

Land North of Bryn Lane

Net World Sports

Planning Statement

CBRE Limited
On Behalf of Net World Sports

July 2023

Contents

1.0 Introduction.....1

2.0 Site & Surroundings.....4

3.0 Consultation.....9

4.0 Proposed Development.....12

5.0 Planning Policy Context.....19

6.0 Planning Assessment.....26

7.0 Summary Conclusions.....47

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Planning Policy

Reference:	Land North of Bryn Lane, Wrexham		
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by CBRE Limited, on behalf of Net World Sports (hereafter referred to as 'NWS' or 'the Applicant'), in relation to a hybrid planning application.
- 1.2 The application site comprises agricultural land to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate (the 'Site'), as edged in red on the accompanying Site Location Plan.
- 1.3 The application site is bound to the north by Francis' Lane, to the east by existing field boundaries and a public right of way, to the south by Bryn Lane, and to the west by Hugmore Lane / Industrial Estate Road.
- 1.4 The Site is identified as a Key Strategic Site in the draft Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) 2013-2028 under Policy SP11 'KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate' for 28ha of Use Class B employment uses. WCBC has decided not to adopt the plan at this stage, however it remains a material consideration with significant weight, as it has been found sound by a Planning Inspector.
- 1.5 The proposed development constitutes a natural extension to Wrexham Industrial Estate, which is recognised as a nationally and regionally important employment location. The delivery of the Site for employment development would make an important contribution to the ability of the Council to deliver its overall spatial strategy as set out in the draft LDP and ensure that there is adequate employment provision at Wrexham Industrial Estate and the borough as a whole to meet existing and future demand.
- 1.6 The description of the proposed development is as follows:

Hybrid planning application seeking:

- *Full planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings and re-profiling of the site for development comprising the severable and phased construction of employment floorspace (Use Class B1c/B2/B8) with ancillary (integral) office floorspace (Use Class B1a) and the provision of associated infrastructure including earthworks, sub-station, parking, landscaping, access from Industrial Estate Road roundabout and Bryn Lane and internal estate road; and*
 - *Outline planning permission for the severable and phased construction of employment floorspace (Use Class B1c/B2/B8) with ancillary (integral) office floorspace (Use Class B1a), ancillary retail and drive thru facilities, a hotel and petrol filling station (Use Class A1/A3/C1/sui generis) and associated infrastructure including earthworks, internal estate road, parking and landscaping (all matters are reserved for future determination).*
- 1.7 The application has been subject to consultation with the Council and statutory consultees. The Applicant has carried out further pre-application engagement with the local community, Ward Councillors, specialist consultees, and the Local Planning Authority. Consultations have been undertaken in line with the statutory requirements and further detail is provided in section 3 of this Planning Statement.

1.1 Application Submission

- 1.8 The application is accompanied by a suite of supporting information as detailed below, the scope of which was agreed with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) during pre-application discussions.

Table 1.1: Submission documents

SUBMISSION DOCUMENT	PREPARED BY
Planning Application Form	CBRE Limited
Covering Letter	CBRE Limited
Planning Statement	CBRE Limited

Environmental Statement (ES)	CBRE Limited
Full suite of application drawings	SGP / Nicholsonsons / Tier / Co-Surveys Ltd / Powers
Design and Access Statement	SGP
Energy Efficiency & Sustainable Development Report	Synergy Building Services
Utilities Statement	Tier
Flood Consequence Assessment	Tier
Storm Water / SuDS Maintenance Plan	Tier
Heritage Impact Assessment	TEP
Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment	TEP
Pre-Application Consultation Report	CBRE Limited

1.2 Statement Structure

1.9 This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2: Site and Surroundings** – describes the application site, its wider context, and planning history;
- **Section 3: Consultation** – summarises the consultation undertaken with the Council, other stakeholders, and the local community;
- **Section 4: Proposed Development** – details the proposed quantum of development, scheme layout, and proposed access arrangements;
- **Section 5: Planning Policy Context** – sets out the relevant policies of the statutory development plan and other material considerations;
- **Section 6: Planning Assessment** – assesses the proposed scheme against planning policies and other material considerations; and
- **Section 7: Summary Conclusions** – summarises the main findings of the Planning Statement, establishes the planning balance, and concludes on the overall merits of the scheme.

2.0 Site & Surroundings

2.1 Site Context

- 2.1 The Site extends to approximately 37.21ha and predominantly comprises arable land, separated into eight fields by intact and defunct hedgerows lined with intermittent trees. It is located immediately to the north of Wrexham Industrial Estate. The Site is currently accessed from Bryn Lane and Francis' Lane.
- 2.2 The site is bound to the north by Francis' Lane, to the east by field boundaries, to the south by Bryn Lane, and to the west by Hugmore Lane / Industrial Estate Road. The Industrial Estate Road / Bryn Lane / Ash Road North / Abenbury Way roundabout is located at the south-west corner of the site.
- 2.3 A cluster of buildings and associated hardstanding is located in the central southern part of the application site, adjacent to Bryn Lane. This includes a residential property and barn structures, which are currently in use. An access road linking these buildings with Bryn Lane is also present in the south of the application site. A residential property is located within the central northern part of the application site, located off Francis' Lane.
- 2.4 The application site also includes an area of publicly accessible highway around the Bryn Lane/Industrial Estate Road as well as small areas of the adjacent verge.
- 2.5 Three residential dwellings are located to the west of the Site between the site boundary and Hugmore Lane. Francis' Lane is a single track country road.
- 2.6 Across the site there are a number of ponds and waterbodies, with 14 waterbodies within 500m of the site. In the south east of the site there is an unfenced pond with a large area of open water and in the north east of the site there is also an unfenced waterbody. The waterbody in the north west of the site is unfenced and holding a limited amount of water. In the west of the site there are two, small, shallow waterbodies. Two shallow ponds are present in the centre of the site. In total, there are seven waterbodies on the application site.
- 2.7 A Public Right of Way (ISY/6 & HOL/26) can be found running adjacent to the east of the development site, from north to south. This follows the field boundaries adjacent to the application site and crosses into the application site at the northern part.
- 2.8 The site's agricultural land classification is considered to be 3b, as denoted on the Welsh Government's 'Agricultural land classification: predictive map'.¹ Grade 3b is considered to be moderate quality agricultural land.

2.1.1 Heritage

- 2.9 The site is not located within or near to a Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings, Registered Parks & Gardens or Scheduled Ancient Monuments within or directly adjacent to the site boundary.
- 2.10 The nearest listed building to the site is the Grade II Listed New Holt Lodge Farm (reference: 1541), which is approximately 115m to the north of the Site.

¹ <https://datamap.gov.wales/maps>

- 2.11 Further information regarding this listed building and non-designated heritage assets which are both on and off-site is included within the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment.

2.1.2 Ecology

- 2.12 The Site is not subject to any statutory nature conservation designations.
- 2.13 There are three internationally designated wildlife sites within 10km of the site, these are Afon Dyfrdwy a Llyn Tegid (River Dee and Bala Lake) which is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in Wales and England and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is 3.1km to the east of the site. The Midlands Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar site is 3.5km to the north west of the site. The Johnstown Newt Sites are also a SAC 8km to the south west of the site. In terms of national designations, there is the River Dee and Bala Lake SSSI, and also the Vicarage Moss SSSI which is 3.7km to the north west of the site, Sontley Marsh SSSI located 4.7km to the south west of the site and Marford Quarry SSSI located 5km to the north west of the site.
- 2.14 More information regarding ecology at the Site is provided in Chapter 11 Volume II of the ES and technical appendices (ES Volume IV) submitted in support of the application.

2.1.3 Flood Risk

- 2.15 The Natural Resource Wales (NRW) flood risk map identifies the site as being within Flood Risk Zone 1 for tidal and fluvial flooding and therefore has a low probability of flooding (less than 1 in 1,000 year annual probability).
- 2.16 The risk of flooding from surface water map shows the site as predominantly being in an area at very low risk of overland and surface water flooding, with a number of isolated areas shown to be potentially at low to high risk of surface water flooding.
- 2.17 Further details regarding the risk of flooding at the site are provided in the accompanying Flood Consequence Assessment.

2.2 Site Surroundings

- 2.18 The Site is located directly to the north of Wrexham Industrial Estate. Wrexham Industrial Estate is the UK's second-largest industrial estate extending to over 550ha² and is recognised as a regionally and nationally importance employment area. It is located 2.5 miles to the east of Wrexham Town Centre.
- 2.19 Beyond the Site to the north and east is open countryside currently in use as agricultural land. To the south and west of the site, beyond Bryn Lane and Industrial Estate Road, is employment provision within Wrexham Industrial Estate.
- 2.20 To the south-east of the Site at 'Land South of Ridleywood Lane' is a c. 35,000 sqm storage and distribution warehouse which was granted planning permission on the 24th of November 2021 (application reference: P/2020/0167). This is the headquarters of the Applicant, Net World Sports, and has been constructed and is operational.
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² <https://wrexham-industrial.com/>

- 2.21 Although the Site is utilised as agricultural land, large scale employment facilities are prevalent in the vicinity of the Site and therefore the wider area is characterised by employment provision, notably comprising large manufacturing and storage & distribution uses.
- 2.22 Industrial Estate Road to the west is a dual carriageway and a key road in the local highway network, linking Wrexham Industrial Estate to the A534, the path of which continues to Wrexham Town Centre.
- 2.23 The Site is well served by public transport, with bus stops at Abbey Road and Ash Road North within walking distance of the site, approximately 550m to the south, providing regular bus services to Wrexham Town Centre.

2.3 Planning History

- 2.24 A search of the Council's online planning register has been undertaken and the relevant planning applications have been identified below which are on the site.

Table 2.1: Application site planning history

REFERENCE	ADDRESS	APPLICANT	PROPOSAL	DECISION
P/2015/0397	Land At, Ridley Wood Road, Ridley Wood, Wrexham, LL13 9UR	TGC Renewables Ltd	Installation of solar farm and associated development (size 12.6 Hectares and up to 6.37Mw)	Approved after appeal 13 September 2016, Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/16/3147773
P/2015/0396	Land South Of, Francis Lane, Holt, Wrexham, LL13 9YB	TGC Renewables Ltd	Installation of solar farm and associated development (size 10.2 Hectares and up to 4.61Mw)	Approved after appeal 13 September 2016, Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/16/3147767

- 2.25 The above applications relate predominantly to land to the east of the application site but do encroach within the application site boundary. However, it is our understanding that the solar farm has not been constructed and is no longer being pursued.
- 2.26 A search of the Council's online planning register has been undertaken and the relevant planning applications have been identified below which are in close proximity to the site.

Table 2.2: Relevant applications in the surrounding area

REFERENCE	ADDRESS	APPLICANT	PROPOSAL	DECISION
P/2023/0280	Land Off, Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate, Wrexham, LL13 9UT	FI Real Estate Management Ltd	Hybrid planning application for (a) outline permission (all matters reserved except for means of access) for erection of up to 3 warehouse & distribution units (Use Class B8), including ancillary office accommodation, comprising up to 93,019 sqm net floorspace, service yards, car	Pending – validated 18/04/2023

parking, HGV parking, internal circulation, landscaping and ancillary works; and (b) detailed permission for demolition, means of access, earthworks, drainage, landscaping, ecology zone and relative ecological mitigation measures, and ancillary works

3.0 Consultation

- 3.1 The following section summarises the consultation which has been undertaken with key stakeholders including WCBC, specialist consultees, and the local community. Further details are provided within the accompanying Pre-Application Consultation Report.

3.1 Consultation with WCBC

- 3.2 The application proposals have been discussed with WCBC Officers as part of extensive pre-application discussions (reference ENQ/2022/0224).
- 3.3 Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the Development Team Approach pre-application service offered by WCBC has been unavailable. However, the proposed development has been discussed comprehensively with the Head of Service (Development Management) Matthew Philips.
- 3.4 Separate engagement was also held with various Officers (both WCBC and statutory consultees) to discuss the scope and methodology of technical assessments. Details of this consultation are provided in the relevant technical assessments which accompany the planning application.
- 3.5 The Council issued a pre-application response on the 9th November 2022 following a meeting on the 7th September 2022. This response identified planning and land use constraints at the site, summarised the relevant planning history, identified relevant planning policies, and provided pre-application advice. The meeting on 7th September 2022 reviewed the current LDP situation at the time, and Matthew Philips confirmed that the proposed development aligns with the emerging policy allocation for B1 / B2 and B8 uses, with the other uses supported through draft policy EM2 which is supportive of ancillary uses. A key message from the meeting was the importance of encouraging walking and cycling connections to the residential areas.
- 3.6 The advice related to the principle of development; ecology; noise; traffic and parking; renewable energy;; phosphorous and planning obligation matters. The pre-application advice also confirmed the validation requirements for the planning application.
- 3.7 A second meeting was held with WCBC to discuss the proposed development layout and ecology matters, including proposed mitigation and the strategy for replacement of existing ponds on the site.
- 3.8 A request for a scoping opinion was compiled and submitted to Wrexham CBC on 2nd November 2022, reference ENQ/2022/0328. A formal response was received on 2nd June 2023. The details of this are set out in Chapter 2 of the Environmental Statement (ES).
- 3.9 The proposed development has evolved as a result of the pre-application advice received, as detailed in the submitted Design & Access Statement and reported in the technical assessments which support this planning application.

3.2 Pre-Application Consultation

- 3.10 In accordance with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, a statutory pre-application consultation has been carried out. This was undertaken for a period of 28 days between 19 June 2023 and 17 July 2023 and the details of this are set out in the Pre-Application Consultation report, including the summary of the responses received and how these have been addressed.
- 3.11 The consultation was communicated via site notice and letters which directed interested parties to a website (<https://utopiacity.co.uk/consultation>) which contained information on the Site and proposed development, provided copies of the draft application documents and provided an opportunity for the provision of feedback on the proposals.
- 3.12 The site notice, relevant consultee notice and letters have been sent to the following:

- All neighbours adjoining and surrounding the immediate vicinity of the site (37 neighbours in total);
 - Specialist consultees:
 - Canal & River Trust;
 - Coal Authority;
 - Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water;
 - North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority;
 - Natural Resources Wales;
 - WCBC Highways Authority;
 - WCBC Planning Authority; and
 - Welsh Ministers (Land Quality Advice Service).
 - Community consultees:
 - Holt Community Council
 - Councillor Michael Morris
- 3.13 In total, 14 responses were received to the consultation, comprising six responses from specialist consultees, four responses from adjoining owners/occupiers, and four responses from non-statutory consultees.
- 3.14 A summary of all responses is provided in the Pre-Application Consultation Report, which accompanies this planning application.
- 3.15 In total, four responses supported the proposal, four objected to the proposal and six provided comments.
- 3.16 The main points raised in the supporting responses were related to the economic benefits of the scheme, the accessibility of the scheme and the local demand for new employment space.
- 3.17 The main points raised in the objecting responses were related to issues surrounding pollution, the demand for the scheme, the layout of the scheme, the impact on ecology and Great Crested Newts, traffic and transport, Green Belt land, and drainage.
- 3.18 Responses to the comments received are detailed in the accompanying Pre-Application Consultation Report.
- 3.19 The Applicant's consultation strategy meets all statutory requirements as set out in the legislation and has followed additional best practice guidance, including undertaking non-statutory consultation beyond the requirements.
- 3.20 There were only minimal comments received throughout the consultation period, however those which were received have been reviewed and considered prior to the submission of the hybrid planning application to WCBC.

4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 This chapter provides a summary of the proposed development including the use and accommodation schedule, scale and massing, access, and landscape strategy.

4.1 Description of Development

- 4.2 The description of development is as follows:

Hybrid planning application seeking:

- *Full planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings and re-profiling of the site for development comprising the severable and phased construction of employment floorspace (Use Class B1c/B2/B8) with ancillary (integral) office floorspace (Use Class B1a) and the provision of associated infrastructure including earthworks, sub-station, parking, landscaping, access from Industrial Estate Road roundabout and Bryn Lane and internal estate road; and*
 - *Outline planning permission for the severable and phased construction of employment floorspace (Use Class B1c/B2/B8) with ancillary (integral) office floorspace (Use Class B1a), ancillary retail and drive thru facilities, a hotel and petrol filling station (Use Class A1/A3/C1/sui generis) and associated infrastructure including earthworks, internal estate road, parking and landscaping (all matters are reserved for future determination).*
- 4.3 The part of the site applied for in detail relates to a parcel in the south-eastern corner of the application site and the central portion of the site, between the northern boundary (Francis' Lane) and southern boundary (Bryn Lane), as well as access provided from the Industrial Estate Road roundabout at the south-western part of the site.
- 4.4 The part of the site applied for in outline relates to two parcels of land to the north-west and south-west of the site (either side of the internal estate road applied for in detail), and a third parcel to the north-east of the site.
- 4.5 The outline component of the hybrid application reserves all matters (Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) for future determination.
- 4.6 A summary of the proposed development is provided below. This section should be read alongside the submitted plans and Design & Access Statement.

