline of the land, the aspect and climate, existing shelter and furniture, views to be obtained from it, the site and aspect for a house and the back and front approaches to it. The kitchen gardens to the north east were formally laid out. Not a great deal survives of its historic form.



Fig. 5. First Edition Ordnance Survey Map six inch to one mile Flintshire Sheet XXII, Surveyed: 1872 to 1873, Published: 1879. This shows details of a landscaped garden and terraced walks. There is an orchard to the south of the house and a small plantation of trees to the north leading up to the road. The owner has recorded that the landscaped gardens included a grass tennis court when their father was younger and are lawns now.

4.13 By 1883 the property was lived in by the Williams family, confirmed by census records of 1891. Mary and Arabella Williams lived there, living off their own means with a cook, lay maid, parlour maid and scullery maid. In 1896 the house was again advertised to let by the Misses Williams, unfurnished for Midsummer. It had four reception rooms, 12 bedrooms, servant's hall, kitchen, excellent stabling for seven horses and a compact garden, with magnificent views in a unique situation. Further minor alterations were carried out in 1897.

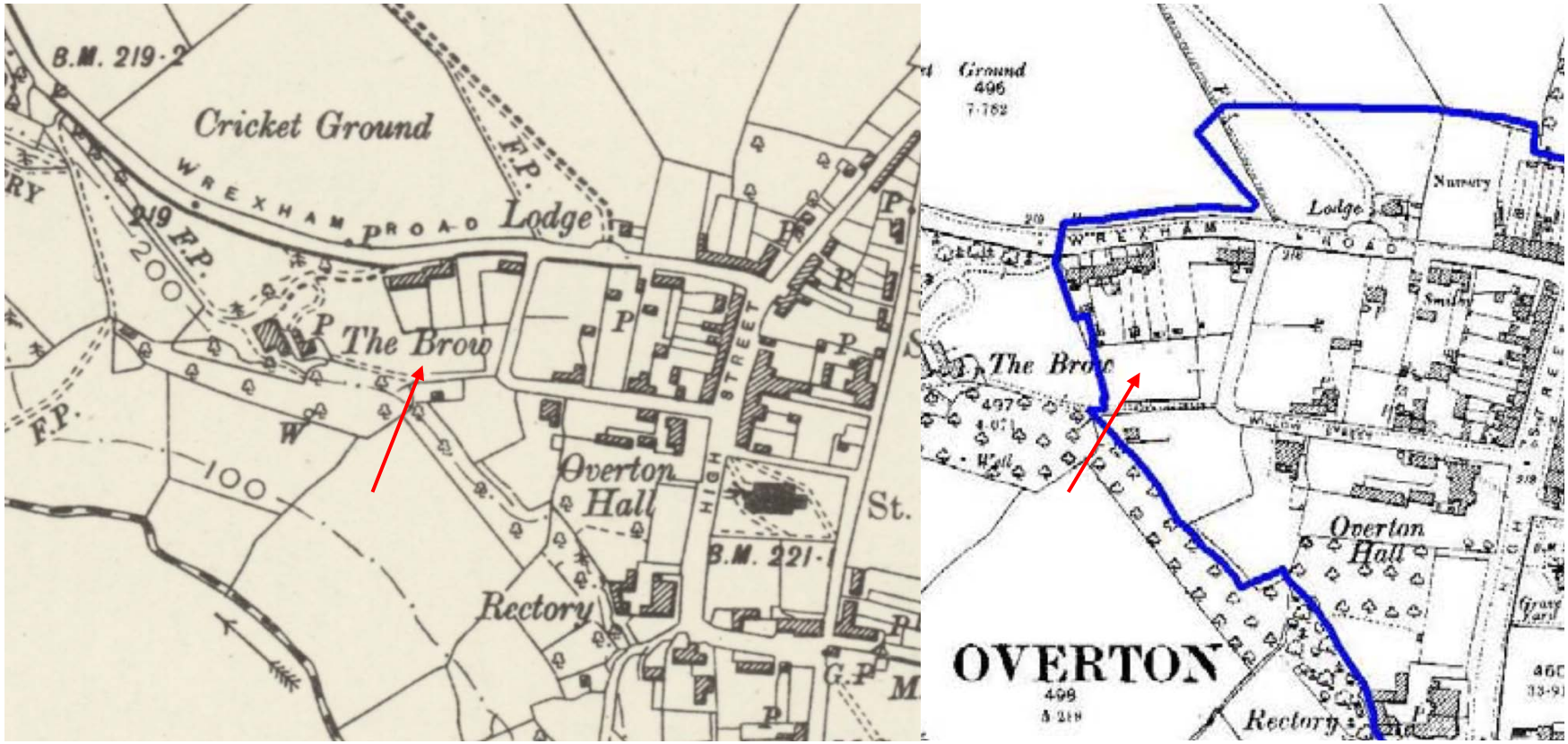


Fig. 6. Left: First Edition Ordnance Survey Map six inch to one mile Flintshire Sheet XXII.SW Revised: 1898, Published: 1900. This is the first map that shows evidence of subdivision of the land adjacent to Willow Street, and a path leading from Willow Street to The Brow. This path is still evident today. Right: the 1:25000 map shows that the land remains in the ownership of The Brow. The blue line is the conservation area boundary.

4.14 In 1901 the Brow was lived in by retired Infantry Officer Colonel William Cleland, (of the Queens Royal Lancers seeing action in 2nd Anglo Afghan War - Afghanistan) his wife, daughter, Cook, Parlourmaid, Housemaid, Kitchen maid, and Nurse. By 1919, following the end of the First World War, the house was in disrepair.

