WINTERBURN
HERITAGE & PLANNING

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Planning Application
For
Internal Alterations and
a Number of Replacement Windows
The Old Smithy
No.3 Wrexham Road, Overton
Wrexham
LL13 0DY

November 2024

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1.0 Context

1.1 This Heritage Impact Statement has been produced[1] in support of an application for works to The Old Smithy, a Grade II listed building on Wrexham Road, Overton on Dee. As these proposals have the potential to impact on the listed building and the setting of nearby designated historic assets[2], an assessment of the potential degree of impact is required.



The Old Smithy with two front doors and outbuilding to the rear, with Nos.1 & 2 to the left

1.2 The site is also within a conservation area. The Overton Conservation Area was first designated in 1971 and its boundary amended in February 1999. The Overton Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan was adopted in December 2010. The Overton article 4(2) direction came into effect in January 2011.

1.3 There are a number of factors that need to be addressed in proposing a development for this site. This Statement has been prepared with the advice in The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation areas) Act 1990 and the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 in mind, which require authorities considering applications for planning permission or listed building consent for works which affect a heritage asset to have special regard to certain matters, including the desirability of preserving the setting. The setting is often an essential part of a building's character especially if a park, garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function.

1.4 Proximity is an issue, as the most sensitive of these matters are the site's relationship with the historically significant townscape and the impact of any development on it, and the significance requires assessment in the context of these proposals.

[1] The contents have been informed by *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, which sets out the general principles to consider when planning changes to historic assets and applying for listed building, conservation area and scheduled monument consent.*

[2] *See Appendix I for full list and descriptions*

The Proposals

1.5 The Old Smithy is a late 18th century cottage with a much later rear extension, where the proposals seek to remove sections of internal wall at ground floor level, replace several of the plastic windows and insert two conservation low-profile roof lights.

1.6 The objective is to provide alterations to the existing extension in a form that does not impact unduly negatively on the setting of this or the adjacent listed buildings. It is on this basis that the current scheme has been formulated, aimed at addressing issue relating to its:

- Materials and massing;
- siting;
- relationship with the topography; and
- relationship with identified historic asset



Existing Elevations & Floorplans (above) Proposed Elevations & Floorplans (below)



1.7 The Proposals are for a contemporary doors and windows on the extension to the west and south elevations, with a lantern skylight over. The glazing is to be aluminium steel-effect 'Crittal' style frames. There is also a proposal to fit photovoltaic panels to the rear roof slope.



Looking east to walls to be removed between extension and main body of the cottage. Much of the original back wall has been lost in the construction of the later rear extension. Proposals for further losses are considered minor and will not impact negatively on the overall significance of the building

1.8 While the extent of proposed works to the fenestration would be partly apparent from the west elevation; the internal works will not be at all externally. As TAN24 states:

> *1.8 Changes in the historic environment are inevitable. This can be the result of decay caused by natural processes, damage caused by wear and tear of use, and the need to respond to social, cultural, economic and technological changes.*

1.9 The Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 12 February 2024) requires any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) must demonstrate clear and convincing justification. It therefore requires that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.



As above, looking south west from cottage into modern extension

1.10 Hence the need for a balanced approach, particularly in historic landscapes which also have crucial and sometimes contradictory roles to perform. The PPW has provided a mechanism by which such impacts fall to be considered.

1.11 Various balances appear throughout the guidance. The two most relevant here are the heritage/public interest balance and the overall planning balance. The PPW recognises that there are circumstances where some harm to heritage assets simply cannot be avoided in the overall search for the public interest; in this case a rural dwelling and the benefit of providing enhanced living accommodation.

2.0 Historic Assets & Policy Context

2.1 A 'designated historic asset' is specifically defined as World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wrecks, sites on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, sites on the Register of Historic Landscapes in Wales or Conservation Areas, as designated under the relevant legislation.