4.2 Proposed Uses

- 4.7 The proposals include a range of uses, including Use Classes B1(c), B2, B8, A1, A3, C1 and Sui Generis (petrol filling station) floorspace including ancillary office space (Use Class B1a), servicing, parking and landscaping.
- 4.8 The detailed component of the proposed development comprises:
- Demolition of all existing buildings, site clearance and preparation works, including removal of vegetation and reprofiling of topsoil, where necessary;
 - Construction of a warehouse unit comprising 33,595 sqm gross external area (GEA) of floorspace for B1c (light industry appropriate in a residential area), B2 (general industrial), and/or B8 (storage and distribution) uses (referred to as Unit 2);
 - Construction of eight new small to medium size industrial units (referred to as Units 3-7; and 14-16), providing a total of 29,659 sqm GEA of floorspace for B1c (light industry appropriate in a residential area), B2 (general industrial), and/or B8 (storage and distribution) uses;
 - Access and parking provision, including new access junctions, internal roads, service yards and car and HGV parking. Two new junctions are proposed providing vehicular access, as well as cycle and pedestrian access, from Bryn Lane/Industrial Estate Road with an additional access road for a

substation. 592 car parking spaces (32 accessible spaces) and 138 HGV spaces are proposed within the detailed component;

- Retention and enhancements of some existing on-site green spaces and provision of landscaping around the detailed component of the application site; and
- Implementation of drainage/attenuation measures and ancillary infrastructure, including substation and pumping station.

4.9 The outline component of the proposed development comprises:

- Construction of new buildings collectively providing up to 72,635 sqm GEA of floorspace for B1c (light industry appropriate in a residential area), B2 (general industrial), and B8 (storage and distribution) uses, as well as potential ancillary retail/drive thru facilities, a hotel and a petrol filling station (A1, A3, C1, sui generis). The overall quantum of A1, A3, C1 and/or sui generis use floorspace would not exceed 16,150 sqm GEA;
- Access and parking provision, internal roads, service yards and car and HGV parking. Up to 908 car parking spaces and up to 138 HGV trailer spaces and HGV lorry spaces are proposed across the application site;
- Retention and enhancements of some existing on-site green spaces and provision of landscaping around the application site; and
- Implementation of drainage/attenuation measures.

4.10 The outline component of the site is split into three development zones. The submitted Parameters Plan sets out the maximum development parameters in terms of the use, floor areas and building heights. The details are summarised in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Proposed Parameters for Outline Zones

	Zone A1	Zone A2	Zone B
Developable Area	1.22 ha	3.62 ha	8.02 ha
Use Classes	B1c, B2, B8 A1, A3, C1, Sui Generis (not exceeding 70% GEA of the floorspace within this Zone)	B1c, B2, B8 A1, A3, C1, Sui Generis (not exceeding 70% GEA of the floorspace within this Zone)	B1c, B2, B8
Maximum Floorspace	6,283 sq m (GEA)	16,789 sq m (GEA)	49,563 sq m (GEA)
Proposed Maximum height	20m to ridge	20m to ridge	28.5m to ridge

4.11 The unit sizes proposed for the detailed component of the hybrid application is provided below. Each unit is a steel-framed distribution unit.

- **Unit 2:** 33,177 sq m of total Gross Internal Area (GIA).
- **Units 3, 4 and 5:** 2,063 sq m GIA per unit.
- **Unit 6:** 5,712 sq m GIA.
- **Unit 7:** 10,293 sq m GIA.
- **Units 14 and 15:** 854m sq m GIA for Unit 14 and 1,319 sq m GIA for Unit 15.
- **Unit 16:** 3,879 sq m GIA.

4.3 Scale and Massing

4.3.1 Outline Component

- 4.12 Scale is a matter which is reserved for future determination.
- 4.13 The maximum height building will be up to 28.5m in height above ground level to ridge. The height of 28.5m to ridge enables the accommodation of modern racking systems., product handling equipment and high level sprinklers. This maximum height applies only to Zone B of the application site (within the part of the site for which outline planning permission is sought). This Zone is located furthest from the residential properties along the north-western boundary and is therefore considered most suitable for the tallest buildings.
- 4.14 For Zones A1 and A2, the maximum scale is reduced to 20m in height above ground level to ridge. This reflects the proximity of these zones to existing residential properties and the importance of creating a human scale entrance to the site.

4.3.2 Detailed Component

- 4.15 The office element of the units will be 2 to 3 storeys high and will be located on the gable ends of the buildings to face the internal estate road, where possible. This will create a sense of activity along the estate road, a strong and more active frontage which will help to break down the scale of the units and limit the visual impact. The floor to ceiling dimensions will typically be at least 2.7m.
- 4.16 For the units applied for in detail, massing is also broken up horizontally with various cladding elements as well as loading docks plus dock doors at low levels, and canopies above level access doors which create a strong horizontal shadow line along the length of the building.

Unit 2

- 4.17 Unit 2 has an overall length of 228m and width of 138m and the footprint of this building generally fills the space provided in the south-eastern corner of the site. The proposed logistics warehouse building has a maximum haunch height of 18m (clear internal height above floor level to the underside of eaves).
- 4.18 Warehouse scale is driven primarily by the required floor area for the unit. The two storey office building to the north of the warehouse and the hub elevation on the western side of the building help to break up the structure when viewed from the site entrances.

Units 3, 4 and 5

- 4.19 With an overall length of 33.9m and width of 58m the footprint of these three buildings fills the eastern part of the central zone. The proposed logistics warehouse buildings have a maximum haunch height of 10m.
- 4.20 The units accommodate a one storey mezzanine office with the ground floor core.

Unit 6

- 4.21 Unit 6 has an overall length of 103.7m and width of 53m. The proposed building has a maximum haunch height of 15m.
- 4.22 The unit accommodates a one storey mezzanine office with the ground floor core.

Unit 7

- 4.23 With an overall length of 136m and width of 73m the footprint of this building fills the central part of the detailed component, opposite units 5 and 6. The proposed logistics warehouse building has a maximum haunch height of 15m.
- 4.24 The two storey office building to west of the warehouse helps to break up the structure when viewed from the site entrances.

Units 14 and 15

- 4.25 With an overall length of 65.4m and width of 32m the footprint of these buildings fills the south western part of the detailed component. These units are adjoining, with the smaller unit stepped in on the rear elevation.
- 4.26 The proposed logistics warehouse buildings have a maximum haunch height of 8.5m.
- 4.27 The two storey office buildings to the west and east of the units helps to break up the structure when viewed from the site entrances.

Unit 16

- 4.28 With an overall length of 82.4m and width of 44.2m the footprint of these buildings fills the south eastern part of the detailed component. The proposed logistics warehouse building has a maximum haunch height of 12.5m.
- 4.29 The two storey office building to north west of the warehouse helps to break up the structure when viewed from the site entrances.

4.4 Appearance

4.4.1 Outline Component

- 4.30 The details of the proposed materials and building design will be controlled via planning conditions and at reserved matters stage for the outline zones.
- 4.31 The units within the outline component will be brought forwards in line with the design principles established by the units applied for in detail, to ensure a high quality, cohesive development. The design of building elevations, including use of colour and texture, will be used to break down the scale of the buildings.
- 4.32 The proposed hotel, PFS and retail drive-thru units will be designed to occupier specifications and therefore the design and detail of this will be subject to Reserved Matters.

4.4.2 Detailed Component

- 4.33 The intention is for the design of the buildings to be informed by the functional parameters of the nature of the proposed usage. Therefore, the warehouse design will reflect a functional design aesthetic, with the design of the offices providing an opportunity for innovation.

- 4.34 The logistics units will include elements of ribbed and flat composite cladding panels and built up profiled cladding systems laid both horizontally and vertically. This will provide variety to the elevation by producing a change in texture.
- 4.35 To reduce the impact of the warehouse buildings upon the surrounding environment, a selection of recessive and neutral colours will be used. The potential for the controlled use of stronger colours in feature bands, flashings, fascias and glazing at lower levels then becomes acceptable in order to offer contrast and relief, and to create some individuality for occupiers, including corporate branding opportunities.
- 4.36 Offices will use high quality materials. Curtain walling entrance features and aluminium framed glazing/window systems would enhance the pedestrian interface with the buildings.

4.4.3 Materials

- 4.37 The selection, detailing and maintenance of all external materials will be considered at the outset of the design process and only products with proven lifespan and quality will be specified. Particular attention will be given to detailing to ensure continued performance, especially at joints and abutments.
- 4.38 The selection of materials will have due regard to the embodied energy for construction, environmental impact and ongoing maintenance.
- 4.39 The use of recyclable materials, where appropriate, will be considered.

4.5 Access

- 4.40 The proposed development will be accessed via an existing roundabout on the main estate road into Wrexham Industrial Estate. There will also be an access developed from Bryn Lane which will allow direct access to the eastern part of the site.
- 4.41 A separate vehicular access is proposed off Ridleywood Road, for access to the proposed Primary Substation (PSS), albeit this is for maintenance purposes only and so is not anticipated to be in frequent use.
- 4.42 Pedestrian footways will be provided throughout the site along the proposed estate road with on-site crossings points where required. Cyclists will access units via an on-road allocated cycleway throughout the site. Connectivity will be retained from estate roads through to main entrances with level approaches for pedestrians and secure onsite, covered cycle storage facilities for cyclists. A link will be provided to the cycle shelters which are located near to the office entrances.
- 4.43 Car park areas will be screened through the use of mounding, fencing and planting, as necessary. Soft landscaping will be integrated into the car parking areas to enhance the visual appearance as well as blend the development into its context. Pedestrian linkages have been designed and specified to create 'pedestrian friendly' areas through car parks.
- 4.44 Accessible parking, electrical charging infrastructure and cycle storage will be provided.
- 4.45 Control of accesses to service yard areas by a gatehouse or remotely controlled gates will help to ensure that unauthorised access is not permitted. Public access should be actively discouraged from service yards from both a security and safety perspective.
- 4.46 For the detailed component of the hybrid application, security/boundary fencing is proposed, incorporated into the soft landscape boundary treatment and set back from the public side of the landscaping belt. The boundary fencing for the premises of each unit will be 2.4m high.

- 4.47 In addition to access to each unit, a pedestrian footpath is proposed around the site, referred to as a 'Wellness Trail'. This will provide a pleasant route through the landscaped areas of the site, for visitors and employees to enjoy. The Wellness Trail will form part of the Public Right of Way (PRoW) which exists along the eastern boundary and also connect to the wider network of PRoWs, including connecting to PRoW to the north of Francis' Lane.

4.6 Landscape Strategy

- 4.48 The concept idea underpinning the landscape strategy is to create a landscape that places water and planting as central features within the development.
- 4.49 The scheme combines activity and relaxation spaces within soft landscaping and brings natural elements in a close proximity with users.
- 4.50 The key landscape design objectives are:
- **Native Hedgerows** – ensure good maintenance of retained hedgerows and creation of new hedgerows within the new layout to link them together to create valuable habitats and wildlife corridors.
 - **Woodland** – native woodland planting in appropriate areas around the site to further increase the infill woodland character that exists within the wider industrial estate area. These are longer term strategies to increase habitat and biodiversity on site and reinforce the framework. Species recommended include the Pedunculate Oak which are prevalent within the area.
 - **Strengthening the wildlife corridors** – managing waterside vegetation, increasing wildflower potential, mosaic grasslands, rainwater harvesting, pollinator plants in car parks, footpath networks with recreational areas all improve the connectivity.
 - **Fruit trees / heritage orchard species** – fruit trees of local provenance are suggested and can include apple, damson, and plum trees and other species found in The Oaks site of Wrexham Industrial Estate. Fruit trees can be incorporated as part of an 'edible landscape' approach to local food production.
 - **Wetland and pond areas** – incorporation of water within a site increases biodiversity and extending the existing pond system on site will have benefits. Species rich ponds with marginal aquatic planting and a series of 'Stepping Stone' ponds will allow movement of newts and other aquatic species.
 - **Wildlife tunnel** – an access link from the ecological corridor under the proposed internal estate road to the adjacent field and pond is advocated to further increase breeding potential and will allow movement of breeding and migrating species.
 - **Grasslands** – a range of grassed areas can provide an array of species for habitat creation and foraging. Semi improved neutral grasslands, wildflower meadow species, improved and amenity grasslands, verges with rough species together with perennials and ruderal grasses contribute to a mosaic of habitats.
 - **Interpretation information** – signage and explanation of the areas designed, and the elements contained help educate the public on the environmental credentials of the site and the overall vision.
 - **Community engagement** – allowing access by the public, volunteering groups and inviting schools to participate in study projects is a good way to increase engagement and create a human value to the landscape.

5.0 Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) establishes the legislative background for town planning. Section 38(6) of this Act establishes the plan-led approach and states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is reiterated in Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).
- 5.2 The statutory development plan for WCBC currently comprises the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (adopted 2005), which covers the plan period 1996 to 2011. It is important to note that this plan period ended 12 years ago and therefore there are several policies which are out of date and inconsistent with national policy.
- 5.3 The Council has been progressing with a new Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP covers the period 2013-2028 and would replace the UDP as the primary planning policy document against which the Council consider planning applications, if adopted.
- 5.4 The LDP was submitted for examination by an independent Inspector on the 30th November 2018. A consultation on proposed Focused and Minor Editing Changes took place in February 2019 and examination in public hearing sessions were undertaken in 2019 and 2020. The Matters Arising Changes consultation took place between 23rd May and 6th July 2022.
- 5.5 The LDP has been found sound by an Inspector, who recommended adoption of the plan; however at an Extraordinary meeting on 19th April 2023 and at a further meeting on the 14th June 2023, the Council voted against the adoption of the LDP. As the LDP has been through examination and been endorsed by a Planning Inspector, this still forms a significant material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

5.1 Site Allocation

- 5.6 The Site is not allocated for a specific use and is located outside of the Wrexham Industrial Estate Settlement Limit on WCBC's adopted proposals map. The Site is therefore within the Open Countryside (**UDP Policy PS1**).
- 5.7 Development will be directed to within settlement limits, as set out at **UDP Policy PS1**. In the justification text WCBC state that settlement boundaries establish a clear limit beyond which new development will not be allowed (UDP paragraph 3.5).
- 5.8 Employment development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is a small-scale conversion of an existing building (**UDP Policy E5**). In the justification text WCBC outline how development in the countryside which would result in a loss of visual quality and landscape character and adversely affect agriculture will be resisted (paragraph 7.11).
- 5.9 However, the Site is identified as a Key Strategic Site in the draft LDP under draft Policy SP11 'KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate' for 28ha of Use Class B employment uses. The policy text to draft Policy SP11 is as follows:

'Land is allocated to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate as shown on the proposals map to deliver 28ha of employment land for B use class purposes including an ecological network and residential buffer zone along with enabling and necessary infrastructure which will be delivered in a phased manner with specific details tied into planning consents:

Necessary Infrastructure:

- *Active Travel,*
- *Public transport,*
- *Provision of vehicular access to and from the site.*

- *Green Infrastructure'*

5.2 Other UDP Policies

5.10 In addition to the site allocation policies set out above, there are a number of other statutory development plan policies relevant to the proposed development.