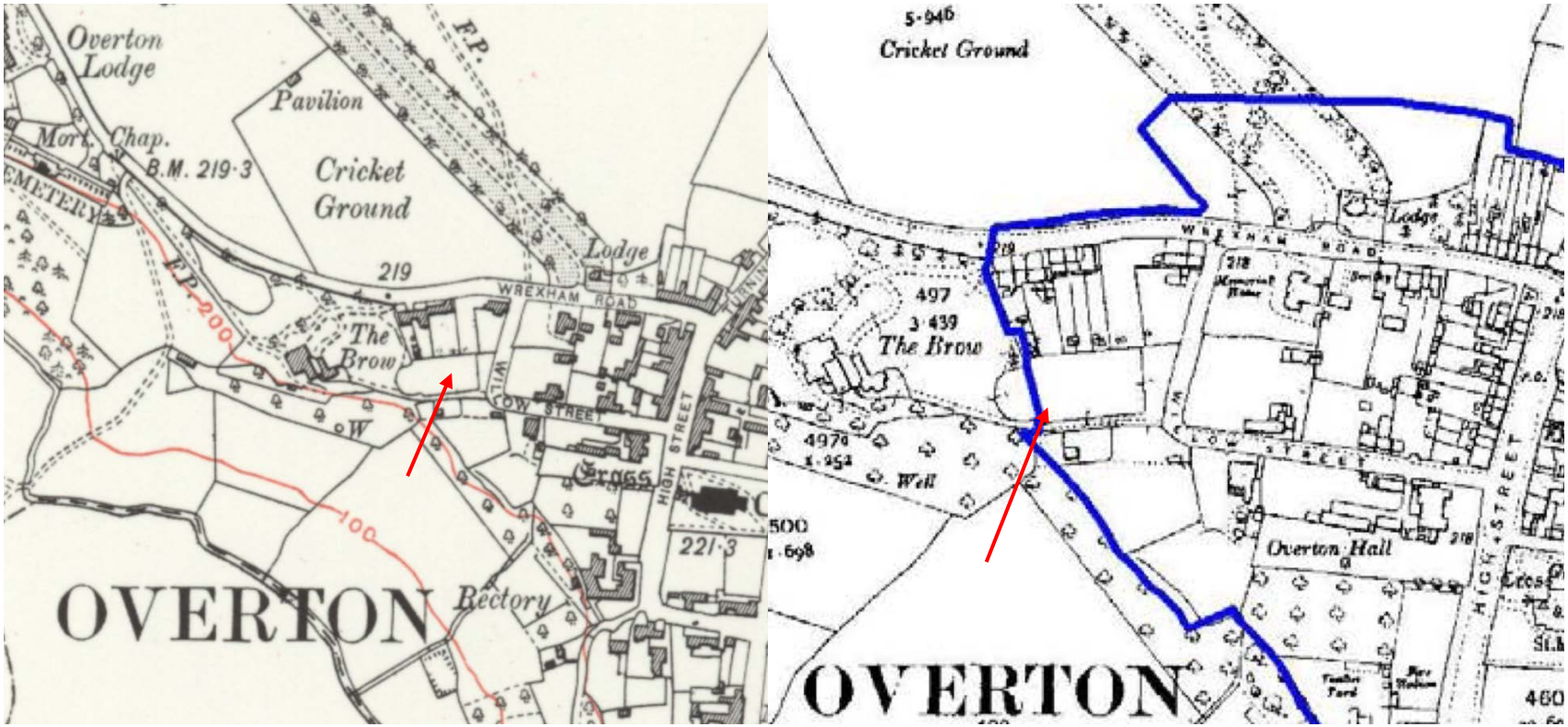


Fig. 7. First Edition Ordnance Survey Map Denbighshire Sheet XXXVI.SW Revised: 1909, Published: 1914. This shows that the land has changed in form, with a curved boundary, possibly a garden feature. It retains its pedestrian access from Willow Street.

4.15 In 1939 The Brow was tenanted by Mrs. Harriet Sanday and in 1945 by Major M. Fitzhugh. The Fitzhugh family bought the property in the 1950's and have owned it ever since.

4.16 Since then the land to the east has been truncated still further, with the erection of a chalet style dormer house, No. 6 Willow Street, built c.1970. This forms a defined boundary to Willow Street. The west boundary of the site includes an overgrown hedgerow and trees.



Fig. 8. Historic photographs of The Brow (Source RCAHMW)

5. 0 The significance of the heritage assets

5.1 Heritage values that contribute to a greater understanding of significance are Assessing significance is embedded in national planning policy. Heritage values that contribute to a greater understanding of significance are identified by Cadw's Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (2011) as being: -

- Evidential
- Historical
- Aesthetic
- Communal

5.2 There are six commonly accepted levels of significance. These are as follows: -

• Outstanding	Highest level of importance, SAMs, WHS, Grade I / II* listed buildings, Historic Parks & Gardens
• High (significant)	Grade II listed buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens and conservation areas
• Medium (moderate)	Locally listed buildings, and those buildings that contribute to a listed building's setting.
• Low (limited)	Limited heritage value
• Neutral	Neither positive nor negative features
• No significance	Features that detract from the heritage values

5.3 Heritage values – The Brow (Grade II)