Historic Assets – National Planning Policy in Wales Considerations

2.2 The historic environment is central to Wales's cultural heritage and sense of identity. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 provide the legislative framework for the protection and sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales. The latter Act makes changes to legislation relating to the protection and management of the historic environment in Wales, such as requiring all applications for Listed Building Consent and for Conservation Area Consent to be accompanied by Heritage Impact Statements.

2.3 Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition February 2024) (PPW) provides the national planning policy framework for the consideration of the historic environment, in particular paras 6.1.23 & 24 which state,

> *'The planning system recognises the need to conserve archaeological remains. The conservation of archaeological remains and their settings is a material consideration in determining planning applications, whether those remains are a scheduled monument or not.*
>
> *'Where nationally important archaeological remains and their settings are likely to be affected by proposed development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical protection in situ. It will only be in exceptional circumstances that planning permission will be granted if development would result in an adverse impact on a scheduled monument or an archaeological site shown to be of national importance) or has a demonstrably and unacceptably damaging effect upon its setting.'*

2.4 This is supplemented by guidance contained in Technical Advice Note 24: *The Historic Environment* and Cadw-associated best practice guidance on the historic environment.

Policy Considerations

2.5 As well as the revised 12th Edition PPW sections outlined elsewhere as they relate to the historic environment in considering the proposals due regard has also been taken in this Heritage Impact Assessment of the Local Plan Policies.

2.6 Chief local policy consideration is contained within the Heritage Assets-related policies of the Local Development Plan (LDP). The current Development Plan is the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011), which was adopted in February 2005. In future this will be replaced by the Wrexham Local Development Plan.

2.7 The overarching Policy is **Policy GDP1:** *General Development Principles*, where all new development should, *inter alia:*

a) 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.

Also of relevance is point j), where developments:

'have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.'

2.8 The two main heritage asset policies are **Policy EC7:** *Conservation Areas states 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. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.*

Policy EC9: *Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest*, requires that *'Alterations or additions to, and development or redevelopment within the curtilage of, buildings or structures listed as of special architectural or historic interest must respect the setting and character of the listed buildings or structures.'*

2.9 The common thread running through these objectives is that they 'flag up' the special interest of the historic assets, and impose, or enable the imposition, of more stringent controls than would otherwise be imposed by the 'normal' planning process over any activities which might harm it, thereby ensuring that full account will have been taken of that which has been identified as of special interest.

2.10 So it is within this policy context, and given the nature and extent of the application proposals, this Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the historic assets (whose significance is assessed in section 3.0, and their setting in Section 4.0) that may be directly affected, and is proportionate to the importance of the assets and sufficient to understand the potential indirect impact of the proposals, discussed below in Section 5.0.

3.0 Significance of the Historic Assets

> *6.1.9 Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place (PPW).*

3.1 Understanding and articulating the values of an historic asset is necessary to inform the decisions about its future[3]. A key principle for managing change to historic assets is understanding significance. It is clear that understanding both the *nature of the significance* and the *level of importance* are fundamental to decision-making, and that the analysis below assessing significance of the various relevant factors indicates the area and its historic assets possesses significant historic interest.

3.2 *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* Principle 2, states:

> *Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital. Historic assets have many values that contribute to their significance. These include:*
> - *their physical remains and surviving fabric*
> - *pictorial and documentary records that help us understand them,*
> - *their capacity to illuminate aspects of the past and connect us to it*
> - *their aesthetic qualities*
> - *the value they have to the people who relate to them.*

3.3 This inevitably requires a careful consideration of the design and materials of the proposed development, the current condition of the site and the quality of the proposed interventions, thus supporting the need for the integration of new development into the existing built and historic environment.

3.4 As 'significance' is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts can be measured and compared, understanding that significance and its origins makes it possible to develop proposals that will protect or enhance the character and cultural value of a site.

3.5 The following brief assessment is therefore provided on the identified significance of the historic asset that may potentially be affected by the application proposals, and is proportionate to the importance of the various assets and sufficient to understand the potential impact of those proposals, given their nature and extent.