- **Policy PS2 The Broad Location of Development** - Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
- **Policy PS3 The Broad Location of Development** - Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value, or comprises agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a quality.
- **Policy PS4 The Broad Location of Development** - Development should maintain the existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated with the existing transport network to help reduce the overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car.
- **Policy PS6 Employment** - Approximately 300 hectares of employment land will be made available for development between 1996 and 2011.
- **Policy PS8 Transport** - encourages the provision of public transport, cycling and walking.
- **Policy PS11 Biodiversity** - Encouragement will be given to proposals which improve the biodiversity value of sites and to the establishment of local nature reserves where the nature conservation and landscape interest of the land will be protected and enhanced.
- **Policy GDP1 Development Objectives** - Development should be of a scale, design and layout which accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.
- **Policy EC2 Agricultural Land** - Development on agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a will only be permitted if it does not lead to the irreversible loss of that land.
- **Policy EC4 Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland** - Development proposals should provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees, orchards, woodland, wildlife and other natural landscape and water features.
- **Policy EC6 Biodiversity Conservation** - Harm to biodiversity should be kept to a minimum, and compensatory measures should be provided. Measures to improve the biodiversity value of sites and enhance their natural conservation interest and landscape quality including the establishment of local nature reserves, will be supported.
- **Policy EC11 Archaeology** - investigation should be carried out to determine the nature, extent and significance of archaeological remains and, where in-situ preservation is not justified, a programme of excavation and recording will be agreed.
- **Policy EC13 Surface Water Run-off** - Development which would result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the water environment due to additional surface water run-off will not be permitted.

- **Policy E1 Employment Allocations** – Sufficient land will be allocated for employment development between 2001 and 2011 at Wrexham Industrial Estate.
- **Policy S3 Non-shopping key town centre uses** - Wrexham Town Centre will be the preferred location for non-shopping uses, and proposals for such uses will be permitted firstly within the town centre, then edge-of-centre locations, with out of centre site only acceptable where there is a clear need which cannot be accommodated on a preferred site and there is a clear justification for this.
- **Policy CLF 6 Informal Recreation** – The existing pattern of public rights of way will be protected, maintained and improved and any potential new routes will be identified and safeguarded.
- **Policy CLF 9 Visitor Accommodation outside Settlement Limits** – Visitor accommodation outside settlement limits will only be permitted through the conversion of existing buildings and extensions to existing serviced and self-serviced accommodation.
- **Policy T1 Public Transport** - Proposals for new and improved public transport facilities for bus, taxi and rail services will be supported, to include public transport interchange facilities, park and ride facilities, car and cycle parking, cycle and walkway routes, and access for buses on new developments.
- **Policy T8 Parking** - Development granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby in accordance with the Council's current parking standards.
- **Policy T9 Walking, Cycling and Horse Riding Routes** – Development proposals will be required to provide walking and cycling routes, where feasible and appropriate, that link with existing or proposed walking and cycling routes and integrate with the public transport system.

5.3 Other Material Planning Considerations

5.11 In addition to the statutory development plan, material considerations relevant to proposed development should also be taken into account in decision making. The scope of what can constitute a material consideration is wide; the following material considerations are of relevance to the application:

- Planning Policy Wales (2021);
- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (2021);
- Technical Advice Notes (TANs);
 - TAN 5: Nature conservation and planning (2009)
 - TAN 11: Noise (1997)
 - TAN 12: Design (2016)
 - TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004)
 - TAN 18: Transport (2007)
 - TAN 23: Economic Development (2014)
 - TAN 24: The Historic Environment (2017)
- WCBC Local Planning Guidance Notes; and

- Landscape and Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No.7)
 - Cycling (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 15)
 - Parking Standards (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 16)
 - Trees and Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No.17)
 - Landscape and Industrial Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No.26)
 - Wrexham Industrial Estate Employment and Nature Conservation (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 29)
 - Biodiversity and Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 32)
 - Draft Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2028 (Deposit Plan (2019) and Matters Arising Changes (2022)) and supporting evidence base.
- 5.12 Of particular relevance is WCBC's draft LDP which, as set out above, is at an advanced stage of preparation and a material consideration in decision making.
- 5.13 The following are considered to be the relevant policies of the draft LDP:
- **Strategic Objective 2** - 'Support a vibrant, diverse and competitive local economy that provides a range of job opportunities to enable new and existing businesses to grow in Wrexham County Borough with strategic growth in Wrexham Town and Wrexham Industrial Estate.'
 - **Policy SP2 Location of New Development** - New development is to be directed within defined settlement limits and employment areas as identified on the draft proposals map.
 - **Policy SP6 Planning Obligations** - Planning obligations will be sought to mitigate any impacts directly related to the development and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in line with relevant planning legislation.
 - **Policy SP9 Economic Growth, Employment and Enterprise** - To ensure the continued role of the County Borough as a key economic driver in North Wales and the wider region, the Plan will diversify the local economy and widen the economic base, in part by allocating a strategic expansion site of 28ha at Wrexham Industrial Estate.
 - **Policy SP10 Wrexham Industrial Estate** - Wrexham Industrial Estate as shown on the proposals map is the County's Key Business Sector Area and will be the primary focus for new employment development over the plan period for class B1, B2 and B8 employment.
 - **Policy SP11 KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate** - Land is allocated to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate as shown on the proposals map to deliver 28ha of employment land for B use class purposes, including an ecological network, residential buffer zone, and enabling and necessary infrastructure.
 - **Policy SP12 Transport and Accessibility** - Wrexham's transport network will be developed in a safe, efficient, and sustainable manner. This will be achieved by restricting development that would have an unacceptable impact on the safe and efficient operation of the transport network.
 - **Policy SP13 Design Principles & Masterplanning Framework** - All development will be required to be of a high quality, sustainable design which makes a positive contribution to the creation of locally

distinctive places by complying with the Masterplanning framework supplementary planning guidance and ‘KSS’ schematics.

- **Policy SP14 Health and Wellbeing** – All development should seek to reduce health inequalities and provide opportunities for improving health and wellbeing.
- **Policy SP15 Natural Environment** - Development will only be permitted where it seeks to protect, conserve, and enhance the natural environment including the strategic ecological network on Wrexham Industrial Estate.
- **Policy SP16 Historic and Cultural Environment** - Development will only be supported where it conserves, protects, and enhances cultural and heritage assets of the Borough and their settings including archaeological remains.
- **Policy SP19 Climate Change** - To mitigate against the effects of climate changes and adapt to its impacts, development proposals will need to demonstrate that they have taken into account measures set out in the policy.
- **Policy SP20 Green Infrastructure** - Development will be required to maintain the extent, quality, and connectivity of multi-functional green infrastructure on or near a site, and, where appropriate to enhance it.
- **Policy DM1 Development Management Considerations** - Developments must accord with or enhance the character and local distinctiveness of a site in terms of their siting, layout, scale, height, density, and landscaping.
- **Policy NE1 International and National Nature Conservation Designations** - Development will only be permitted where it is possible to ascertain no adverse effect on the species or integrity of the habitat or site or where there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest and compensatory measures are secured.
- **Policy NE3 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows** - Development will only be permitted where it does not cause unacceptable harm to trees and hedgerows of significant public amenity, natural or cultural heritage value, or those that provide important ecosystem services.
- **Policy NE6 Waste Water Treatment and River Water Quality** - All new development will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC in particular through the treatment of waste water.
- **Policy EM2 Provision of Supporting Facilities for Employees in Business, Industrial and Warehousing Developments** - Provision for open space, public realm, leisure, food and drink, and child-care facilities will be appropriate in the employment areas shown on the proposals map.
- **Policy EM5 Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlement Limits** – Proposals for visitor accommodation outside settlement limits will only be permitted in certain circumstances.
- **Policy EM6 Pentre Maelor and KSS3 Housing Buffer Zones** - Land surrounding residential dwellings adjacent to allocation ‘KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane’ are safeguarded as buffer zones remaining free of built development to ensure satisfactory standards of residential amenity.
- **Policy T1 Managing Transport Impacts** - Development will be supported where it will facilitate increased journeys by more sustainable modes of travel, mitigate any significant adverse effects upon the transport network that arise from the proposed development, does not compromise the safe, effective, and efficient

use of the highway network and does not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation, and will provide appropriate levels of parking and access arrangements.

- **Policy T2 Active Travel** – New development will be supported where active travel is integral to the overall design of the scheme and makes a positive contribution to the place.
- **Policy R6 Retail, Leisure and Commercial Development (Edge and Out of Centre)** – Proposals will need to demonstrate compliance with the National Planning Policy sequential test, the preference is first to locate new development within a retail, leisure and commercial centre.
- **Policy RE1 Development and Renewable Energy/Low Carbon Technology** – Developers of key strategic sites will be required to incorporate schemes which generate energy from renewable and low carbon technologies, unless it is not financially or technically viable to do so.

5.14 A summary of the relevant policies and guidance from the above documents is provided in Appendix 1.

6.0 Planning Assessment

6.1 The following section summarises the relevant planning considerations that should be taken into account when determining this planning application:

1. Principle of development
 - a. Site Allocation
 - b. Weight Afforded to Emerging Policy
 - c. Emerging Key Strategic Site allocation
 - d. Proposed Uses
 - e. Employment Need & Site Selection
 - f. Economic Strategy & Employment Creation
 - g. Summary
2. Design
 - a. Landscape Strategy
 - b. Landscape and Visual Impact
 - c. Sustainability and Energy Efficiency
3. Impact on Residential Amenity
 - a. Residential Buffer
 - b. Noise
4. Other Site Specific Technical Considerations
 - a. Transport
 - b. Heritage
 - d. Ecology
 - e. Trees and Hedges
 - c. Flood Risk and Drainage
 - d. Air Quality
 - e. Ground Conditions
 - f. Phosphates
 - g. Utilities

6.1 Principle of Development

6.1.1 Site Allocation

- 6.2 Within the statutory development plan (Unitary Development Plan, adopted 2005), the application Site is not allocated for a specific use and is located outside of the Wrexham Industrial Estate Settlement Limit. The Site therefore lies within the Open Countryside under UDP Policy PS1. UDP Policy E5 seeks to limit employment provision in the countryside to small-scale development only.
- 6.3 The UDP was adopted in 2005 and has a plan period of 1996-2011. The UDP was therefore not intended to be in place beyond 2011. However, twelve years have passed since the expiration of the plan period and the UDP remains the statutory development plan for the authority.
- 6.4 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) identifies that up-to-date development plans are the basis of the planning system and plans at all levels should be prepared in accordance with national policy (para. 1.22). Since the adoption of the UDP, 18 years ago, a number of planning policy documents and guidance have been published by the Welsh Government, which are not reflected in the UDP.
- 6.5 The production of the UDP was informed by an evidence base which is not reflective of the current employment needs and requirements of Wrexham.
- 6.6 PPW establishes that development plans and development management decisions should be based on up-to-date local and sub-regional evidence relating to the economy and employment land (para. 5.4.7). It is clear from the age of the UDP that it fails to provide for the existing and future employment needs of the authority.
- 6.7 Therefore, although the proposed development is contrary to the allocation of the site within the UDP, as it is located within the Open Countryside, it aligns with the current and future needs of Wrexham, as demonstrated by the emerging allocation of the site in the Local Development Plan (LDP), as discussed below.

6.1.2 Weight Afforded to Emerging Policy

- 6.8 The Development Management Manual published by the Welsh Government in 2017 is clear that policies in an emerging development plan document are a material consideration, and the weight to be attached to them should correlate with the stage of a plan's preparation, with the more advanced a plan is the greater weight it can be afforded.
- 6.9 WCBC have prepared the LDP which sets out the planning requirements for achieving sustainable development in the County over the period 2013-2028. The LDP is at an advanced stage having been submitted for examination by an independent Inspector on the 30th November 2018. A consultation on proposed Focused and Minor Editing Changes took place in February 2019 and the Examination in Public (EiP) hearing sessions were undertaken in 2019 and 2020.
- 6.10 Following the LDP examination in public hearing sessions undertaken in 2019, the Inspectors published a 'Post Hearing Issues' document (reference: INSP019A) outlining the Inspectors' concerns regarding the soundness of the LDP. Concerns were centred on, and subsequent hearing sessions were held in relation to, Gypsy and Travellers sites, housing provision, and other housing matters.
- 6.11 The Council undertook a six week consultation (23rd May to 6th July 2022) on a number of proposed changes to the LDP known as Matters Arising Changes (MACs) which arose from the EiP hearing sessions.
- 6.12 The consultation responses were then sent to the Inspectors for consideration, and the Inspectors then submitted their final report which closed the Examination. The report found the LDP to be sound.
- 6.13 The LDP has been endorsed by an Inspector, however at an Extraordinary meeting on 19th April 2023, the Council voted against the adoption of the LDP. At a further Extraordinary meeting on 14th June 2023, the Council confirmed its vote against the adoption of the LDP.

- 6.14 It should be noted that during the two meetings and subsequent votes regarding whether or not to adopt the LDP, the application site or the proposed allocation of the site in the LDP were not a point of discussion or reason for voting against the adoption of the LDP.
- 6.15 It is understood that a Judicial Review of this decision has been sought by a group of developers. The Council has sought legal advice which has confirmed it is likely that the Council will lose the Judicial Review and have to incur significant costs as a result of the process.
- 6.16 Nonetheless, as the LDP has been through examination and been endorsed by a Planning Inspector, this still forms a material consideration in the determination of this, and other, planning applications.
- 6.17 The Inspectors' Report concludes that subject to the recommended Matters Arising Changes (MACs) and Inspector Changes (IMACs), the LDP provides an appropriate basis for the planning of Wrexham up to 2028. The Inspectors have found that the Council has sufficient evidence to support the strategy and has shown that it has a realistic prospect of being delivered.
- 6.18 The Inspectors have no concerns regarding the appropriateness of the LDP settlement hierarchy or the spatial distribution of growth. The Inspectors conclude that the spatial strategy is *"coherent and based on a clear and robust preparation process. The spatial strategy and relevant strategic policies are realistic, appropriate and logical in the light of relevant alternatives and are based on robust and credible evidence"* (para. 5.20).
- 6.19 Therefore, the LDP is a material consideration in decision making and should be afforded substantial weight due to the advanced nature of its preparation.

6.1.3 Emerging Key Strategic Site Allocation

- 6.20 In the draft LDP, the application site is included within the Wrexham Industrial Estate's settlement boundary, as defined by draft Policy SP2, and identified as a Key Strategic Site with a draft allocation for 28ha net of Use Class B employment development, as set out at draft Policy SP11 'KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate'.
- 6.21 Emerging Policy SP11 states that as well as employment land, the allocation will be required to deliver an ecological network and residential buffer zone, along with enabling and necessary infrastructure, delivered in a phased manner. Necessary infrastructure is defined as active travel; public transport; provision of vehicular access to and from the site; and green infrastructure.
- 6.22 The need for the residential buffer is further reinforced by Policy EM6 which states that land surrounding the residential properties adjacent to the KSS3 allocation should be safeguarded as landscape buffer zones, forming part of the green network to remain free of built development.
- 6.23 Within the Inspector's report, there is only a limited reference to the KSS3 site allocation (para. 10.10):
- "The landscaped buffer zone surrounding the Pentre Maelor housing estate is within the strategic ecological network and covered by an additional policy, EM6. Similar buffers are indicated around dwellings adjacent to KSS3. These are essential features, necessary to protect the residential amenity of local occupiers, and it is important to establish this principle in the LDP. The 50m width is referred to only in the explanation and not the policy itself and is not, thus, an absolute requirement. The size of the buffer zones is, however, consistent with that indicated by a similar UDP policy which, according to the Council, has served its purpose well. We see no reason, therefore, to alter Policy EM6, other than to remove extraneous wording which will make the policy more concise (MAC48)."*
- 6.24 In regards to the employment provision, the Inspector's report confirms that the scale of employment land provision, growth and spatial locations are *"coherent, realistic, appropriate and based on credible evidence."*

(para. 10.5). The Inspectors also acknowledge that the extension to Wrexham Industrial Estate proposed by allocation KSS3 is necessary to meet the needs of the existing firms in the area and attract further inward investment (para. 10.6).

- 6.25 There are no changes between the Matters Arising Changes and the Inspector's Report Appendix regarding reference to KSS3.
- 6.26 Therefore, employment development at the site is acceptable in principle in a plan which although not adopted does have significant weight, subject to the provision of an ecological network, residential buffer zone, and other necessary infrastructure as set out at Draft Policy SP11.