Evidential Value – High	The area has a history of use that has gradually evolved over time, as evidenced in archival and archaeological records. This includes historic use, including the shape and boundaries. The Brow has earlier origins. It was remodelled in the early 19th century in a Regency style, which added to its picturesque landscape setting above the Dee. It is evidenced in archival and map sources. It has mid 19th and 20th century alterations. The immediate surroundings and setting include its historic garden, and tree setting, as well as subdivision of the site.	Overall significance **High** 
Historical Value – High	Built c1820 (property with this name is referred to in an indenture dated 1826), and remodelled in 1850 by Edward Haycock, architect, of Shrewsbury. Further minor alterations were carried out in 1897. A compact and well-designed small country house, which forms part of an important series of early C19 houses in Overton, built to exploit a picturesque, riverside location and associated with a local G.P, whose wife was Charles Darwin's sister. Its significance is derived from its historical associations with the site and with the historical development of Overton village, and the survival of the house and picturesque setting. The building is listed at Grade II for its special architectural and historic interest.	
Aesthetic Value – High	The aesthetics of the building relate largely to a Regency style based on a pattern book. The building's hierarchy in the treatment of its elevations are different, suggesting that the remodelling was expressed and reflected in the status of the internal rooms and how that translated to the exterior. Rendered over brick with shallow pitched hipped slate roofs with marked overhang. A central entrance with projecting ashlar Tuscan portico porch. Mullioned and transomed windows. The building is listed at Grade II for its special architectural and historic interest	
Communal Value - medium	The building was built as a private house and remains as such, but the house would have required several people to run it, of which most would have been local.	