3.6 The 'significance' of the house derives from the evidential and historic values, including its form, recognised through its designation as a listed building with a group value. It has some aesthetic value as its location on the street means that it is a clearly visible feature of the streetscape. Its communal value is

[3] para 2.4. *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*

evident in the location as the feature is a recognisable landmark clearly visible from the east and west.

The Identified Values of the Historic Assets

3.7 Overton (Welsh: *Owrtyn*) is a village situated close to the Welsh-English border in Wrexham County Borough. The settlement is not mentioned in the Domesday Book, but was first recorded in 1195, via a 14th century source, as *Ouerton*. Its name was also recorded as *Overtone* in 1201, *Awtun*, in the 14th century and *Ortyn* in the 15th century, all of which are forms of a name meaning "settlement on the bank [of the Dee]". A castle was built here in the 12th century by Madog ap Maredudd, a prince of Powys. One of Overton's earliest appearances in history was as one of the first targets of the revolt of 1294–95, led by Madog ap Llywelyn.

3.8 In 1536, under Henry VIII, it was included into the county of Flintshire. Although part of Flintshire, Overton was within an exclave known as *Maelor Saesneg* ('English Maelor'), surrounded by Cheshire, Shropshire and Denbighshire, and became the administrative centre of the area, often referred to as *Flintshire Detached.*

3.9 Much of Overton and the surrounding land was owned by the local Estate, Bryn-y-Pys, centred on Bryn-y-Pys Hall, a country mansion built around 1739, which went through many stages of being remodelled over the years. The Georgian massing survived remodelling of the 1850's. It was a three storey building with a west front which had a five bay centre between 2 semi-circular bows and a seven bay south front. The Hall was demolished in 1956, but the Estate itself still continues to function.

3.10 The original Bryn-y-Pys Hall was built in the 1500s and was bought by Edmund Ethelston Peel in 1850. The building of the lodge, gates and remodelling may be set in the context of the considerable development of the estate which took place under his auspices. Edmund married Anne Peel, cousin of Robert Peel – Prime Minister from 1834-35 and 1841-46 and widely regarded as the father of modern policing.

3.11 Following the death of Edmund, the Estate was inherited by his eldest son Hughie, Major Peel, who lived at Bryn y Pys Hall until his death in 1950. Hughie Peel was a keen sportsman – hunting, shooting, fishing, horse racing and breeding amongst his keenest interests; the family having been closely involved in the formation of Bangor Races in 1859[4].

[4] Hughie's horse 'Poethlyn' won the Grand National in 1918 at the wartime venue of Gatwick. The following year he won again, this time at Aintree, carrying the record weight of 12st. 7lb and ridden by Ernest Piggot, Grandfather of racing legend, Lester Piggot. Poethlyn died at the age of 25 and is buried in Bryn-y-Pys Park. There is a Munnings portrait of him, with 'Bryn Truthful', Hughie's greyhound, who won the Waterloo Cup in 1934. This picture hangs in the National Sporting Museum in Newmarket. Poethlyn was shod at the smithy.

3.12 The Old Smithy is one of a short row of brick with slate roof cottages built by the Estate around 1800, much like Dispensary Row across the Wrexham Road – their presence does much to define this area around the junction with High Street. Nos.1 & 2 are each single unit cottages with doorway to the right and windows aligned on each floor. Steep 2-centred arches to doorways which have boarded doors; windows with round-arched heads, enclosing casement glazing with 2 Gothic lights.

3.13 No.3, The Old Smithy, consists of 2 sections, to left, a cottage as Nos.1 & 2, and to the right, a 2-window section with first floor windows and doorway. There is a modern single storey extension to the rear. The group is set back from road behind narrow forecourts with iron railings and gates. Some first floor Gothic windows reinstated at The Old Smithy in 2003.