6.1.4 Proposed Uses

- 6.27 As set out in Section 4.0 of this Planning Statement, the proposed uses are commercial in nature and include a range of Use Class B1c, B2 and B8 units, as well as ancillary development including a hotel, retail/drive-thrus and petrol filling station.
- 6.28 The predominant use of the site for Use Classes B1c, B2 and B8 development aligns with the emerging allocation for the site (Policy SP11).
- 6.29 Emerging LDP Policy EM2 states that provision for leisure and food & drink uses will be appropriate in employment areas, providing that the facility is of an appropriate size and scale and is subordinate in its nature to meet the needs of workers in the vicinity, thus not resulting in an over-concentration of such uses in one area. The uses should not impact on the status or character of the employment area for predominantly B-use class employment uses or adversely affect the operational of other industrial / employment uses in the vicinity.
- 6.30 The proposed ancillary uses at the application site have been identified by the Applicant as those necessary to serve the existing and future extension to Wrexham Industrial Estate. The current estate employs thousands of people; however it lacks facilities to meet the needs of employees and visitors.
- 6.31 The outline component of the hybrid planning application includes a HGV parking area, to address known problems on the Industrial Estate relating to informal parking of HGVs in the local area, which causes amenity issues for local occupiers and residents.
- 6.32 These ancillary uses are considered to support the predominant use of the allocation for traditional employment uses, as well as meeting the needs of existing businesses on the Industrial Estate, thus reducing the need to travel.
- 6.33 The proposed ancillary uses are therefore compliant with emerging Policy EM2.

6.1.5 Employment Need & Site Selection

- 6.34 The application site's Key Strategic Site employment allocation has been informed by a comprehensive and up-to-date evidence base including the Joint Employment Land Review (ELR) produced by WCBC and Flintshire County Council (2015). The ELR has been produced in line with the updated requirements of Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 23.
- 6.35 The ELR concludes that, although there is no overall need for Wrexham to identify further employment land allocations in the period to 2030, there is an exception with regards to Wrexham Industrial Estate where high demand combines with a constrained overall land supply.
- 6.36 Qualitative research indicates that at Wrexham Industrial Estate there is a growing land supply shortfall relative to identified demand. Wrexham Industrial Estate is recognised as a nationally and regionally important employment location. The industrial estate has a crucial role to play in delivering the Council's overall spatial

strategy in the emerging LDP by contributing to delivering the jobs growth required to support the Council's proposed housing targets. The ELR therefore identifies a need to allocate 20-30ha of land at Wrexham Industrial Estate to ensure there are adequate sites to meet the needs of existing and future occupiers. The ELR recognised that employment land allocations need to be sufficiently large to meet the needs of occupiers, with individual plot sizes between 2-5ha deemed appropriate based on enquiries from prospective occupiers.

- 6.37 Following this, WCBC published Background Paper 5 'Wrexham Industrial Estate Expansion Selection' (February 2016) which outlined the site selection exercise undertaken to ensure that any site proposed for allocation at the Industrial Estate is the most appropriate in relation to environmental factors, accessibility, and infrastructure provision.
- 6.38 The Background Paper considered two areas of search as possible locations for the expansion of the Industrial Estate: Area A and Area B - the application Site at Bryn Lane comprises the majority of land within Area A.
- 6.39 Areas A and B were identified as potential locations to accommodate a strategic employment development due to the scale of infrastructure required to deliver strategic allocations and their proximity to recently completed link roads. Other locations on the edge of the Industrial Estate were not considered viable alternatives due to access, ecology, flooding, and highways constraints.
- 6.40 Following the area of search assessment, the Council set out in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal (2016) which supported the LDP Preferred Options and the Sustainability Appraisal which supported the LDP Deposit Version (2018), that Area A offered the best potential for accommodating a new extension of Wrexham Industrial Estate owing to its lower quality agricultural land, fewer ecology constraints, and proximity to markets accessed from the A483. As a result of this exercise, Area A (the application Site) was taken forwards as a proposed strategic employment allocation for the plan period.
- 6.41 It is therefore considered that whilst the proposed uses are not in conformity with the adopted UDP, they do align with the draft Local Plan and the wider development aspirations for Wrexham Industrial Estate. The evidence base supports the need to provide additional employment land at the Industrial Estate and specifically identifies the application site as the most suitable location for this expansion.

6.1.6 Economic Strategy & Employment Creation

- 6.42 The allocation of land at Wrexham Industrial Estate to ensure there is sufficient employment provision to cater to demand is consistent with the national economic strategy and policy set out in Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (2021).
- 6.43 Future Wales Policy identifies Wrexham Industrial Estate as located within a National Growth Area, and Policy 20 is clear that LDPs must recognise National Growth Areas as the focus for strategic economic growth.
- 6.44 Wrexham Industrial Estate is the UK's second-largest industrial estate extending to over 550ha³ and is recognised as a regionally and nationally importance employment area.

³ <https://wrexham-industrial.com/>

- 6.45 The submitted socio-economic impact assessment (ES Volume II, Chapter 7) considers the potential employment generation associated with the proposed development, concluding that the development will generate:
- Approximately 90 gross construction jobs (Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) (24 net construction FTE jobs), which will have a minor beneficial effect in the short-term; and
 - Between 1,166 and 3,352 gross operational jobs (FTE) (between 306 and 880 net operational FTE jobs), which is anticipated to have a moderate beneficial effect.
- 6.46 The development of modern, high quality employment space will attract new occupiers to Wrexham Industrial Estate and allow existing occupiers to remain on the Industrial Estate and expand.
- 6.47 The proposed development aligns with the economic strategy of the borough and Wales and would deliver on the regeneration aspirations of the local authority.

6.1.7 Summary

- 6.48 It is apparent that planning policy in the UDP relating to employment development and Wrexham Industrial Estate's settlement boundary has been overtaken by events and is no longer aligned with national economic strategy and the recognised importance of ensuring the long-term development and success of Wrexham Industrial Estate as the 'County's Key Business Sector Area' (draft LDP Policy SP10).
- 6.49 UDP Policy is therefore not only historic in terms of adoption date but also anchored in a different economic time. It is not in a position to guide employment development as it is not cognisant of economic realities of today and how this correlates with Wrexham's development needs.
- 6.50 Significant weight should be given to the draft LDP and draft allocation SP11, which has been endorsed by an Inspector, as this is informed by a robust up-to-date evidence base and better placed to deliver development in the interests of the authority.

6.2 Design

- 6.51 Planning Policy Wales sets out that good design is fundamental to the creation of sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise, with design not just being about good architecture but about the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment. TAN 12 *Design* sets out the objectives of good design and there is a focus on the collaboration of design.
- 6.52 Policy GDP1 *Development Principles* of the UDP sets out that development should be of a scale, design and layout, and in its use of landscaping, accord with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality. It should ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access and be located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities and sustainable routes.
- 6.53 Emerging Policy SP13 *Design Principles & Masterplanning Framework* states that all development will be required to be of a high quality, sustainable design, which makes a positive contribution to the creation of locally distinctive places, ensuring compliance with the masterplanning frameworks and KSS schematics.
- 6.54 The proposed development has been designed with regard to the design based policies of the statutory development plan and the PPW guidance on good design, as well as the emerging LDP. The submitted Design & Access Statement demonstrates how the design principles which have informed the proposed development reflect the KSS3 schematic, specifically the emphasis on green infrastructure and interfaces with surrounding residential properties.

6.2.1 Landscape Strategy

- 6.55 Environmental sustainability is a key objective of good design, as identified in PPW. This includes enhancing biodiversity.
- 6.56 UDP Policy EC4 states that development proposals should provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees and other landscape features and include new planting, in order to enhance the character of the landscape. This is reiterated in emerging Policy SP15 and Policy SP20, which seek to protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment and green infrastructure. In accordance with emerging Policy NE3, development will only be permitted where it does not cause unacceptable harm to trees, woodlands and hedgerows. If adverse impacts cannot be avoided, adequate mitigation will be required.
- 6.57 The proposed development represents an opportunity for consistent, coherent and high quality development with the flexibility to accommodate a range of employment uses in varying sized units. The landscape design seeks to integrate this proposed built form into the existing framework of the landscape. The wider site has a baseline of ecological and habitat assets that has been utilised and enhanced.
- 6.58 The landscape strategy prepared and submitted as part of this planning application sets out the concept idea, which is to create a landscape that places water and planting as central features within the development. The scheme combines activity and relaxation spaces and brings natural elements in close proximity with users.
- 6.59 The design of the proposed development has evolved to maximise retention of existing trees, where possible, including:
- Re-designing the service yard of Units 4 and 5 to avoid the Construction Exclusion Zone (CEZ) associated with a veteran tree, ensuring that it has sufficient offset to avoid potential for harm; and
 - Relocating areas of parking and hardstanding associated with Unit 2 in order to avoid a group of Category A trees to the north of the unit, ensuring that the trees can be retained with sufficient offset from their Root Protection Areas (RPAs).
- 6.60 This is in direct response to the requirements of the emerging site allocation. Policy SP11 explicitly states that the development of the allocation must include green infrastructure, with the masterplan framework included in Figure 7 of the LDP showing areas of environmental mitigation. The proposed development has followed the principles of Figure 7, creating a central north-south ecological mitigation corridor, which retains the existing trees, hedgerow and ponds in this area (including a veteran tree).
- 6.61 This proposed corridor connects the agricultural land to the north of Francis' Lane with the plot of land to the south, which forms part of the KSS3 allocation (predominantly as 'environmental mitigation' land) but which is outside of the application red line boundary. Although outside of the red line boundary (and outside of the Applicant's ownership), the proposed development will not affect the ability of this section of the allocation to continue its role as ecological mitigation land for the wider KSS3 allocation.
- 6.62 Environmental mitigation is also proposed in the form of landscaped boundaries around the site, including bunded areas (which specifically avoid the RPAs of retained trees) and landscaped buffer zones to the west, north and east of the site.
- 6.63 The submitted landscaping plans show that in addition to the ecology corridors there is proposed planting throughout the proposed development, including an avenue of trees lining the internal estate road.
- 6.64 In summary, ecology corridors have been created throughout the site as part of the extensive green infrastructure network, with trees and hedgerows retained where possible. Where it was not possible to retain existing features, replacements are proposed.

- 6.65 It is therefore considered that the landscape strategy conforms with the aims set out in the national and local policies in terms of enhancing biodiversity and preventing harm to existing features, with replacement planting seeking to mitigate any impacts where this is unavoidable.

6.2.2 Landscape and Visual Impact

- 6.66 A landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) has been prepared and submitted as part of this planning application and is contained within Appendix III of the submitted ES.
- 6.67 Chapter 3 of PPW covers strategic and spatial choices and at 3.3, it encourages good design to make better places. It states that good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. It further states that design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places.
- 6.68 Policies relating to the natural environment and landscape character are set out in Chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places of PPW.
- 6.69 Policy EC4 of the UDP requires development proposals to provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees and other natural features, this includes implementing new planting to enhance the character of the landscape.
- 6.70 The emerging LDP includes policies relating to the natural environment, green infrastructure and trees, woodlands and hedgerows as well as policies relating to good design.
- 6.71 The LVIA considers the current baseline conditions, assesses the sensitivity of receptors and establishes the nature of the changes anticipated as a result of the proposed development, including the effects this will have upon receptors.
- 6.72 The sensitive receptors comprise landscape character receptors, including landscape character areas, and visual receptors, including the use of local transport links and nearby residential properties.
- 6.73 The LVIA notes the embedded mitigation which is proposed as part of the design of the development, and recommends that the landscaping strategy for the outline component of the development is designed in accordance with the landscaping strategy established for the detailed component. This includes the provision of sufficient hedgerows, trees and planting required to mitigate impacts to surrounding visual receptors. An example includes planting on the bund in the north-western corner of the application site, in order to soften and improve the appearance of the proposed bund.
- 6.74 During construction, major to moderate adverse significant effects are anticipated on surrounding visual receptors. However, these effects will be temporary as they relate to the construction phase.
- 6.75 For the operation of the proposed development, the LVIA considers two scenarios – one upon completion and the second 15 years following completion. The latter is intended to establish the long-term effects of the proposed development, once proposed planting has matured. In this later scenario all significant adverse effects noted in the ‘upon completion’ scenario (including major and moderate adverse effects to residents on Hugmore Lane, users of Francis’ lane and users of adjacent PRowS) have been reduced and are no longer considered to be significant. This demonstrates the long-term mitigating effect of the proposed landscaping strategy.

6.2.3 Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

- 6.76 PPW states that all new development should mitigate the causes of climate change in accordance with the energy hierarchy for planning. Reducing energy demand and increasing energy efficiency through the location and design of new development will assist in meeting energy demand with renewable and low carbon sources.

- 6.77 Emerging LDP Policy RE1 *Development and Renewable Energy / Low Carbon Technology* states that the Council will encourage developers of the Key Strategic Sites to incorporate schemes which generate energy from renewable and low carbon technologies. This policy supports emerging Policy SP19 *Climate Change*, which requires development proposals to reduce carbon emissions; promote energy efficiency and increase the supply of renewable energy; and adapt to the implications of climate change.
- 6.78 An Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Development Report has been prepared and submitted as part of this planning application. This sets out the commitment to both CO₂ and environmental impact reduction and demonstrates that the proposed scheme will improve the sustainability and environmental performance of the built environment beyond the mandatory requirements by increasing energy efficiency, reducing CO₂ emissions, and implementing building integrated Low or Zero Carbon (LZC) technology when compared to a traditional equivalent scheme.
- 6.79 The Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Development Report concludes that there is significant opportunity for the development to become an energy efficient and sustainable development as the design develops. The Applicant is proposing to increase use of sustainable energy through the provision of photovoltaic panels on available roofspace. The exact number and position of proposed panels can be secured by way of an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 6.80 It is therefore considered that the proposed development is in accordance with national and emerging local planning policies relating to sustainable energy use.

6.3 Impact on Residential Amenity

- 6.81 UDP Policy GDP1 sets out how amenity of the public should be safeguarded. Similarly, emerging LDP Policy DM1 is clear that development must not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of nearby properties, by virtue of noise, disturbance, and overlooking.

6.3.1 Residential Buffer

- 6.82 The requirement for a residential buffer zone to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings is a site specific requirement of draft LDP Policy SP11 and draft LDP Policy EM6. In the justifying text to draft Policy SP11, WCBC state that a 50m buffer zone between the residential dwellings and the developable area is considered appropriate.
- 6.83 Figure 7 of the draft LDP shows two areas of residential buffer required. One relates to the north-west corner of the site, as a buffer for the existing properties on Hugmore Lane. This has been incorporated into the proposed development, including a landscaped area with a c. 5m high bund, to provide further noise and visual mitigation for adjoining residents. The second residential buffer relates to Honeysuckle Cottage, located in the central northern part of the site, off Francis' Lane. This buffer is not proposed as part of this planning application, as the application seeks permission for the demolition of Honeysuckle Cottage, and therefore the buffer will no longer be required.
- 6.84 In accordance with UDP Policy GDP1 and draft policies DM1, EM6 and SP11 of the LDP, an appropriate residential buffer zone is incorporated into the development where required.

6.3.2 Noise

- 6.85 A Noise Assessment has been undertaken in support of the application. This is presented within the Environmental Statement (Volume II, Chapter 10 and Volume IV, Appendices 10.1 & 10.2).
- 6.86 PPW states in Paragraph 6.7.6 that any new developments must address impacts arising as a result of locations where there are sensitive receptors and not create inappropriate soundscape.

- 6.87 TAN11 states that development should not cause an unacceptable degree of disturbance, and should reduce noise pollution and implement measures to mitigate noise levels from a development within the local area.
- 6.88 The noise levels from the proposed construction activities have been predicted at local representative receptors. This assessment has been undertaken to establish the maximum external noise levels at neighbouring properties for the construction activity anticipated in relation to the proposed development and whether noise emissions from typical plant and activities will be within these levels, based on a worst-case scenario.
- 6.89 All existing receptors are predicted to be subject to short-term minor adverse effects from demolition and construction noise, prior to mitigation. Demolition and construction phase works are transient and will not occur for a prolonged or continuous period of time in any one location and will move across the entire site in a phased manner in accordance with a phased plan of works. Best Practicable Means will be implemented during the demolition and construction works to keep the level of noise and vibration generated on site as low as practicable and minimise any potential impacts to the sensitive receptors whilst works are ongoing.
- 6.90 Several mitigation measures are proposed to reduce potential noise and vibration impacts, which will be secured via a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be agreed with WCBC via a planning condition.
- 6.91 Following the incorporation of these mitigation measures, all residual effects are anticipated to be minor adverse in nature and not significant.
- 6.92 An assessment of the noise generated by the operational phase of the development has also been carried out, considering the impact upon existing residential receptors and proposed receptors (guests associated with the proposed on-site hotel).
- 6.93 With mitigation in place, in the form of a Travel Plan, the noise associated with additional traffic from vehicle movements generated by the proposed development (once operational) is anticipated to be negligible.
- 6.94 In order to mitigate other sources of noise during the operational phase, the proposed development includes the inclusion of landscaped bunds, establishment of plant noise limits and sensitive selection of HGV dock locations. With these mitigation measures in place, the residual effects range from negligible to moderate adverse significance.