5.4 Heritage Values – Overton Conservation Area

Evidential Value - High	The area has a history of use that has gradually evolved over time, as evidenced in archival and archaeological records. This includes historic use, including the shape and boundaries, which are well preserved as indicated by historic mapping sources and reports.	Overall significance **Medium** 
Historical Value – High *(Special Historic Interest)*	Overton is an historic village with good examples of domestic architecture from the 17th century onwards. It has a variety of tenure directly associated with the development of the Bryn-y-Pys estate. The area is densely developed and there exists a hierarchical pattern of development and road layout that contributes strongly to its sense of place. The conservation area retains authentic structures that contribute to its wider setting. The evolution of the village is demonstrated in its streets and architecture. The road layout and burgage plots are significant for its contribution to the understanding of the village morphology.	
Aesthetic Value –high *(Special Architectural Interest)*	Building materials ad vernacular detail, traditional street patterns and street line, landmark buildings, trees and the influence of the Bryn-y-Pys and Gwernhaylod estates all contribute to Overton's character and interest. Also of importance are the landscape elements of trees and hedgerows and garden boundaries all contribute to the sense of place.	
Communal Value - medium	It has local and interest for the wider community in which it serves.	

5.5 The setting of heritage assets

5.5.1 Although setting is not a heritage asset, it still requires assessment. To understand how adjacent designated heritage assets are experienced it is important to define the contribution that the existing site makes to their significance. Cadw's guidance note: Setting of Heritage Assets is a key document to consider.

5.5.2 The Brow was originally set within medium sized grounds with the setting much wider, but in the same ownership – i.e. that of the Bryn-y-Pys estate. The setting of The Brow continues to enjoy the borrowed views of land outside its ownership, and the trees and topography continue to contribute to its picturesque setting.

5.5.3 The setting to the east of The Brow has changed since the house was built, demonstrating that the land once in the ownership of The Brow has been sold off for residential development on Willow Street. This has not significantly changed the key characteristics of The Brow's setting. The eastern part of the Brow's garden is of less significance because of its original croft use and its proximity to Willow Street, which is development of largely 20th century origin. It doesn't appear to have formed part of a pleasure ground, or walled kitchen garden, which were usually accessed directly from the ornamental pleasure grounds and the functional areas of the house. The curved boundary hints at a previous garden layout but that character has changed and doesn't presently contribute to any significant degree to the setting. The site includes modern orchard trees, young pine trees, overgrown holly and modern greenhouses. An historic giant Redwood Wellingtonia is just outside the site boundary but within The Brow's proposed new boundary. Details of the trees are within the accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment. Larger specimen trees are identified beyond the application site and will remain within the ownership of The Brow.

5.5.4 The importance of the public road to the north of The Brow allowed for ready access to carts to the garden yard, and 'easy communication' with the stables for horse manure, which was essential for its ready supply. The site also abuts terraced housing on Wrexham Road, but these form a cohesive group in their own right, adjacent to the entrance gateway of The Brow.

6.0 Impact of The Development Proposal on The Heritage Assets

6.1 The proposal is for the erection of 1 no. dwelling (C3) and single detached garage, and associated access arrangements, drainage infrastructure works, and landscaping works at Land Adjacent to The Brow, Overton Road, Overton. The main issues are as follows:

- The effect on Overton Conservation Area
- The effect on the setting of The Brow, a Grade II listed building.

6.2 Cadw's Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales document sets out four criteria: -

1. Explaining objectives and the purpose for proposed changes, including options for the different ways in which it can be met and the most appropriate option and design response. What the works are intended to achieve and why they are desirable or necessary.