Summary of Significance

3.14 The significance of No.3 Wrexham Road therefore lies in a modest but conscious quality of its architecture, particularly that of 18th and 19th century estate cottages, and the distinctive form and layout of the historic core, which contains a substantial number of surviving buildings of historic or architectural interest, as well as those of lesser interest, but collectively they have a high historic value. The main features of significance are therefore:

- Surviving 18th - 19th century and earlier buildings, mostly of brick and variable in scale, dominating by the surrounding townscape
- mix of building types and uses, mainly built from the 18th and 19th centuries
- Association with the evolution of the settlement as a minor estate community and provider of facilities for the effective operation of the estate.

3.15 Of particular significance are assets associated with the following:

- the locality's role relating to the history of the Welsh socio-economic system of farming and territorial possession in the form of a landed estate based at Bryn-y-Pys; and
- through control by the Estate, the development of the various buildings, materials and specific architectural styles, their appearance (largely with Gothic patterns of fenestration) and the various activities, crafts and industries which took place within them.

Consideration of Heritage Values

3.16 *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales* (2011) opines that to help reach a shared understanding of the special qualities of historic assets, significance can be considered as a family of four heritage values: evidential (or archaeological), historical, aesthetic and communal. Within these four main categories of heritage value, the level of significance can be measured and assigned to a hierarchical structure:

> ***Exceptional*** *– an asset important at the highest national or international level; includes scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings and World Heritage Sites. The PPW advises that substantial harm to such assets should be wholly exceptional.*
> ***High*** *– a designated asset important at a national level, including Grade II listed building and conservation areas. The PPW advises that substantial harm to such assets should be exceptional.*
> ***Medium*** *– a non-designated asset important at local to regional level, including buildings on a Local List (non-statutory). Can also include less significant parts of listed buildings and conservation areas. Heritage assets in this category should be retained where possible, although there is usually scope for adaptation.*
> ***Low*** *– structure or feature of very limited heritage value and not defined as a heritage asset. Includes later additions to listed buildings or settings that are of low value. The removal or adaptation of structure or features in this category is usually acceptable where proposals will enhance a related heritage asset.*
> ***Negative*** *– structure or feature that harms the value and significance of a heritage asset. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.*

3.17 On this basis, the four different types of value (with the assessment in italics) that can contribute to significance are identified as follows:

Evidential value: every historic asset has a unique story to tell. The surviving historic fabric and detail — whether above or below ground — helps us to understand when and how each historic asset was made, how it was used and how it has changed over time. Pictorial and documentary sources may also increase our understanding.

> *The historic smithy provides important evidence concerning the development of, and relationship between, the various forces including social, economic and historic factors. Interpretations concerning the efforts to mark the development and evolution of a landed estate on the border with England. Each effort has left a mark on the area around Overton and beyond. The cottages and their functions, together with the documentary sources relating to the estate, will provide a detailed picture of the activities of the tenants and occupiers of the community. This evidence can be used to understand more fully the relationship between different sectors of social activities in Overton. Therefore, the overall* ***evidential value is high****.*

Historical value: historic assets may illuminate particular aspects of the past. They can help us to understand how people lived and worked, and the beliefs and values they cherished. They may be associated with notable people or events. Through evocation and association, historic assets can connect past people, aspects of life and events with the present.

> *Throughout its history the community and associated occupational and domestic initiatives has influenced the form and appearance of the townscape, and the smithy should be seen in relation to the local community's geographical/memorial aspirations. It is a significant example of a minor series of estate-built properties driven by the ambitions of its prominent owners dominating the locality. Therefore, the* ***historical value is high.***

Aesthetic value: we may value historic assets for their visual qualities, whether they result from conscious design and craftsmanship, or from the

fortuitous effect of change over time. Tastes alter and so do historic assets: earlier records and careful analysis of what survives may help in appreciating aesthetic value.