6.4 Other Site Specific Technical Considerations

6.4.1 Transport

- 6.95 Transport planning in Wales has a very strong focus on following an accessibility-led approach. This is developed from the national policies set out in Planning Policy Wales.
- 6.96 PPW identifies as a series of objectives of good design, relating to transport, including:
- Access: ensuring access for all;
 - Character: sustaining or enhancing local character; promoting legible development, a successful relationship between public and private space, quality, choice and variety, innovative design; and
 - Movement: promoting sustainable means of travel.
- 6.97 TAN 18 *Transport* provides guidance in relation to the integration of land use planning and transport, parking, design, accessibility, sustainable modes of transport and infrastructure development.

- 6.98 In the adopted UDP, Strategic Policy PS4 sets out that development should integrate with the existing transport network, and PS8 *Transport* states that the transport network will be developed to integrate a range of travel options, including encouraging public transport, cycling and walking.
- 6.99 UDP Policy T1 *Public Transport* states that proposals for cycle and walkway routes and access for buses on new developments will be supported. UDP Policy T8 *Parking* establishes that any development granted planning permission will be expected to accord with Council's current parking standards, and special regard will be made to proposals near to public transport services. UDP Policy T9 *Walking, Cycling and Horse Riding* requires development proposals to provide walking and cycling routes, where feasible and appropriate, that link into the existing network and integrate with the public transport system.
- 6.100 Within the emerging LDP, Policy SP12 *Transport & Accessibility* sets out that the transport network will be developed in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner through restricting any development that would have an unacceptable impact on the safe and efficient operation of the transport network.
- 6.101 Draft LDP Policy T1 sets out that development will be supported where it will facilitate increased journeys by more sustainable modes of travel, mitigate any significant adverse effects upon the transport network that arise from the proposed development, does not compromise the safe, effective, and efficient use of the highway network and does not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation, and provide appropriate levels of parking and access arrangements.
- 6.102 Draft LDP Policy DM1 *Development Management Considerations* confirms that development proposals must prioritise walking, cycling and public transport ahead of travel by car.
- 6.103 Draft LDP transport policies T2 (*Active Travel*) and T3 (*Passenger Travel*) emphasise the priority given to sustainable modes of travel. LDP Policy T3 states that in order to reduce the dependency on the private car, developments should enhance the promotion and marketing of public transport alternatives through Travel Plans. In accordance with this policy, a Framework Travel Plan has been prepared and submitted as part of this planning application.
- 6.104 The submitted Framework Travel Plan provides an overarching framework for managing multi-modal access to the site and promoting sustainable and active modes through a series of measures. Initial targets have been set to encourage a 10% reduction in the number of single occupancy car trips to and from the site. This target is considered to be aspirational but achievable given the location and high level of accessibility by sustainable modes; however, targets should be reviewed and informed by more detailed survey data. The Applicant welcomes a planning condition for each occupier to provide an end-user specific Travel Plan which accords with the site-wide Framework Travel Plan, including the identification of a Travel Plan Coordinator to ensure ongoing monitoring and updates of the Travel Plan.
- 6.105 Additional footpaths are proposed within the site which provide access to Francis' Lane to the northeast of the site and PRoW accessible from Francis' Lane. The PRoW on the eastern boundary of the site will be retained and improved providing linkage between Bryn Lane and Francis' Lane. This accords with UDP Policy CLF6 *Informal Recreation*, which seeks to protect, maintain and improve the existing pattern of public rights of way.
- 6.106 The proposed development includes two main access points. Vehicular access to the detailed component is proposed via a new priority right turn island junction off Bryn Lane. A pedestrian refuge island is proposed to the west of the site access to assist crossing of Bryn Lane. A new access arm off the 4-arm Industrial Estate Road roundabout is also proposed and forms part of the detailed element of the planning application. As part of the proposals dropped kerb and tactile crossings are proposed at the new access roundabout.
- 6.107 At this stage it is considered that the roundabout access will come forward prior to the occupation of the drive thru and petrol filling station uses, which are proposed as part of the outline element of the scheme.

- 6.108 A Transport Assessment has been prepared in support of this application and is reported in ES Volume II, Chapter 8 and ES Volume IV Appendix 8.3.
- 6.109 The proposed development site is located in an accessible location enabling visitors and employees to make use of the existing public transport links and pedestrian / cycle facilities.
- 6.110 The impact assessment shows that the proposed development would have a minimal impact on the local highway network for all assessment scenarios. It should be noted that a worst-case scenario has been applied for trip generation associated with the development.
- 6.111 The Transport Assessment did not identify any existing highway safety patterns or problems and assessments of the proposed site access junctions have demonstrate that both would operate well within their capacity.
- 6.112 The ES Transport Chapter identifies that the majority of transport impacts during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development are anticipated to be negligible, with some minor adverse effects, which are not significant.
- 6.113 The Transport Assessment has considered the potential traffic and transport impacts of the proposed development and concludes that the proposals are in accordance with the statutory development plan and other material considerations.

6.4.2 Heritage

- 6.114 PPW (2021) provides the national planning policy framework for the consideration of the historic environment and is supplemented by guidance in Technical Advice Note 24 and Cadw best practice guidance. The historic environment is discussed in Chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places of PPW, which recognises the importance of such areas and features to the country.
- 6.115 Chapter 6 states that the *"special and unique characteristics and intrinsic qualities of the natural and built environment must be protected in their own right"*.
- 6.116 Paragraph 6.1.9 states that *"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"*.
- 6.117 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017) provides guidance on how to consider the historic environment in development plans and planning decisions. It provides support for the policies in PPW.
- 6.118 UDP Policy EC11 *Archaeology* states that development which would directly affect the non-scheduled sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted if an archaeological investigation has been carried out to determine the extent and significance of the remains and it indicates that preservation is not justified, and a programme of excavation and recording has been agreed.
- 6.119 Draft LDP Policy SP16 *Historic and Cultural Environment* states that development will only be supported where it conserves, protects and enhances heritage assets of the authority and, where appropriate, their settings.
- 6.120 A Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared and submitted in support of this planning application. Baseline conditions show that the 1km study area includes three designated historic assets, all Grade II Listed buildings. The application site is assessed as providing a minor positive contribution to the Grade II Listed New Holt Lodge Farm, which is located close to the north-west site boundary. There are 102 non-designated historic assets within the study area, of which seventeen are within the application site boundary; these include three areas of visible ridge and furrow, twelve surviving and infilled marl pits and ponds (NDHA72-84), a post-medieval homestead, and the recorded site of a Second World War aircraft crash. These historic assets are assessed are being of low heritage significance.

- 6.121 The application site includes twelve hedgerows which can be demonstrated from historic mapping to have been in place since at least 1843 and one serves as a township boundary within the parish. These hedgerows have been assessed as 'Important' under the criteria of the Hedgerow Regulations Act 1997.
- 6.122 A geophysical survey was undertaken of the application site which confirmed the presence of the superficial or sub-surface ridge and furrow remains of the medieval cultivation system, as well as confirming the locations of former post-medieval field boundaries and marl pits. The survey confirmed that no archaeological remains likely to pre-date the medieval period were identified.
- 6.123 There is very limited intervisibility between the application site and the Grade II listed New Holt Lodge. It is assessed that the proposed development would result in minor adverse change to the setting of this Grade II listed building.
- 6.124 The proposed development would result in direct impact on known non-designated historic assets of ridge and furrow, marl pits, and the site of an aircraft crash, as well as a post-medieval homestead which would be demolished. These historic assets are of low heritage significance and the significance of effect would be low.
- 6.125 Desk-based research has identified that there is low potential for any physical wreckage remains within the application site following the aircraft crash. The geophysical survey did not identify any remains associated with this event.
- 6.126 Mitigation and recommendations include sensitive massing and sufficient screening or buildings to reduce the visual impact on the listed building and Spring Grove, a nearby non-designated heritage asset. The Heritage Impact Assessment notes that the loss of Important hedgerows has been minimised where possible. Mitigation in the form of preservation by record is recommended where the proposed development will impact on the medieval ridge and furrow. A programme of archaeological works in the form of a trial trench survey is also recommended. The scope of the survey should be commensurate with the low archaeological potential and the scale of impact of development.
- 6.127 In accordance with legislative and planning policy requirements, special regard has been had to the heritage impacts of the proposed development and the desirability of preserving assets, their setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest.
- 6.128 Harm to heritage assets has been considered and minimised where possible and in accordance with PPW and the adopted and emerging Local Plans. Given the limited heritage impacts and the mitigation measures proposed, it is considered that the application should not be refused on heritage grounds.

6.4.3 Ecology

- 6.129 Ecology is considered in the submitted ES (Volume II, Chapter 11) and the ES Chapter is supported by a range of technical reports and surveys which have been undertaken at the site (Volume IV, Appendices 11.1-11.11 relate to Ecology).
- 6.130 PPW requires developments to minimise impacts on ecosystems and to positively impact local biodiversity. Technical Advice Note 5 *Nature Conservation and Planning* is a key TAN in relation to nature conservation and biodiversity.
- 6.131 UDP policies EC4 and EC6, and emerging LDP policies SP15, SP20 and NE3 detail the need to protect and enhance biodiversity. Harm should be kept to a minimum, and compensatory measures should be provided in instances where harm does occur.
- 6.132 There are three internationally designated wildlife sites within 10km of the site, these are Afon Dyfrdwy a Llyn Tegid (River Dee and Bala Lake) which is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in Wales and England and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is 3.1km to the east of the site. The Midlands Meres and Mosses

Phase 2 Ramsar site is 3.5km to the north west of the site. The Johnstown Newt Sites are also a SAC 8km to the south west of the site. In terms of national designations, there is the River Dee and Bala Lake SSSI, and also the Vicarage Moss SSSI which is 3.7km to the north west of the site, Sontley Marsh SSSI which is 4.7km to the south west of the site and Marford Quarry SSSI which is 5km to the north west of the site.

- 6.133 There are no statutory locally designated wildlife sites within 2km of the site; however, there are three non-statutory locally designated wildlife sites within 2km of the site, which are Wrexham Industrial Estate (619m to the south), Cefn Park (1.3km south west) and Borrass Wood North (1.6km to the north). There are no notable habitats on or adjacent to the site.
- 6.134 The proposed development will result in the loss of many of the existing habitats present at the site. The majority of the application site is comprised of habitats that are considered to be of importance at, or below, the Local level (with the exception of veteran trees and native hedgerows). There would be no loss of veteran trees as a result of the proposed development.
- 6.135 A CEMP and tree protection plan would be implemented during construction, including attendance of an Arboricultural Clerk of Works at key stages, to protect retained habitats in the application site from pollution events and direct damage. The CEMP would include measures compliant with best practice. The CEMP would also include measures to reduce lighting, noise and vibration impacts upon species.
- 6.136 Great Crested Newts are known to be present in the application site. A mitigation strategy will be devised which would include sufficient mitigation and enhancement measures to ensure no residual negative significant effects on GCN and other amphibians from killing/injury/disturbance. The proposed development seeks to retain two ponds on site (in the central ecological corridor), and replace three existing ponds elsewhere within the application site boundary. In order to mitigate for the loss of two further ponds, 16 new 'stepping stone' ponds will be created throughout the proposed ecological corridor. The proposed ecological corridor is approximately 38m wide and will include suitable habitat for GCNs and other species.
- 6.137 The proposed development would result in a loss of suitable bird nesting habitat and clearance of this habitat could result in killing/injury/disturbance of nesting birds if undertaken during the breeding season (March to August inclusive) or without nesting bird checks taking place. Loss of suitable nesting habitat would occur as a result of the proposed development. The landscaping strategy and provision of bird boxes would provide sufficient alternative habitat but the benefits would not be forthcoming until the completed development stage.
- 6.138 Disturbance impacts from construction and operational lighting were assessed for Lesser Silver Water Beetle (LSWB), roosting bats, foraging and commuting bats, badger, hedgehog and brown hare. A sensitive lighting strategy will be designed and implemented during the construction stage and for the operational phase to minimise potential disturbance.
- 6.139 Recreational use of the development from visitors and staff could result in the degradation of retained and newly created habitats. However, a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan would be implemented which would contain long-term management measures for these habitats and the development has been designed to include ample roads and footpaths to minimise human and vehicle encroachment. These measures would ensure the long-term value of habitats is maintained, both as habitats themselves and as habitats for protected species.
- 6.140 The proposed development (including buildings up to 28.5 m tall) could disrupt the flight lines of foraging and commuting bats. However, the landscaping design includes sufficient planting around and through the development to provide sufficient alternative flight lines. Bat boxes are also proposed as mitigation.
- 6.141 New roads and thus increased traffic within the application site and on surrounding roads during the operational stage has the potential to kill/injure GCN, common toad, badger, hedgehog and brown hare as well as fragmenting their habitats. However, the development has been designed to include a central green corridor,

connecting on- and off-site habitats, with a wildlife tunnel suitable for amphibians and other small animals (e.g. hedgehogs) beneath the internal estate road that would bisect this corridor. Beyond the green corridor, the majority of wildlife-friendly landscaping would be around the site boundaries, attracting species away from the active central areas of the operational development.

- 6.142 During construction, residual effects from the loss of native hedgerows are anticipated to be moderate adverse in nature, which is significant at the County level. The loss of trees and ponds are anticipated to result in a minor adverse effect, which is significant at the local level. The construction phase is also expected to result in an adverse impact on Great Crested Newt (GCN) and other S7 amphibian species, roosting bats, Lesser Silver Water Beetle (LSWB) and breeding birds, due to habitat loss and fragmentation. This is anticipated to result in a minor adverse effect, which is significant at the local level.
- 6.143 In the operational / completed development stage the residual effects, post mitigation, are considered minor beneficial and significant at a local level, in relation to native hedgerows, scattered trees & standing water (associated with habitat creation); GCN & other S7 amphibians and bats (associated with habitat creation and maintenance of favourable conservation status); and LSBW and breeding birds (associated with habitat creation).
- 6.144 Overall, loss of vegetation within the site is anticipated, however with the implementation of mitigation measures and the enhancement strategy proposed, the development will be in conformity with relevant planning policy and legislation.

6.4.4 Trees and Hedges

- 6.145 Planning Policy Wales states that *“Planning authorities should protect trees, hedgerows, groups of trees and areas of woodland where they have ecological value, contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality, or perform a beneficial and identified green infrastructure function”* (para. 6.4.25).
- 6.146 Policy EC4 of the UDP, *Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland*, sets out that any development proposals should provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees, orchards, woodland, wildlife and other natural landscape and water features.
- 6.147 Within the draft Local Plan, Policy NE3 *Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows* sets out that development will only be permitted where it does not cause unacceptable harm to *“trees, woodlands and hedgerows of significant public amenity, natural or cultural heritage value or those that provide important ecosystem services.”* The policy continues to state that where adverse effects cannot be avoided, adequate mitigation will be required which will include new planting within the site.
- 6.148 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared as part of this planning application in accordance with local policy requirements.
- 6.149 The tree survey recorded 122 individual trees; 17 groups of trees; and 25 hedges within influencing distance of the application site.
- 6.150 The proposed development will result in the loss of approximately 0.36ha of tree cover, which includes 25 individual trees and four tree groups, as well as 1,355m of hedgerow. The majority of the individual trees are middle-aged to mature oak trees and the groups are lower growing shrubby species.
- 6.151 During the design process, priority was given to retaining any trees where possible, particularly where these were of a high quality.
- 6.152 Tree protection measures will be used throughout the construction process to ensure no harm to the trees which are being retained.

- 6.153 Mitigation measures include the planting of approximately 1.26h of replacement canopy cover (20 years post construction), via the planting of 644 new trees. The development would result in a net increase of 0.9ha of tree canopy within a reasonable time frame. Mixed native hedgerow planting would deliver approximately 2,568 linear metres once established, a net increase of 1,213m within a reasonable timeframe.
- 6.154 Therefore, although trees and hedgerows will be lost on site, over the long term the proposed development will provide a net gain in tree canopy cover and hedgerow planting. This is considered to sufficiently mitigate the losses proposed.