2. Understanding and identifying significance –The significance of the asset needs to be considered when making the changes.

3. Identifying proposed changes – the proposed schedule of works – identifying the best way to achieve the objectives that respect its character.

4. Assessing the impact –

    - how would the proposals affect the evidential value of the historic asset?
    - Would they result in the loss of or damage to historic fabric, including archaeological evidence, or make it harder to appreciate the way in which the building or site was used in the past, and how it has changed over time?
    - how would the proposals affect the aesthetic or design qualities of the historic asset? Will they compromise its historical design principles — such as its layout, scale, and proportion — or result in the loss of historic detail or craftsmanship?
    - how would the proposals affect communal value? Would they make it easier for people to access and appreciate the building or site?
    - are there any other risks or benefits? For example, risks might include increased maintenance and management liabilities, or compromised performance using incompatible materials; benefits might include the introduction of a sustainable new use.
    - Offsetting measures – where damage is unavoidable, opportunities to introduce compensatory measures.

6.3 The land in which Overton Conservation Area is set in is very distinctive. There are some distinct physical boundaries, and it has been drawn up to capture all the essential elements that contribute to its special architectural or historic interest. It has been subdivided into six character areas, of which Character Area: Willow Street is where part of the application site is within. It also abuts Character Area: Wrexham Road.

6.4 The landscape in which the setting of The Brow is appreciated is much wider than its garden area and has been described previously. The key picturesque elements of the site include the house and its wider treescape and the river Dee. The view from the house to the wider landscape beyond is exceptional, clearly the reason for the choice of site.

6.5 The application site's north eastern boundary includes the terraced housing and their narrow rear gardens, and to the eastern boundary, detached housing on Willow Street. Overton Conservation Area Appraisal 2009 (CAA) confirms that the terraced houses along Wrexham Road are buildings of visual interest. It identifies a large part of The Brow's entire garden area, which for the most part is outside the conservation area as Tree Preservation Order Area and Important Woodland backdrop. This is however slightly misleading in the fact that the application site is not important woodland. Please see the accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment for further analysis of these trees.

6.6 The CAA also confirms that Willow Street properties "vary in size and age with most dating from the latter half of 20th Century. Buildings are set within large grounds bounded by thick hedges and planting. Trees are particularly important features of this area. The trees found in the garden areas, those to the rear of the Brow and to the rear of the Sundorne estate create an important backdrop framing views and giving this area of the village a quieter and rural character." It also references the trees in a particular viewpoint within the conservation area "Beyond numbers 4 and 4a [Willow Street} the road curves sharply northwards where the large trees and woodland of The Brow forms an important backdrop". Mature tree planting makes a significant contribution to the setting of the conservation area; however, it was not considered to be of such importance that it was to form part of the conservation area.

6.7 On Wrexham Road the area appeared to be laid out in the 19th century on historic burgage plots. On Willow Street, boundaries have changed over time during the 20th century. The garden boundary of The Brow has changed over time on its eastern boundary to reflect this subdivision. This subdivision was well established before this area formed part of the conservation area and it appears to be a logical place to build a new dwelling with the least impact on the setting of The Brow and on the street scene to Willow Lane.

6.8 It should be recognised that the urban grain and mix of properties in Willow Street and Sundorne are broadly similar and that there is a pattern of development here that is well established, with detached housing behind primary dwellings on Willow Street, with fleeting views through the vegetation and through driveways. Views of these houses are greatly restricted by tree enclosure. Detached houses continue to form part of the essential character of this part of the conservation area, garden surrounding houses are a feature.

6.9 Following on from assessing other properties in the Willow Street area, various design options were considered to ensure that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Overton Conservation Area. The design brief was that the property should be a detached two storey dwelling that is in keeping with the development of the area, a change that has occurred over time, beginning with 19th century detached housing to modern 20th century development. The proposed building is to the west of a c1970 house of suburban character, seen in most suburban areas, of a design not locally distinctive.