> *Estate communities such as Bryn-y-Pys historically have erected selective buildings to perform the various tasks associated with farming and the proper functioning of a rural estate. This well-preserved historic townscape, albeit largely no longer in the ownership of the Estate, provides a strong framework for the interpretation of local political and social power. That such buildings still survive in Overton is reflected in the granting of listed building and conservation area status. Therefore, the* ***aesthetic value is high.***

Communal value: historic assets may be cherished by the people and communities who relate to them, and they may play an important part in collective experience or memory. Historic assets can have economic as well as social value with the capacity to provide a valuable source of income or employment.

> *The estate properties generally remain as prominent features within the townscape. Few of them are formally accessible to the public, but can be experienced by local people in the road network, etc.*
>
> *The Old Smithy is one of a good number of surviving historic buildings in the area and is greatly representative of the social, commercial and economic structure of this part of old Flintshire, particularly from the 18th – 19th century period, and so has a* ***high communal value****. However, as a private house, the dwelling and outbuildings have a* ***low communal value***

3.18 In summary, it is considered that the proposed domestic internal re-ordering selective window replacements and PV panels have been designed to preserve its group setting within the surrounding historic area. The significance of the Old Smithy is not thereby challenged visually and the appearance and relationship of the group of buildings with the setting of the conservation area will be effectively preserved.



The modern rear extension and dormer window

4.0 Assessment of Setting

> *'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 in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset*.'
>
> (Technical Advice Note 24: *The Historic Environment* para 1.25).

> *6.1.7 It is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way. (PPW)*

The Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (May 2017)

4.1 The purpose of this guidance is to provide information on what setting is, how it contributes to the significance of a historic asset and why. The setting of a historic asset may reflect the character of the wider townscape or landscape in which it is situated, or be quite distinct from it. The contribution of setting to the significance of historic assets, and how it can enable that significance to be appreciated, will almost always include the consideration of views. (**section 1**). Views can of course be valued for reasons other than their contribution to heritage significance, and may be related to the appreciation of the wider landscape, where there may be little or no association with heritage assets.

4.2 The indirect visual impacts of the proposed development on the setting of designated and non-designated historic assets within the locality have been assessed. These are mainly related to views from, to and across those historic assets.

4.3 A 'Zone of Visual Influence' defines the areas from which a development may potentially be totally or partially visible by reference to surrounding topography. The analysis does not take into account any landscape artefacts such as trees, woodland, or buildings, and for this reason is increasingly referred to as a '*Zone of Theoretical Visibility*'.

4.4 In this context, the site is to be viewed from the east and west against the adjacent listed buildings; less easily visible from other points, where visibility is closely confined by buildings (especially from the north and south, planted boundaries and screening fencing, considerably limiting intervisibility in the townscape from these directions.

Impact on Setting

4.5 The range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the number of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects: different approaches will be required for different circumstances. In general, however, this assessment can address the key attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

> **Location and siting** – *retention of the existing building limits the options in terms of positioning and orientation, but takes account of the setting of the adjacent heritage assets and the nature of the complex and wider locality.*
> **Form and appearance** – *the re-ordered extension will respect the character and appearance of the property.*
> **Additional effects** – *the replacement windows will materially enhance the current appearance of the locality by providing sympathetic fenestration patterns, thus conserving the public experience of the heritage asset when viewed from various points.*
> **Permanence** – *as a development to provide amended floorspace, the proposals are ultimately a non-reversible amendment within the setting of the identified historic assets.*

4.6 It is assessed therefore that The Old Smithy's setting contributes to its significance in respect of those evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values noted above. There is clear intervisibility between the Application site and the adjacent assets.

4.7 As such this development will not then devalue to any further degree the significance of the place, both its tangible values, such as the historic setting, or its associational values, such as its now notionally prominent placing within the landscape, provided the implementation is done with understanding and attention to detail. Indeed, due to the current appearance of the fenestration, the proposed development will in effect enhance the setting and thus the ability to still appreciate or experience the historic assets.