6.4.5 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 6.155 Paragraph 6.6.25 of the PPW states that development should reduce and must not increase flood risk. In the UDP, Policy EC13 *Surface Water Run-off*, states that development which would result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the water environment due to additional surface water run off will not be permitted. Policy GDP1 *Development Objectives* states that all new development should ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding either on or off the site.
- 6.156 In the draft Local Plan, Policy SP19, *Climate Change*, states that to mitigate the impacts of climate change, development proposals will need to demonstrate that they avoid areas susceptible to flood risk in the first instance, in accordance with the sequential approach set out in national guidance. Development which would increase flood risk will be prevented. The potential effects of climate change should be assessed when preparing a Flood Consequence Assessment for development sites.
- 6.157 Draft Local Plan Policy DM1 *Development Management Considerations* states that development proposals must not increase the risk of flooding but make adequate provision for sustainably dealing with foul and surface water drainage and not result in an unacceptable impact upon the water environment.
- 6.158 In accordance with policy requirements, a Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA) has been carried out in relation to the site and the proposed development. The site is not at risk of flooding from a major source (e.g. fluvial and/or tidal). The Development Advice Maps (DAM) which accompany TAN15 confirm that the site is located within Zone A: Considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial or tidal/coastal flooding. This indicates that the justification test is not applicable. The Natural Resources Wales Flood Map for Planning shows that the site is located within Flood Zone 1 for flooding from rivers and sea; however, small areas of the site are located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 for flooding from surface water and small watercourses, associated with low spots on the site.
- 6.159 The risk of flooding from all sources is considered to be low or not significant.
- 6.160 The flooding sources will be managed on the site by using a number of mitigation strategies to manage and reduce the overall flood risk at the site and will ensure the development will be safe. These measures include establishing a minimum floor level, incorporating flood resilience and resistance methods and maintaining a safe and dry access.
- 6.161 This hybrid planning application is accompanied by drainage plans for both surface water and foul drainage. A SuDS Maintenance Plan has also been submitted to ensure the long-term management of sustainable drainage features.
- 6.162 The FCA concludes that the flood risk to the site can be considered to be limited, with a low or less than annual probability of flooding from all sources, when taking account of climate change. The proposed development is expected to remain dry in all but the most extreme conditions. The proposed development complies with the requirements set out in policies within TAN and local planning policy as the development would be operated with minimal risk from flooding and would not increase flood risk elsewhere. In summary, the FCA considers

that there are no grounds from a flood risk and drainage perspective which preclude positive determination of the planning application.

6.4.6 Air Quality

- 6.163 PPW sets out the land use planning policies for a range of environmental considerations, including air quality. Chapter 6, Section 6.7 - Air Quality and Soundscape, provides a framework for addressing air quality and states that the planning system should maximise its contribution to achieving well-being goals, and in particular a healthier Wales, by aiming to reduce average population exposure to air pollution alongside action to tackle high pollution hotspots. PPW states that any new developments should address any implications arising as a result of its association with, or location within, air quality management areas or areas where there are sensitive receptors. Development should not create areas of poor air quality and should seek to incorporate measures which reduce the overall exposure to air pollution (para. 6.7.6).
- 6.164 Policy GDP1 of the Wrexham UDP sets out that all new development should ensure that the environment is safeguarded against adverse effects of pollution arising from development, including air pollution.
- 6.165 The proposed development has the potential to cause air quality impacts as a result of road traffic exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the application site during the demolition and construction and completed development stages. As such, an air quality assessment was undertaken in order to determine baseline conditions and assess potential effects as a result of the proposed development. The findings of the assessment are detailed in ES Volume II, Chapter 9.
- 6.166 The sensitive receptors considered in the assessment included both human and ecological receptors within 200 m of the highway network subject to changes in traffic flows as a result of the proposed development. A total of 23 human receptor locations and 5 ecological receptors (namely, Wrexham Industrial Estate LWS, Cefn Park LWS, Vicarage Moss SSSI, Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar, River Dee and Bala Lake SAC and River Dee SSSI) were identified as sensitive to potential impacts from the proposed development and were therefore considered in the assessment.
- 6.167 For the demolition and construction stage, the results demonstrate that predicted air quality impacts as a result of traffic generated by the construction of the proposed development are not significant at any sensitive location in the vicinity of the application site.
- 6.168 Potential impacts during the completed development stage of the proposed development may occur due to road traffic exhaust emissions associated with vehicles travelling to and from the application site. Dispersion modelling was therefore undertaken in order to predict pollutant concentrations at sensitive human locations as a result of emissions from the local highway network both with and without the proposed development in place. Review of the dispersion modelling results indicate that predicted air quality impacts as a result of traffic generated by the operation of the proposed development are not significant at any sensitive human receptor location in the vicinity of the application site.
- 6.169 Dust generation from the demolition and construction stages has been considered and mitigation measures have been proposed, which will be confirmed via a CEMP and Dust Management Plan (DMP).
- 6.170 As the impacts will be negligible and not significant, it is considered that the proposed development will be in accordance with the relevant legislation, national and local policy.

6.4.7 Ground Conditions

- 6.171 PPW establishes that planning decisions should ensure a site is suitable for its proposed use, accounting for physical ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability which may pose direct risks to life and health, buildings and structures, or present indirect hazards associated with ground movement, including mine

entry collapse. Local planning authorities also need to be mindful of potential land contamination from development, and should adopt a de-risking approach to address any risks.

- 6.172 UDP Policy GDP1 states that new development should ensure that there is no contamination on or off site.
- 6.173 The application is accompanied by a Phase 1 assessment, as set out in Appendix 12.1, ES Volume IV. This comprises a desk-based study, a walkover survey, development of an initial conceptual model and preliminary risk assessment.
- 6.174 The desk study concludes that the only potential source of ground gases are the limited areas of on-site made ground and infilled ponds, with the site not within a high risk radon area or a historic mining area. There are four unspecified tanks within 250m of the south of the site which are potentially contaminated features. The unexploded ordnance risk is considered to be low based on the publicly available mapping; however, it is recommended that a UXO survey is carried out.
- 6.175 The Preliminary Conceptual Site Model indicates moderate and low to moderate risks identified for human health receptors, and low risks identified for the controlled waters environment from inorganic, organic and asbestos impacts within any localised made ground associated with the former agricultural land use and farm in the south of the site. There are moderate / low risks to human health from the off-site former Royal Ordnance Factory (ROF) Wrexham and moderate to moderate / low risks identified associated with hazardous ground gases generated from on-site localised made ground and potentially infilled ponds.
- 6.176 No significant adverse effects will remain following completion of any remedial works required and implementation of all anticipated mitigation within the completed development. It is assumed that the proposed petrol filling station and any other potentially hazardous substances within the final development are operated, stored and used in accordance with necessary Environmental Permits and/or regulatory guidance. All residual effects during the construction and operational stage of the proposed development are anticipated to be negligible.

6.4.8 Phosphates

- 6.177 Draft LDP Policy NE6 states that all new development will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC, in particular through the treatment of waste water. To ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC, development creating waste water discharges will be required to demonstrate there is no increase in phosphorus levels in the SAC.
- 6.178 This can be achieved through implementation of measures to achieve water efficiency and/or a reduction in surface water discharge to the main sewer network, minimising the capacity required to accommodate the proposal. Alternatively, developer contributions could be sought to contribute to improvements to waste water treatment works or measures to release capacity for new development.
- 6.179 A Phosphates Assessment has been prepared and submitted as part of the application and is included within ES Volume IV, Appendix 12.2.
- 6.180 The most significant way for phosphate to enter the Dee Catchment from the proposed development will be from wastewater discharge to and from the Fiver Fords Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW).
- 6.181 The increased phosphate load being discharged to the Five Fords WwTW has been assessed as coming from the 40% of staff and visitors anticipated to commute in from outside the local authority area. The estimated wastewater discharge from 40% of staff using the new development has been calculated at between 23.8m³/day (minimum) and 84.7m³/day (maximum).

- 6.182 To ensure nutrient neutrality, in accordance with the Habitats Regulations Assessment, the generated total annual phosphate load will need to be taken up within the headroom space of the Five Fords WwTW and/or reduced using appropriate on-site treatment prior to discharge from site.
- 6.183 Consultation is currently being undertaken with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water to confirm if sufficient headroom exists within the Five Fords WwTW. If this is confirmed then the wastewater from the proposed development can be discharged into the sewage network for treatment at the WwTW and no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC will result, i.e. there would be no increase in phosphorus levels in the SAC.
- 6.184 However, if Dwr Cymru Welsh Water confirm that no headroom exists, then mitigation will be required to reduce phosphates at the site which will be in the form of an on site solution. This solution is shown on the submitted foul drainage plans and includes a pumping station and on site treatment infrastructure.
- 6.185 As a result, if there is no headroom, a private solution will be installed on site which will mitigate any effects before the wastewater is discharged.
- 6.186 It is therefore considered that the scheme is in accordance with this policy, either through the confirmation of the headroom at the WwTW or through a private on-site solution. As a result, phosphate loads should not preclude the development from proceeding.

6.4.9 Utilities

- 6.187 A Utilities Statement has been prepared to support this application to identify the existing utility services around the site and address the impact on those services by the proposed development, in terms of necessary diversions and constraints, together with considering the issues surrounding new supplies to service the development and delivery.
- 6.188 The proposed development impacts on a number of the existing utility networks, requiring standard diversions to electricity, gas, water and telecom networks to facilitate the development and all of these diversions have been confirmed as feasible by the asset owners.
- 6.189 SP Energy Networks (SPEN) operate an overhead line which serves two residential plots. Both of these are under the ownership of the Applicant and therefore the line will become redundant upon commencement of development. SPEN confirmed that the feasibility of disconnection and removal is acceptable.
- 6.190 Wales and West utilities operate the gas network in the area. There is an intermediate pressure gas main which is below ground and follows a route from the junction of Bryn lane and Ridleywood Road on a north westerly track. This main will require diversion as a result of the proposed development and the route is to be agreed in detail with Wales and West, however Wales and West has confirmed that it is feasible and acceptable to divert this main and a route has been agreed in principle.
- 6.191 Hafren Dyfrdwy Utilities operate the water network and there are three water mains along the western boundary of the site. The depth of these are currently unknown and therefore it is not confirmed if they will need to be relocated as a result of the proposed development; however, Hafren Dyfrdwy Utilities has confirmed that relocation would be acceptable.
- 6.192 Openreach assets are present along Bryn Lane and at the proposed bell mouth access. These services may need to be lowered as part of the works. Openreach confirmed the works are acceptable.
- 6.193 All existing utilities have been assessed and any potential constraints are understood and have been considered in the Utilities Statement.

- 6.194 Initial consultations (where relevant) have taken place within the statutory utility undertakers and the approximate level of works needed to deliver the required capacities is understood and catered for in the proposed development.

7.0 Summary Conclusions

7.1 This hybrid planning application seeks permission for an employment development, with ancillary supporting uses including a hotel, retail drive-thru units and PFS. The description of development is as follows:

Hybrid planning application seeking:

- *Full planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings and re-profiling of the site for development comprising the severable and phased construction of employment floorspace (Use Class B1c/B2/B8) with ancillary (integral) office floorspace (Use Class B1a) and the provision of associated infrastructure including earthworks, sub-station, parking, landscaping, access from Industrial Estate Road roundabout and Bryn Lane and internal estate road; and*
- *Outline planning permission for the severable and phased construction of employment floorspace (Use Class B1c/B2/B8) with ancillary (integral) office floorspace (Use Class B1a), ancillary retail and drive thru facilities, a hotel and petrol filling station (Use Class A1/A3/C1/sui generis) and associated infrastructure including earthworks, internal estate road, parking and landscaping (all matters are reserved for future determination).*

7.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and Section 70(2) of the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) require applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.3 The Development Management Manual published by the Welsh Government in 2017 is clear that policies in an emerging development plan document are a material consideration, and the weight to be attached to them correlates to stage of a plan's preparation, with the more advanced a plan is the greater weight it can be afforded.

7.4 The proposed development is being brought forward in line with the draft LDP which is at an advanced stage of preparation and should be afforded substantial weight in decision making, particularly when considering the outdated nature of the UDP and the evidence base which underpinned this plan, given that 12 years have elapsed since the expiration of the UDP plan period.

7.5 In the emerging LDP, the site is included within the Wrexham Industrial Estate's settlement boundary, as defined by draft Policy SP2, and identified as a Key Strategic Site with a draft allocation for 28ha of Use Class B employment development, as set out at draft Policy SP11 'KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate'.

7.6 The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with the emerging LDP and up to date national policy and guidance. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in principle, and the site specific requirements of draft Policy SP11 relating to an ecological network, buffer zone, and necessary infrastructure have been addressed.

7.7 The benefits of the scheme include:

- The creation of approximately 90 gross construction jobs (Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) (24 net construction FTE jobs);
- The development of modern, high quality employment space to attract new occupiers to Wrexham Industrial Estate and allow existing occupiers to remain on the Industrial Estate and expand;
- The development of a hotel to strengthen the visitor offer and potential retail/drive-thru/petrol station facilities for employees and visitors to the wider Industrial Estate, reducing the need to travel;
- Proposed HGV parking area to address issues associated with informal HGV parking around the Industrial Estate;

- The development of green infrastructure, including net additional planting of trees and hedgerows, and additional ponds to support local biodiversity;
- Minor beneficial effects upon habitats and species as a result of the proposed landscaping strategy;
- Creation of a wellness trail around the site, linking to the existing PRow network;
- The development of a site which is a sustainable and logical extension to the Industrial Estate, ensuring accessibility via non-car modes including cycle facilities and nearby public transport connections; and
- The creation of between 1,166 and 3,352 gross operational jobs (FTE) (between 306 and 880 net operational FTE jobs), which is anticipated to have a moderate beneficial effect.

7.8 This application is accompanied by a suite of technical assessments which have considered the potential impacts of the proposed development and have recommended mitigation measures where necessary. This Planning Statement has demonstrated that there are no clear reasons for refusing the application and there are no adverse impacts of the scheme which would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

7.9 In light of the above, the Applicant respectfully requests the planning permission be granted for this hybrid planning application.

APPENDIX 1

Planning Policy

Planning Policy

Statutory Development Plan

Unitary Development Plan (2005)

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2005) covers the plan period 1996-2011 and provides a framework for local decision making. The plan is divided into two parts: Part 1 outlines the Council's broad intention for development and provides a framework for more specific policies and proposals; Part 2 constitutes the Council's specific policies and provides detailed guidance for development.

Strategic Policies

- **Policy PS1** - New development for housing, employment, and community services will be directed to within defined settlement limits/employment areas.
- **Policy PS2** - Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
- **Policy PS3** - Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value, or comprises agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a quality.
- **Policy PS4** - Development should maintain the existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated with the existing transport network to help reduce the overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car.
- **Policy PS6** - Approximately 300 hectares of employment land will be made available for development between 1996 and 2011.
- **Policy PS8** - encourages the provision of public transport, cycling and walking.
- **Policy PS11** - Encouragement will be given to proposals which improve the biodiversity value of sites.

Specific Policies

Policy GDP1 Development Objectives

Development should be of a scale, design and layout, and in its use of landscaping, accord with the character of the site and make a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality. It should ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access and be located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities and sustainable routes. Development should ensure the safety and amenity of the public and that the environment is safeguarded from the adverse effects of pollution, flooding, or contamination. New habitats should be provided where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.

Policy EC2 Agricultural Land

Development on agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a will only be permitted if it does not lead to the irreversible loss of that land.

Policy EC4 Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland

Development proposals should provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees, orchards, woodland, wildlife and other natural landscape and water features, and include new planting in order to enhance the character of the landscape and townscape. Development which results in the loss or significant damage to valuable trees, important hedgerows or ancient woodland sites will not be permitted.

Policy EC6 Biodiversity Conservation

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

Policy EC11 Archaeology

Development that directly affects non-scheduled sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted if an archaeological investigation has been carried out to determine the nature, extent and significance of the remains, and this investigation indicates that in-situ preservation is not justified, and a programme of excavation and recording has been agreed. Development will also be carefully controlled to ensure that the setting of non-scheduled sites of archaeological importance is not harmed, where appropriate.

Policy EC13 Surface Water Run-off

Development which would result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the water environment due to additional surface water run-off will not be permitted.

Policy E1 Employment Allocations

Sufficient land will be allocated for employment development between 2001 and 2011 at Wrexham Industrial Estate. This totals 65.4ha of allocations at Wrexham Industrial Estate.