6.10 The proposed dwelling is an appropriate response to the site. The proposed building is similar in scale and massing to others on Willow Street and subordinate in scale to The Brow, which because of its distance away from the application site, continues to be experienced largely as existing. The proposed dwelling been designed in a contemporary Victorian revival style, which fits in with the varied architectural character within the conservation area. The design and massing is well articulated, asymmetrically balanced in parts, with windows and doors of timber. The front door is clearly expressed, the roof is animated by chimneys, and dormer windows. Materials are like that in the local area, a mix of brick and slate using architectural detailing such as deep eaves, exposed purlin feet, string courses and canted bay windows to accentuate windows and doors. The proposal is typical of the general presentation of buildings along this part of Willow Street that positively contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area and is reflective the feeling of spaciousness on each proposed plot.

6.11 In terms of scale, the new dwelling's proposed ridge will be 7.9m. Neighbouring ridge heights on Willow Street are similar. The overall mass of the building is not overwhelming, and the scale, height, location is influenced by the neighbouring properties and the design is appropriate to its context. The spatial attributes between buildings can still be appreciated and the proposal would sit appropriately within the establish urban grain of this part of the conservation area.

6.12 In terms of scale, the new dwelling is set well back from The Brow. The position and orientation of the new dwelling has been chosen to minimise impact on the setting of The Brow and to avoid impact on the Root Protection Area (RPA) of existing mature trees on site and to ensure that there is minimal shading of the garden area and property. The implementation of a comprehensive landscape scheme will contribute to integrating the new development into the conservation area. This, overall, will preserve the character of the conservation area.

6.13 Whilst the entrance to the proposed new dwelling and The Brow would be accessed from the same location, off Wrexham Road, the entrance has been designed to retain the gateway of The Brow and parts of the stone wall. There will be a physical change to the wall to facilitate the new development, as 4.1 metres of it will be removed. A gate for the new driveway will be set back into the access by 6 metres. This change is not considered to adversely affect The Brow's significance as The Brow's entrance and gateway is very modest and unassuming. It will still be clearly read, and it is felt that the loss of this part of the wall would not adversely affect the sense of arrival to The Brow or diminish the setting to an unacceptable degree. The boundary wall forms part of the transitional relationship between the edge of village and the boundary of The Brow, set within a rural setting, the design of the new entrance will continue to form part of that experience. A formalised boundary to the new dwelling will be created and has been designed to be like the boundary treatment to The Brow at this location. The new access would therefore assimilate well with this established character. Boundary details will include hedgerow and trees planting and this will be secured by condition.

6.14 The application submission is designed to express both the subdivision of the grounds and the location and architectural character of the new dwelling in a sensitive way that will preserve both the setting and evidential value of The Brow and the Overton conservation area's special architectural and historic interest. The proposed development would leave a large proportion of the garden of The Brow undeveloped, retaining approximately 90% as outdoor amenity space, and with appropriate landscaping and tree planting, it will enhance the sylvan nature of the site which will assist in the provision of a large visual breathing space between The Brow and the new dwelling. The proposed area of development is the least sensitive place within the setting of The Brow. The character and nature of any formal garden has long disappeared. The experience of the setting of The Brow is only really appreciated within the site, as it is not visible from Wrexham Road to any degree. The development is a sufficient distance from The Brow to preserve its setting and its significance. The garden of The Brow is still a good size to reflect the social status of The Brow as it is today.