5.0 *Impact of Proposals on Historic Assets*

5.1 In determining this application, the main issue would be the proposals' impact on the setting of this historic asset, the consequences for the wider landscape and thus the character and appearance of the area. The proposed development reflects an understanding of the historical evolution of the buildings, layout and settings (as described earlier), providing a well-informed architectural and locational response.

> *6.1.16 Preservation or enhancement of a conservation area can be achieved by a development which either makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance or leaves them unharmed. Mitigation measures can also be considered which could result in an overall neutral or positive impact of a proposed development in a conservation area. (PPW)*

5.2 Careful consideration of the alignment, scale, massing and materiality of the proposed development supports the requirement for the integration of new development into the existing built and historic environment. The proposed development has been carefully designed to act as a foil to the heritage values and their settings, and will not cause direct loss or damage to the surviving historic fabric. The internal layout of the extension will provide for a successful integration into the current character of the townscape.

5.3 The proposals are therefore sympathetic to the scale, mass, height and aesthetic attributes of the property's built fabric. The level of intervention on the area is the minimum feasible, preserving the character by retaining the prominence of the property as an historic structure in the wider historic environment.

Summary of Impact Assessment

5.4 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. Section 72(1) of the Act requires that, in the exercise of planning powers in conservation areas, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

5.5 Therefore there are two relevant issues against which these proposals are measured:

- Whether the proposals, described in the application, conserve the special interest and physical significance of the designated historic assets; and
- Whether the proposals harm the special character and appearance of the assets and their setting when viewed from the wider area.

Definition of Level of Impact on Heritage Significance	
Level of Impact	*Definition*
Total Loss	Total loss of the Historic Asset and its elements of significance
Substantial Harm	Major alterations to the Heritage Asset removing most area of significance but leaving some areas of special interest
Moderate Harm – Less Than Substantial Harm	Loss of one or more high level areas of special interest of the Heritage Asset
Slight Adverse Impact	Slight alteration resulting in some small loss of special interest
Negligible	Very slight or negligible loss of significance of the Heritage Asset
None	The proposed development has no discernible impact on the significance of the Heritage Asset
Slight Beneficial	Slight enhancement of one aspect of special interest of the Heritage Asset
Moderately Beneficial	Moderate enhancement of one aspect of special interest of the Heritage Asset
Highly Beneficial	Major alterations resulting in wholesale enhancement of the significance of the Heritage Asset

5.6 The overall impact and significance of any direct effects of the proposed development on the historic fabric of the property has been assessed as **negligible** (as defined above) and so in Cadw terms the proposals will have a '*neutral*' impact.

5.7 Overall there would be some direct impact in visual terms upon the wider setting of the historic asset, as discussed above. The proposed fenestration in design and materials are intended to be sympathetic to the immediate context, where the visual impact of providing an extension on the setting of the Conservation Area will be **negligible** (as defined above) – again in Cadw's lexicography; 'neutral'.

5.8 In the context of all the above discussions, it is reasonable to conclude that the proposal will be acceptable by virtue of its careful design, quality and the reduction of visual clutter across the site. Thus, in making a positive contribution there will be a preservation of the property's character and appearance, as required by PPW's paragraphs 6.1.7 and 6.1.15 quoted above.

5.9 In respect of PV panels on a listed building the Welsh Government makes clear that the transition to a low carbon future and use of renewable resources in a changing climate is a core planning principle of national planning policy. The Government recognises the key role Planning plays in supporting the delivery

of renewable and low carbon energy. The Planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future, encouraging the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings, and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

5.10 It is considered that the proposal meets the objectives of the Government as solar power is a clean and renewable energy source mitigating against climate change, supporting the transition to a low-carbon future. The proposal is a small-scale project that will benefit the cottage by reducing its energy costs and ensuring its future sustainability, contributing towards carbon-neutral practices.