Policy E5 Employment in the Countryside

Small-scale employment development in the countryside will only be permitted through the conversion of an existing building where:

- a. the proposal accords with Policy GDP1; and
- b. the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without extensive rebuilding tantamount to the erection of a new building; and
- c. any inherent characteristics of merit in the building are retained; and
- d. the building and resulting curtilage does not constitute an undesirable intrusion into the landscape, create access problems, nor require the provision of services at public cost.

Policy S3 Non-shopping key town centre uses

Wrexham Town Centre will be the preferred location for non-shopping uses, and proposals for such uses will be permitted firstly within the town centre, then edge-of-centre locations, with out of centre sites only acceptable where there is a clear need which cannot be accommodated on a preferred site and there is a clear justification for this.

Policy CLF 6 Informal Recreation

The existing pattern of public rights of way will be protected, maintained and improved and any potential new routes will be identified and safeguarded.

Policy CLF 9 Visitor Accommodation outside Settlement Limits

Visitor accommodation outside settlement limits will only be permitted through the conversion of existing buildings and extensions to existing serviced and self-serviced accommodation.

Policy T1 Public Transport

Proposals for new and improved public transport facilities for bus, taxi and rail services will be supported, to include public transport interchange facilities, park and ride facilities, car and cycle parking, cycle and walkway routes, and access for buses on new developments.

Policy T8 Parking

Development granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby in accordance with the Council's current parking standards. Special regard will be paid to the availability of public transport nearby, proximity to public car parking, proximity to local services and facilities, road safety hazards and amenity considerations arising from on-street parking in the vicinity of the site. Where implementation difficulties arise in making parking provision on-site or nearby, the Council will require a developer to make financial contributions for measures to assist public transport or walking and cycling as appropriate.

Policy T9 Walking, Cycling and Horse Riding Routes

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

Material Considerations

In addition to the statutory development plan, material considerations relevant to proposed development should also be taken into account in decision making. The scope of what can constitute a material consideration is wide; the following material considerations are of particular relevance to the application and are summarised below:

- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (2021)
- Planning Policy Wales (2021)
- Technical Advice Notes (TANs)
- WCBC Local Planning Guidance Notes
- Development Management Manual (2017)
- Draft Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2028 (Deposit Plan (2019) and Matters Arising Changes (2022)) and supporting evidence base.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (2021)

Future Wales, published in 2021, is the national development framework for Wales and has been prepared in the context of the development plan system in Wales.

Future Wales does not repeat Planning Policy Wales' key principles and it does not cover every area of planning policy. Planning Policy Wales will continue to inform the preparation of development plans and development management decisions. The Technical Advice Notes remain in place following publication of Future Wales. They will continue to provide additional technical advice to support the implementation of Planning Policy Wales and Future Wales.

Policy 1 Where Wales Will Grow

The Welsh Government supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales. In three National Growth Areas there will be growth in employment and housing opportunities and investment in infrastructure. The National Growth Areas include Wrexham Industrial Estate.

Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

To ensure the enhancement of biodiversity, the resilience of ecosystems and the provision of green infrastructure, the Welsh Government will work with key partners to:

- identify areas which should be safeguarded and created as ecological networks for their importance for adaptation to climate change, for habitat protection, restoration or creation, to protect species, or which provide key ecosystems, to ensure they are not unduly compromised by future development; and
- identify opportunities where existing and potential green infrastructure could be maximised as part of placemaking, requiring the use of nature-based solutions as a key mechanism for securing sustainable growth, ecological connectivity, social equality, and well-being.

Action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity (to provide a net benefit), the resilience of ecosystems, and green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature-based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment.

Policy 20 – National Growth Area – Wrexham and Deeside

Wrexham and Deeside will be the main focus for growth and investment in the North region. Strategic and Local Development Plans across the region must recognise the National Growth Area as the focus for strategic economic and housing growth; essential services and facilities; advanced manufacturing and transport infrastructure. The Wrexham and Deeside area is the region's main centre of population, employment and services and is served by the main connectivity infrastructure.

Planning Policy Wales (2021)

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), published in February 2021, sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales.

The Welsh Government states that the primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales (paragraph 1.2). There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (paragraph 1.18).

Development management is the positive and proactive approach to shaping, considering, determining, and delivering development proposals through the process of deciding planning applications. It must be undertaken in the spirit of partnership and inclusiveness and contributing to improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being (paragraph 1.30).

People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking

Development proposals should create a sense of place, well-being, and prosperity for all (paragraph 2.3). Placemaking in development decisions happens at all levels and involves considerations at a global scale, including the climate emergency, down to the very local level, such as considering the amenity impact on neighbouring properties and people (paragraph 2.7).

The Welsh Government define Placemaking as a holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces. It relates to context, function, and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings,

whether that be major developments creating new places as well as small developments created within a wider place (page 14).

In assessing the sustainability benefits of development, planning authorities should ensure that social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits are considered in the decision-making process and assessed in accordance with the five ways of working (these are involvement; collaboration; integration; prevention; and long term factors) to ensure a balanced assessment is carried out to implement the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) and the Sustainable Development Principle (paragraph 2.27).

Strategic and Spatial Choices

Good design is fundamental to the creation of sustainable places where people want to live, work, and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but also the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places.

PPW identifies the following objectives of good design:

- **Access:** ensuring access for all
- **Character:** sustaining or enhancing local character; promoting legible development / a successful relationship between public and private space / quality; choice and variety / innovative design;
- **Community Safety:** ensuring attractive, safe public spaces / security through natural surveillance;
- **Environmental Sustainability:** achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources / enhancing biodiversity / designing for change; and
- **Movement:** promoting sustainable means of travel.

Planning authorities should seek to improve developments which are not well designed, do not take account of their context and consider their place, or do not meet the objectives of good design. However, they should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily and should avoid inhibiting opportunities for innovative design solutions (paragraph 3.16).

The way places work and operate can have an impact on the choices people make in their everyday lives, including their travel and recreational choices and how easy it may be to socialise with others (paragraph 3.19). The planning system must consider the impacts of new development on existing communities and maximise health protection and well-being and safeguard amenity (paragraph 3.21).

Development in the countryside should be located within and adjoining those settlements where it can best be accommodated in terms of infrastructure, access, habitat and landscape conservation. Infilling or minor extensions to existing settlements may be acceptable, in particular where they meet a local need for affordable housing or it can be demonstrated that the proposal will increase local economic activity. All new development should be of a scale and design that respects the character of the surrounding area (paragraph 3.60).

Active and Social Places

Planning authorities need to ensure that residents of existing and new communities have access to jobs and an appropriate range of community facilities including recreation, leisure, health and education (paragraph 4.0.2).

New development should be located and designed in a way which minimises the need to travel, reduces dependency on the private car and enables sustainable access to employment, local services, and community facilities. This will be achieved through integrating development with sustainable transport infrastructure and designing schemes in a way which maximises provision and use of sustainable forms of travel, including prioritising these modes over the private car (paragraph 4.0.3).

In determining planning applications, planning authorities must ensure development proposals, through their design and supporting infrastructure, prioritise provision for access and movement by walking and cycling and, in doing so, maximise their contribution to the objectives of the Active Travel Act (2013) (paragraph 4.1.34).

Productive and Enterprising Places

Wherever possible, planning authorities should encourage and support developments which generate economic prosperity and regeneration (paragraph 5.4.4). Development should be co-ordinated with all forms of infrastructure provision such as transport and utilities (paragraph 5.4.13).

Economic clustering typically occurs when businesses from the same or similar industry, or with a common interest, choose to locate in close proximity for mutual benefit. Businesses can benefit from shared facilities, infrastructure, local pools of skilled and qualified labour, common supply chains, and links to higher education (paragraph 5.4.16). Planning authorities should seek to support the development of business networks and clusters (paragraph 5.4.17).

Design and Access Statements should show how sustainable building design principles have been considered in the design process (paragraph 5.8.6). Planning authorities and developers should consider the energy needs of site allocation development proposals. In collaboration with grid operators, they should assess if the necessary infrastructure is in place to meet future demand (paragraph 5.9.7).

Distinctive and Natural Places

The special and unique characteristics and intrinsic qualities of the natural and built environment must be protected in their own right and for historic, scenic, aesthetic and nature conservation reasons (paragraph 6.0.2).

Historic Environment

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 (paragraph 6.1.7). 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 (paragraph 6.1.9).

There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (paragraph 6.1.10).

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 (paragraph 6.1.23). Unforeseen archaeological remains may still be discovered during the course of a development. A written scheme of investigation should consider how to react to such circumstances, or it can be covered through an appropriate condition for a watching brief (paragraph 6.1.27).

Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure is capable of providing several functions at the same time and as a result offers multiple benefits, for social, economic and cultural as well as environmental resilience (paragraph 6.2.3). The planning system should protect and enhance green infrastructure assets and networks because of these multi-functional roles. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity must be carefully considered as part of green infrastructure provision alongside the need to meet society's wider social and economic objectives and the needs of local communities (paragraph 6.2.4).

The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design. With careful planning and design, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places, helping to overcome the potential for conflicting objectives, and contributing towards health and well-being outcomes (paragraph 6.2.5).

Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors (paragraph 6.3.1). All the landscapes of Wales are valued for their intrinsic contribution to a sense of place, and local authorities should protect and enhance their special characteristics, whilst paying due regard to the social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits they provide, and to their role in creating valued places (paragraph 6.3.3). Where adverse effects on landscape character cannot be avoided, it will be necessary to refuse planning permission (paragraph 6.3.4).

The planning system has a key role to play in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increasing the resilience of ecosystems. Development proposals must consider the need to support the conservation of biodiversity, in particular the conservation of wildlife and habitats, ensure statutory and non-statutory designated sites are properly protected and managed, and safeguard protected and priority species and existing biodiversity assets (inter alia) (paragraph 6.4.3).

Drainage

The planning system should protect and improve water resources by promoting and encouraging increased efficiency and demand management of water, ensure that the infrastructure is adequate to accommodate proposed development, ensure sustainable drainage systems are an integral part of new development, and ensure the protection of the quantity and quality of surface and ground water supplies is taken into account as part of development proposals (paragraph 6.6.5).

Air Quality and Noise

New developments should address any implication arising as a result of its association with, or location within, air quality management areas, noise action planning priority areas, or areas where there are sensitive receptors. Developments should not create areas of poor air quality or inappropriate soundscape and seek to incorporate measures which reduce overall exposure to air and noise pollution and create appropriate soundscapes (paragraph 6.7.6).

Proposed developments should be designed wherever possible to prevent adverse effects to amenity, health and the environment but as a minimum to limit or constrain any effects that do occur. In circumstances where impacts are unacceptable, for example where adequate mitigation is unlikely to be sufficient to safeguard local amenity in terms of air quality and the acoustic environment, it will be appropriate to refuse permission (paragraph 6.7.14).

Commercial and industrial development should be located in areas where there is low potential for public exposure, or where its impact can be minimised (paragraph 6.7.15).

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

- **TAN 5: Nature conservation and planning (September 2009)** - This Technical Advice Note provides a range of guidance associated with nature conservation, including for development affecting protected and priority habitats and species, and the legislative framework relating to protected species and habitats and requirements for licensing.
- **TAN 11: Noise (1997)** - Technical Advice Note 11 provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding significant costs. It outlines some of the main considerations which local planning authorities should take into

account when determining planning applications for development which will either generate noise or be exposed to existing noise sources.

- **TAN 12: Design (2016)** - This Advice Note identifies the objectives of good design under the following headings: Access, Character, Community Safety, Environmental Sustainability, and Movement. A series of design objectives are identified for each category. Guidance is provided in relation to the design process, including collaboration stages, appraising the context of a site and consideration of design objectives as well as detailed matters.
- **TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004)** – This note provides technical guidance which supplements the policy set out in Planning Policy Wales in relation to development and flooding. It advises on development and flood risk as this relates to sustainability principles, and provides a framework within which risks arising from both river and coastal flooding, and from additional run-off from development in any location, can be assessed. One of the key aims of TAN 15 is to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages of the planning process; to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and to direct development away from areas of highest risk.
- **TAN 18: Transport (2007)** – The Welsh Government seeks to secure the provision of transport infrastructure and services which improve accessibility, build a stronger economy, improve road safety, and foster more sustainable communities. In so doing, TAN 18 provides guidance in relation to the integration of land use planning and transport, parking, design, accessibility, sustainable modes of transport, and infrastructure development.
- **TAN 23: Economic Development (2014)** – The Economic Development TAN 23 deals principally with Use Class B developments. It provides guidance on how economic development should be dealt with in development plans and how LPAs should consider a planning application for such development.
- **TAN 24: The Historic Environment (2017)** - The purpose of this TAN is to provide guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and Listed Building applications.

Local Planning Guidance Notes

WCBC has approved a series of local planning guidance notes which supplement the development plan. Relevant guidance notes are summarised below.

Landscape and Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No.7)

In assessing planning applications the design of buildings and their external environment and landscape are taken into account. Guidance note 7 seeks to clarify landscape information requirements and help applicants to have a better understanding of landscape issues.

With respect to Outline Planning Applications, landscape issues must be regarded as an integral part of the development process, with consideration given to the form and use of all spaces from the earliest stage. The factors listed below should be considered at any early stage by an applicant, so that information which would be helpful in assessing whether the proposal is acceptable in principle can be identified, as well as those matters of detail which can be ‘reserved’ for a further planning application:

- Existing boundaries;
- The position of existing trees and whether they are to be retained or removed;
- The intended uses and treatment of the external spaces;

- The location of screening factors e.g. buildings, trees etc, within or outside the site;
- The location of other structures;
- Any intended changes in landform; and
- The position and general type of planting.

For full applications and any landscape conditions, the following information should be provided:

- Survey information;
- Details of proposed boundary treatments, including materials, height, location;
- Existing and proposed levels, including information on any surplus materials to be taken off site, or fill material to be imported;
- Existing trees and other soft landscape features to be retained, and methods of protection during construction;
- Details of all existing and proposed hard landscape materials, and their location;
- Species, numbers (or planting density), distribution and sizes of proposed new planting and mixes for grass and wildflora seeding;
- The location of any existing or proposed underground or overhead services which could affect existing or proposed planting; and
- Any areas which are required for adoption by the Council.

Cycling (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 15)

To encourage a greater number of journeys to be made by bicycle, this note sets out how developers will be expected to provide facilities for cyclists in the preparation of relevant development schemes. It also provides design guidance on the construction of cycle routes and cycle parking facilities.

Parking Standards (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 16)

This guidance note explains the parking standards the Council applies to new development. The car parking standards set out are maximum standards. For some uses operational parking in addition to non-operational parking is likely to be required.

Developers should clearly demonstrate that the amount of parking provided will be sufficient to meet likely demand and show they have taken account of how close a site is to employment, local facilities such as shops, and frequency of public transport.

Development will not be permitted if there is insufficient parking on site and or where there would be an increase in highway issues. Any adverse cumulative impact of other developments in the locality will also be taken into account. However, if these impacts can be overcome or reduced to acceptable levels by the delivery of new or improved transport infrastructure, including walking or cycling routes, public transport, new car parks, cycling parking or the implementation of traffic management and parking controls, developers will be required to fund or in some instances contribute towards the cost of their delivery.

The calculation of parking provision for mixed use developments will vary with the type of uses proposed. In cases where the mixed uses generally operate concurrently, levels applicable to all uses will be aggregated. Where the mixed uses generate demands at different times of the day the provision of space will be based on the development type which is the dominant use of that specific site.

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	PARKING STANDARD	CYCLE PARKING STANDARD
B1 Business and Light Industry	1 car space per 30m ² gross floor space	1 cycle space per 300m ² gross floor space
B2 General Industry	1 car space per 50m ² gross floor space	1 cycle space per 500m ² gross floor space
B8 Storage and Distribution	1 car space per 100m ² gross floor space	1 cycle space per 1000m ² gross floor space
C1 Hotels	1 car space per bedroom. For hotels that have function suites, please refer to the parking standard for A3 uses A3 standards include 1 car space per 4m ² public floor space	1 cycle space per 10 bed spaces. and 1 cycle space per 10 employees A3 standards include 1 cycle space per 40m ² public floor space
An area suitable for HGVs to load/unload and turn within the site will normally be required for B2 and B8 uses, particularly for sites accessed from a classified road.		

Trees and Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No.17)

The purpose of Local Planning Guidance Note No.17 is to provide additional guidance regarding the protection of trees and to highlight the benefit of trees as an integral part of design.