6.15 Therefore, to address the tests in legislation and policy, these factors are evident: -

1. In terms of heritage impact, whilst the proposed house would be visible from a very small number of vantage points in the immediate surrounding area, the weight to be attached to that visibility and the weight of the effect on this part of the conservation area would be low, because it is largely hidden. There are few views of the site from within the designated area.
2. The degree of change within the conservation area, in an area of relatively moderate to low sensitivity, would be low. It would be largely unseen. Notwithstanding that, the design and plot ratio is like other plots within this part of the conservation area. As such it preserves this part of the conservation area's character and appearance.
3. The slight increase in scale created by the new development is not hugely significant, because of the simplicity of the form and detailing proposed. It is concluded that this will not fundamentally affect the experience, setting or significance of the conservation area. Enhanced landscaping and screening will enhance the experience and setting. The weight of the given effect is neutral and of no harm. It preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area.
4. The site was visited in March and seasonal effects are reasonably pronounced in terms of tree coverage. The Brow is well hidden from most vantage points from Overton village and its approach to it. The change in character of the application site, which is part of the domestic setting of The Brow, although laid out in a way that it is a transitional area, would be low in terms of impact. The site is sufficiently far away from The Brow which would mean that the effect on the setting would be limited and highly localised. It would be seen within the backdrop of the village and would not affect the more important panoramic views that The Brow presently enjoys.
5. The degree of change to the setting of the designated heritage asset of high sensitivity, The Brow, would be low, as would the level of harm to significance. It would not attract important weight, and as such there is no degree of harm to significance and on balance, because of its location as a secondary and incidental element of the grounds of The Brow, close to the built up area of Willow Street,

where part of the original grounds have already been built upon, preserves the setting of this heritage asset. Its special interest and setting would not be compromised by this development.

6. The proposed development would not occupy a large area. The magnitude of change to visual amenity and impact on the heritage value of this part of the setting would be low. This area is low in terms of aesthetic significance, and low in terms of its evidential and historic significance given the changes since the 1960's. / 70's The proposed development would not be significantly out of scale with the landscape, nor would it dominate the landform. The views of the landscape are not valued, important or intended but incidental and would not be distracting in any way to The Brow. It would not make it harder to appreciate the way in which the building and site was used in the past, or the legibility of changes over time.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The proposal is for the erection of 1 no. dwelling (C3) and single detached garage, and associated access arrangements, drainage infrastructure works, and landscaping works at Land Adjacent to The Brow, Overton Road, Overton.

7.2 The main issues are as follows:

- The effect on Overton Conservation Area
- The effect on the setting of The Brow, a Grade II listed building.

7.3 Overall it is concluded that whilst there is a degree of change and visibility of these features in the landscape: -

- The setting of The Brow will change slightly as the garden area will be smaller than existing, the subdivision of the plot does not unacceptably impact on the setting of The Brow because of the distance away from the house and its orientation of key views. The degree of change to the setting of the designated heritage asset of high sensitivity, The Brow, would be low, as would the level of harm to significance. It would not attract important weight, and as such it is considered that there is no degree of harm to significance and on balance, because of its location as a secondary and incidental element of the grounds of The Brow, close to the built up area of Willow Street, where part of the original grounds have already been built upon, preserves the setting of this heritage asset. Its special interest and setting would not be compromised by this development.

- The degree of change within the conservation area, in an area of relatively moderate to low sensitivity, would be low. It would be largely unseen. Notwithstanding that, the design and plot ratio is like other plots within this part of the conservation area. As such it preserves this part of the conservation area's special architectural and historic interest.

- The proposed development would leave a reasonable proportion of the garden undeveloped to the west, nearest The Brow, and with appropriate landscaping and tree planting, it will enhance the sylvan nature of the site. This will assist in the provision of a visual breathing space between The Brow and the new dwelling. The proposal is typical of the general presentation of buildings along this part of Willow Street and the feeling of spaciousness on each plot.

- The carefully considered bespoke design aims to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Overton conservation area, whilst complimenting and not competing with the spacious setting of the character of The Brow.

7.4 The proposals follow the five principles outlined for 'new work or alteration to a significant place' in Section 28 of Cadw's 'Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the Historic Environment in Wales', March 2011. These are:

• The need for the work is fully justified - The works are justified in terms of the assessment of the effect on the significance of the heritage assets

• There is sufficient information to understand the significance of the heritage assets and the proposals upon it.

• The proposals would not materially harm the values of the heritage assets.

• The proposals have a neutral impact on the value of the heritage assets.

• The quality of the design and execution must add value to the existing asset.

• The special interest of the heritage assets are preserved. It would not affect the ability to appreciate and understand it.