5.11 In the light of the above, the importance of renewable energy is a significant material consideration in the determination of this application, and as such the renewable energy scheme designed to power a significant proportion of the Applicants' needs should be attributed significant weight, where the benefits greatly outweigh any less than substantial harm that might be identified on a property with this particular history of development.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The principle of the proposed is considered acceptable on the basis of:

- its appropriate form in relation to the existing layout of the Bryn-y-Pys Estate cottages and nearby heritage assets, preserving those significant elements of the asset and the historic interest;
- the existing pattern of development is respected and the house's current structural character reflected, where the proposed layout has no direct adverse impact on the historic asset;
- the introduction of re-ordered residential accommodation has no appreciable impact on the locality;
- to create sustainable places, development will be designed to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This will be achieved *inter alia*, by resource and energy efficiency and renewable energy generation are adequately addressed and improved where possible; and
- the application is therefore generally in accordance with adopted policies and development guidance relating to preserving historic assets and the concept of setting.

6.2 These factors carry much positive weight, and so are in favour of the scheme in the Planning Balance. It is therefore considered that they are sympathetic to the significance of the identified designated historic asset bearing in mind the statutory duties, in that the PPW states that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated historic assets and that considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving their setting when carrying out a balancing exercise in Planning decisions.

6.3 The character of the area stems as a whole from the interplay of the historic assets of various ages, topography and the surrounding landscape. The scheme design and materials have been consciously arranged to respect the general character and appearance of the house and mitigate to an encouraging degree the visual impact of the proposals. Some limited alteration to the setting will inevitably be necessary to facilitate the scheme. However, these modest interventions are demonstrably balanced by the scheme as a whole, promoting an optimum viable and sustainable use.

6.4 This Historic Impact Assessment indicates that there will be some visual impacts on the setting of the historic townscape. However, the effects on the settings and significance of the designated asset would be effectively neutral through creating an acceptable visual association between the proposed and the historic.

APPENDIX I Identified Historic Assets & Their Descriptions

Reference Number 87509, 87507, 87508
Building Number 1 - 3
Grade II
Status Designated
Date of Designation 30/11/2006
Date of Amendment 30/11/2006
Name of Property The Old Smithy, including iron forecourt railings
Address 3 Wrexham Road
History
Row of cottages with Gothic details built around 1800 for the Bryn-y-Pys Estate. The right hand end formerly the village smithy. Overton's famous double Grand National winner (1918 and 1919) Poethlyn, was bred by the Peels of Bryn-y-Pys, and shod at the smithy. Some first floor Gothic windows reinstated at The Old Smithy in 2003.
Reason for designation
Early C19 row of small cottages and former smithy with well-preserved character, part of an important group of buildings at the N end of Overton High Street. Group value with the similar listed Dispensary Row almost opposite.
Group Description
Nos.1-3 Wrexham Road Two-storey row with five first floor windows; outshut rears (later rear extensions). Brick with slate roofs. Five rectangular brick chimneys. Nos 1 and 2 are each single unit cottages with doorway to the R and windows aligned on each floor. Steep 2-centred arches to doorways which have boarded doors; windows with round-arched heads, enclosing casement glazing with 2 Gothic lights. No 3, The Old Smithy, consists of 2 sections, to L, a cottage as Nos 1 and 2, and to R, a 2-window section with first floor windows and doorway as before. The boarded door has impressions from branding irons including "PEEL" for owners of Bryn-y-Pys. To its R, a window with 3 Gothic lights. Right return has, at first floor level, one window as front, and a small 2-light Gothic window; on ground floor, broad segmental archway enclosing Gothic doorway to R, and 2-light Gothic window to L. The group is set back from road behind narrow forecourts with iron railings and gates.

Reference Number 14460 - 71
Grade II
Status Designated
Date of Designation 15/03/1994
Date of Amendment 15/03/1994
Name of Property Park View
History House, built c1830, and shown on the Tithe Map of 1838.
Exterior
Brick with hipped slate roof. 2 storeys, 3 window range with central entrance. 6-panelled door with radial fanlight, in slight moulded architrave. Windows on each floor are wide 16-pane sashes with flat arched brick heads. End wall stacks.
Interior
Reason for designation
Included as an unaltered and well-detailed example of a typical early C19 small house.