Development which would result in damage and/or inappropriate felling of significant trees (BS 5837 Category A & B trees) and hedgerows will not normally be permitted. Development proposed near to existing trees, woodlands or hedgerows must be in accordance with the design and protection principles set out in this Local Planning Guidance Note and British Standard 5837: 2012 "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction" (or any subsequent revisions).

Development design should take into account the constraints and opportunities posed by existing quality trees, woodland and hedgerows and provide adequate space for new planting.

Landscape and Industrial Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No.26)

It is intended that Note number 26 will assist applicants to have a better understanding of the landscape and environmental issues which the Council will take account of when determining applications for industrial development.

New development in particular can provide excellent opportunities for exciting and sustainable landscape and building design, providing attention is paid to the impact which such proposals might have on the surroundings. Landscape considerations include the way the external environment is affected by the development, and the way the development is perceived by the public. Landscape needs to be considered from the very beginning of the development process.

Wrexham Industrial Estate Employment and Nature Conservation (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 29)

This note advises developers and landowners on the key ecological issues that need to be addressed before carrying out any development at Wrexham Industrial Estate and the procedures that should be followed to gain planning permission and the necessary licences. It emphasises:

- the need for an ecological assessment of the site;
- the protection of habitats that are found in preference to mitigation or off-site compensation; and
- the protection of the developable area of a site from colonisation by species.

In this way it should be possible to promote economic development while also protecting and enhancing the ecology and landscape of the Estate and wider area.

Biodiversity and Development (Local Planning Guidance Note No. 32)

The planning system has a central role to play through resisting development proposals that may irreversibly damage important habitats or species, by enhancing biodiversity through incorporating mitigation and enhancements and by securing long-term favourable management of biodiversity rich sites. This guidance note is intended to raise the quality and profile of nature conservation, protected species and biodiversity issues when submitting and considering planning applications.

Development Management Manual (2017)

The Development Management Manual (2017) focuses on the procedural aspects of development management, describing the minimum requirements set out in law. It sets out guidance for all participants in development management procedures.

At paragraph 9.4.7 the Welsh Government is clear that policies in an emerging development plan could be deemed a material consideration. The weight to be attached to an emerging draft Local Development Plan will in general depend on the stage it has reached. In considering what weight to give to the specific policies in an emerging LDP that apply to a particular proposal, LPAs will need to consider carefully the underlying evidence and background to the policies. National planning policy would be a material consideration in these circumstances, as set out at paragraph 9.4.8.

During the period between submission of a draft LDP for examination and its adoption, the existing development plan remains the extant development plan for the purposes of decision making. However, the evidence to support the policies in an emerging LDP could be used as a material consideration when making decisions (paragraph 9.4.9).

Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2028

WCBC are preparing a Local Development Plan (LDP) which will replace the current adopted Unitary Development Plan. The LDP is a land use plan that sets out the planning requirements for achieving sustainable development in the Borough over the period 2013-2028.

Vision and Strategic Objectives

A vision and set of strategic objectives have been formulated to ensure the LDP addresses the key issues affecting the Borough. The vision set out by the Council is as follows:

‘By 2028, Wrexham will be an attractive, distinctive and accessible place where people will want to live, work, visit and invest. Our economy will be strong, resilient and responsive to our gateway location within Wales. Wrexham County Borough will be a sustainable place where everyone feels safe and included and a place that enhances the quality and distinctiveness of our natural, built heritage and unique culture.’

In relation to employment, Strategic Objective S02 sets out how the LDP will:

‘Support a vibrant, diverse and competitive local economy that provides a range of job opportunities to enable new and existing businesses to grow in Wrexham County Borough with strategic growth in Wrexham Town and Wrexham Industrial Estate.’

This objective will be achieved by allocating a Key Strategic Site for employment at Wrexham Industrial Estate.

Draft Policy SP2 Location of Development

New development is to be directed within defined settlement limits and employment areas as identified on the draft proposals map. In the justifying text, WCBC state that to meet an evidenced employment need a 28ha employment allocation is proposed at Wrexham Industrial Estate. In addition, Wrexham Industrial Estate is identified as a Tier 1 settlement in the Council's settlement hierarchy, which is a Primary Key Settlement & Strategic Employment Area.

Draft Policy SP6 Planning Obligations

Planning obligations will be sought to mitigate any impacts directly related to the development and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in line with relevant planning legislation.

Draft Policy SP9 Economic Growth Employment and Enterprise

To ensure the continued role of the County Borough as a key economic driver in North Wales and the wider region, the Plan will diversify the local economy and widen the economic base in part allocating a strategic expansion site of 28ha at Wrexham Industrial Estate – the County's Key Business Sector area.

The Council will also provide a level of growth which allows opportunities to deliver approximately 4,200 jobs in the Borough over the Plan period across a wide range of employment sectors.

Draft Policy SP10 Wrexham Industrial Estate

Wrexham Industrial Estate as shown on the proposals map is the County's Key Business Sector Area and will be the primary focus for new employment development over the plan period for class B1, B2 and B8 employment. Land is also protected on the estate for a strategic ecological network for a number of local, national and internationally protected species and habitat.

Draft Policy SP11 KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate

Land is allocated to the north of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate as shown on the proposals map to deliver 28ha of employment land for B use class purposes, including an ecological network, residential buffer zone, and enabling and necessary infrastructure which will be delivered in a phased manner with specific details tied into planning consents in relation to:

- Active Travel
- Public transport
- Provision of vehicular access to and from the site
- Green Infrastructure

In the justifying text the Council state that no enabling infrastructure is required to deliver this site, however infrastructure necessary to make the site acceptable in planning terms will be required.

Draft Policy SP12 Transport and Accessibility

Wrexham's transport network will be developed in a safe, efficient, and sustainable manner. This will be achieved by restricting development that would have an unacceptable impact on the safe and efficient operation of the transport network. In addition, the Council will ensure adequate levels of car parking are incorporated into new development and

develop the coverage of the Active Travel Network across Wrexham to promote increased use of walking and cycling as safe, viable, and sustainable alternatives to the car (inter alia).

Draft Policy SP13 Design Principles and Masterplanning Framework

All development will be required to be of a high quality, sustainable design which makes a positive contribution to the creation of locally distinctive places by complying with the Masterplanning framework supplementary planning guidance and 'KSS' schematics. Proposals must demonstrate how they have taken account of the local characteristics of surrounding areas and how innovative design solutions will enhance the quality of the built and natural environment.

Draft Policy SP14: Health and Wellbeing

All development should seek to reduce health inequalities and provide opportunities for improving health and wellbeing. This includes mental health, by addressing the physical, economic and social determinants of health.

Draft Policy SP15 Natural Environment

Development will only be permitted where it seeks to protect, conserve, and enhance the natural environment including strategic ecological network on Wrexham Industrial Estate, protected species and their habitats, natural landscape features such as trees, hedges, and woodland and the green networks between them which contribute to the quality and diversity of the natural environment (inter alia).

Draft Policy SP16 Historic and Cultural Environment

Development will only be supported where it conserves, protects, and enhances cultural and heritage assets of the Borough and, their settings including archaeological remains.

Draft Policy SP19: Climate Change

To mitigate against the effects of climate changes and adapt to its impacts, development proposals will need to demonstrate that they have taken into account the following:

- i) Reducing carbon emissions;
- ii) Protecting and increasing carbon sinks;
- iii) Adapting to the implications of climate change at both a strategic and detailed design level;
- iv) Promoting energy efficiency and increasing the supply of renewable energy;
- v) Maintaining ecological resilience;
- vi) Avoiding areas susceptible to flood risk in the first instance in accordance with the sequential approach set out in national guidance. Highly vulnerable development, as defined in TAN15: Development and Flood Risk, should not be located within zone C2;
- vii) Preventing development that increases flood risk; and
- viii) Assesses the potential effects of climate change when preparing a Flood Consequence Assessment for the site.

Draft Policy SP20 Green Infrastructure

At draft Policy SP20 the Council describe how Wrexham's distinctive natural heritage provides a network of green and blue infrastructure. Protection, conservation, and enhancement of natural heritage networks needs to be reconciled with the benefits of development. Development will be required to maintain the extent, quality, and connectivity of multi-functional green infrastructure on or near a site, and, where appropriate to enhance it. Where the loss of green infrastructure is unavoidable, mitigation and compensation should be provided for the lost assets on a site-specific basis.

Draft Policy DM1 Development Management Considerations

Developments must accord with or enhance the character and local distinctiveness of a site in terms of their siting, layout, scale, height, density, and landscaping. In addition, developments must (inter alia):

- not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties or land, and provide a satisfactory standard of amenity for the occupiers/users of the development itself;
- prioritise walking, cycling and public transport use ahead of travel by car;
- not give rise to parking or highway safety problems on site or in the locality; and
- not increase the risk of flooding but makes adequate provision for sustainably dealing with foul and surface water drainage and not result in an unacceptable impact upon the water environment.

Draft Policy NE1 International and National Nature Conservation Designations

Development likely to significantly affect any protected habitat or species either alone or in combination with other plans or projects will be subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment. Development will only be permitted where it is possible to ascertain no adverse effect on the species or integrity of the habitat or site or where there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest and compensatory measures are secured. Permission for development likely to impact protected species or habitat will only be granted in exceptional circumstances where appropriate compensation can be provided.

Development likely to affect any protected species will only be permitted when there is no satisfactory alternative and if there is no detrimental impact to the maintenance of the population concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range. The proposals must adequately demonstrate that they are for the purposes of preserving public health or safety or reasons of overriding public interest.

Draft Policy NE3 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Development will only be permitted where it does not cause unacceptable harm to trees and hedgerows of significant public amenity, natural or cultural heritage value, or those that provide important ecosystem services.

Where adverse effects cannot justifiably be avoided, and sustainable integration is not possible then mitigation will be required. In such cases development should include proposals for the planting of new trees and hedgerows within the site, ensuring connectivity between proposed and existing green infrastructure.

Draft Policy NE6: Waste Water Treatment and River Water Quality

All new development will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC in particular through the treatment of waste water. To ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC, development creating waste water discharges will be required to demonstrate there is no increase in phosphorus levels in the SAC.

This can be achieved through implementation of mitigation measures.

Draft Policy EM2 Provision of Supporting Facilities for Employees in Business, Industrial and Warehousing Developments

Provision for open space, public realm, leisure, food and drink, and child-care facilities will be appropriate in the employment areas shown on the proposals map, provided:

- i. the facility is of an appropriate size and scale and is subordinate in its nature to meet the needs of workers in the vicinity and does not result in an over concentration of such facilities in one area,
- ii. the proposal does not impact on the status and character of the employment area for B1, B2 or B8 uses,

- iii. the operations of other industrial and employment uses in the vicinity of the site would not be adversely affected, and
- iv. the proposal would not result in significant levels of visitor traffic into the area or exacerbate existing traffic conditions.

In the justifying text the Council highlight that the absence of such facilities in an employment area can increase travel demand and make the areas less attractive to employers and employees. Where new employment areas are proposed, the need for such facilities should be considered as part of the overall development scheme. In all cases, only facilities of an appropriate nature and scale to meet the needs of employees will be permitted.

Draft Policy EM5: Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlement Limits

Proposals for visitor accommodation outside settlement limits will only be permitted in certain circumstances. This includes where it involves the conversion of an existing building, an extension to existing visitor accommodation, new touring caravan / camping / glamping sites or exceptionally new development that forms an integral part of an established and viable tourism or recreation facility.

Draft Policy EM6 Pentre Maelor and KSS3 Housing Buffer Zones

Land surrounding residential dwellings adjacent to allocation 'KSS3: Land to the north of Bryn Lane' are safeguarded as buffer zones remaining free of built development to ensure satisfactory standards of residential amenity.

In the justifying text the Council state that it is considered appropriate that a 50m buffer (measured from the edge of the domestic curtilage of those properties) be retained between the residential properties and edge of the developable areas of the allocation.

Draft Policy T1 Managing Transport Impacts

Development will be supported where it will facilitate increased journeys by more sustainable modes of travel, mitigate any significant adverse effects upon the transport network that arise from the proposed development, does not compromise the safe, effective, and efficient use of the highway network and does not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation, and will provide appropriate levels of parking and access arrangements.

Draft Policy T2 Active Travel

New development will be supported where:

- i. Walking and cycling infrastructure is an integral part of the overall design of the scheme and makes a positive contribution to the distinctiveness of communities and places;
- ii. Facilities that encourage and promote Active Travel (including but not limited to appropriate signing, lighting, secure and convenient cycle parking and where appropriate shower and changing facilities) are provided;
- iii. The development and enhancement of the Active Travel routes identified on the Integrated Network Map is included, connecting communities to essential services including public transport, employment and education opportunities;
- iv. Appropriate travel choice information, including reference to the benefits of cycling and walking for all or part of journeys is made available; and
- v. Measures that work to reduce the dominance and speed of vehicles are provided, affording increased priority to pedestrians and cycle movements.

Draft Policy R6 Retail, Leisure and Commercial Development (Edge and Out of Centre)

The policy states that proposals will need to demonstrate compliance with the National Planning Policy sequential test, the preference is first to locate new development within a retail, leisure and commercial centre. Where proposals demonstrate there are no suitable available sites or premises within these centres, then edge of centre sites can be considered and if no such sites are suitable or available only then should out of centre sites be considered.

Draft Policy RE1: Development and Renewable Energy/Low Carbon Technology

Developers of key strategic sites will be required to incorporate schemes which generate energy from renewable and low carbon technologies, unless it is not financially or technically viable to do so. This includes opportunities to minimise carbon emissions associated with heating, cooling and power systems.

Employment Land Review: Wrexham County Borough Council and Flintshire County Council (2015)

The Joint Employment Land Review (ELR) produced by WCBC and Flintshire County Council was published in 2015 and assesses the supply, need, and demand for employment land and premises (Use Class B) in the local authority areas of Wrexham and Flintshire through to 2030. It provides robust evidence to inform the Councils' respective Local Development Plans to bring them in line with the updated requirements of Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 23.

On the 31st of March 2014, Wrexham had a baseline employment land resource of 204.91ha. Excluding land which is already developed, has significant access constraints, is held for the expansion of individual firms, is proposed for alternative uses, or land which has identified ecological issues reduces the net land supply reduces to 80.05ha.

The ELR recommends WCBC use the projected growth of employment in industry sectors scenario as the measure to Wrexham's future employment land needs. This scenario indicates a minimum need for 2-3ha of employment land per year. The total need for the LDP period is therefore in the region of 35-45ha.

Although there is no overall need for Wrexham to identify further employment land allocations in the period to 2030, there is an exception with Wrexham Industrial Estate where high demand combines with a constrained overall land supply.

Qualitative research indicates that at Wrexham Industrial Estate there is a growing land supply shortfall relative to identified demand. Wrexham Industrial Estate is recognised as a nationally and regionally important employment location. The industrial estate has a crucial role to play in delivering the Council's overall spatial strategy in the emerging Local Development Plan by contributing to delivering the jobs growth required to support the Council's proposed housing targets.

The ELR therefore identifies a need to allocate 20-30ha of land at Wrexham Industrial Estate to ensure there are adequate sites to meet the needs of existing and future occupiers. Employment land allocations need to be sufficiently large to meet the needs of occupiers, with individual plot sizes between 2-5ha deemed appropriate based on enquiries from prospective occupiers.

Background Paper 5 'Wrexham Industrial Estate Expansion Selection' (February 2016)

The allocation of additional land at Wrexham Industrial Estate has been subject to a site selection exercise to ensure that any site proposed for allocation at the Industrial Estate is the most appropriate in relation to environmental factors, accessibility, and infrastructure provision.

Background Paper 5 'Wrexham Industrial Estate Expansion Selection' considered two areas of search as possible locations for the expansion of the Industrial Estate: Area A and Area B - the application Site at Bryn Lane comprises the majority of land within Area A.

Areas A and B were identified as potential locations to accommodate a strategic employment development due to the scale of infrastructure required to deliver strategic allocations and their proximity to recently completed link roads. Other locations on the edge of the Industrial Estate were not considered viable alternatives due to access, ecology, flooding, and highways constraints.

Following the area of search assessment, the Council set out in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal (2016) which supported the LDP Preferred Options and the Sustainability Appraisal which supported the LDP Deposit Version (2018), that Area A offered the best potential for accommodating a new extension of Wrexham Industrial Estate owing to its lower quality agricultural land, fewer ecology constraints, and proximity to markets accessed from the A483. As a result of this exercise, Area A (the application Site) was taken forwards as a proposed strategic employment allocation for the plan period.