Reference Number 14465 - 71
Building Number 1 - 8 Dispensary Row, Wrexham Road
Grade II
Status Designated
Date of Designation 13/03/1994
Date of Amendment 10/11/1994
Name of Property Dispensary Row
Address 7 Wrexham Road
Location Towards the junction of Wrexham Road and High Street, adjoining Pendas House on High Street.

History
Row of 8 cottages, building as a single development c1800, the use of Picturesque vocabulary suggesting that they were built as part of an estate.
Exterior
Brick with slate roofs. A two storeyed row, each cottage has a single unit, double pile plan, with doorway to the right and windows aligned on each floor. Steep 2-centred arches to doors, and segmental heads to 2-light casement windows, with leading in the tympana. The corner adjoining Pendas is curved and has an additional window to the right of the doorway to No 1. Each cottage has an end wall stack with moulded cap.
Reason for designation
An exceptional and almost unaltered row of small cottages which forms part of an important group of buildings at the end of High Street.

Reference Number 1690
Grade II
Status Designated
Date of Designation 16/11/1962
Date of Amendment 15/03/1994
Name of Property Pendas House
Location On the W corner of Turning Street, in a prominent position facing down High Street.
History
Mid C18 house.
Exterior
Brick with slate roofs. Three-storeyed, 3-window range with central entrance. Six-panelled door with overlight in pedimented architrave, flanked by 3-light casement windows (renewed in original openings) with steep cambered heads. Similar windows on the upper floors (of 2-lights over door and in attic storey). Plat band over lower windows. Coped gables with end wall stacks. Lower wing to rear forming part of the original building, extended later C18 or early C19.
Reason for designation Forms an important group with the adjoining terrace at Nos.1-8 Wrexham Road.

Reference Number 14467
Grade II
Status Designated
Date of Designation 15/03/1994
Date of Amendment 15/03/1994
Name of Property Bryn-y-Pys Lodge
Location At the western end of the village, next to the gates which formerly led to the drive to Bryn-y-Pys Hall.
History
Built for the Bryn-y-Pys estate, designed by Joyn Douglas of Chester, and dated 1875. The former mansion of Bryn-y-Pys, was built in the mid C18, but the estate appears to have been considerably developed from c1850, when it was purchased by Edmund Peel. John Douglas also prepared plans for the remodelling of the house, but these were near executed.
Exterior
Coursed and squared stone with plain tiled roof with scalloped bands. One and a half storeys, 2-window range, with lean-to porch and outshut projecting from southern elevation. Doorway to left of this elevation, in porch formed at the end of the outshut, the roof carried on a corner pillar. Dated with initials 'EP' in the wall over the porch. Leaded mullioned windows of 3 and 4-lights in the gable end to the west, contained in a projecting full height bay, roofed as an extension of the main roof-line. 2-light mullioned window in outshut which extends the line of the porch, and a similar window in the main range beyond. Coved plaster eaves cornice, bargeboards with pendant finials and axial stack.
Reason for designation
Listed as a good example of late C19 estate architecture by John Douglas.

Reference Number 14468
Grade II
Status Designated
Date of Designation 15/03/1994
Date of Amendment 15/03/1994
Name of Property Gate Piers and Gates to former Bryn-y-Pys Hall
Location
At the western edge of the village, next to Bryn-y-Pys Lodge.
History
Gates and gate piers erected at the same time as the adjoining lodge, also to designs of John Douglas. They marked the entrance to Bryn-y-Pys, a country house which had been built or rebuilt in the mid C18, and was acquired by Edmund Peel in c1850 . The building of the lodge and gates may be set in the context of the considerable development of the estate which took place under his auspices.