

Appendix 7.1: Socio-economics Baseline

Project Name(s)	Land North of Bryn Lane
Rev.	01
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01	25/04/2023	First issue

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1 Legislation & Policy Framework

National

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

- 1.1 The first Welsh National Development Framework (NDF), Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (Future Wales), was published in February 2021. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of communities.¹
- 1.2 The NDF sets out a number of policies to deliver sustainable development, those of most relevance to this chapter are as follows:
 - 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 and Deeside.
 - Policy 19 – Strategic policies for regional planning. Plans should embed placemaking as an overarching principle and should establish for the region (and where required constituent Local Development Plans) the employment provision among other priorities.
 - Policy 20 - National Growth Area – Wrexham and Deeside. 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.

Planning Policy Wales

- 1.3 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) was last updated by the Welsh Government in February 2021. The document sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. 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, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty.²
- 1.4 Relevant guidance addresses the following:
 - People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking
 - Strategic and Spatial Placemaking Choices
 - Active and Social Places
 - Productive and Enterprising Places
 - Distinctive and Natural Places

¹ Future Wales: The National Plan 2040. [Online]

² Planning Policy Wales. Edition 11. [Online]

Local

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2005)

- 1.5 The Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 was adopted on 14 February 2005. It provides a framework for local decision making and the reconciliation of development and conservation interests in order that land use changes proceed coherently and with maximum community benefit. The plan comprises two parts; the strategy which outlines the Council's broad intention for development in the area and provides a framework for the more specific policies and proposals, and the specific policies accompanied by justifications.³
- 1.6 The Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 sets out a number of policies to deliver sustainable development, those of most relevance to this chapter are as follows:
- Policy PS1. In addition to the specific land use or locational policies of the Plan, all development proposals must satisfy certain general requirements, the regulation of which is a key function of the planning system. It requires the development of sustainable communities through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.
 - Policy PS6. Approximately 300 hectares of employment land will be made available for development between 1996 and 2011. The Plan identifies sufficient fully serviced and easily accessible employment land to cater for the sustained economic development of the County Borough.

Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2018

- 1.7 Wrexham has prepared a Local Development Plan 2013-2028 (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. 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. Key aims of the LDP include:
- Guide development for housing, employment, retail and other uses;
 - Set out policies that will be used to decide planning applications;
 - Safeguard areas of land requiring protection or enhancement.

³ Wrexham Borough Council. Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996-2011, 2005 [Online].

Baseline Conditions

Existing Baseline

- 1.8 This section summarises the existing socio-economic conditions at the application site and within the study area. These conditions are considered in the context of the neighbourhood, borough, sub-regional, regional and national socio-economic spatial levels, as appropriate. The information provides the baseline against which the potential impacts of the proposed development have been assessed.
- 1.9 Due to the application site's positioning, travel to work areas have been considered in determining baseline conditions. The Holt neighbourhood is directly adjacent to the Chester Travel to Work area, and therefore, Cheshire West and Chester as a Borough will also be considered in determining the Employment Baseline, as well as the English National Level.

Existing Uses

- 1.10 As detailed in the ES Chapter, the application site is comprised of arable land, separated into eight fields by intact and defunct hedgerows lined with intermittent trees. Although there are a cluster of buildings and associated hardstanding on the application site, there is no significant existing employee population on-site.

Demographic Profile

- 1.11 According to the 2021 Census data, the borough has a resident population of 135,117⁴, representing an increase of 0.01% from the 2011 Census⁵. The resident population of the borough increased by a smaller percentage than the overall population of Wales. The population of Wales increased by 0.15% between 2011 and 2021. Wrexham has a smaller population (135,117) than Chester borough (357,147).
- 1.12 There was a neighborhood population of 4,881 in 2021, which translates to a population density of 12.1 persons per ha (pph). This is lower than the borough population density (20.5 pph) and the national population density (23.9 pph)⁶. This reflects that the site is located in a rural area.

Age

- 1.13 Based on the 2021 Census, in the neighbourhood under 15 year olds represent approximately 14.7% of the resident population, the working age residents (those aged between 15 to 64) account for 51.57% and those aged 65 and above 33.7%. There is a higher proportion of older people in the neighbourhood compared to the borough (20.6%) and national levels (21.2%).

Ethnicity

- 1.14 Approximately 96.5% of the residents at the borough level report themselves as being White compared to 94.8% at the National level. This indicates that the neighbourhood and borough have a lower degree of ethnic diversity than the national levels. The remaining 3.5% of the neighbourhood comprise of people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Deprivation

- 1.15 The Welsh Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the principal official Government measure of the spatial distribution of deprivation across the country and provides a key ranking of local authorities. Levels of deprivation are also calculated for the local neighbourhood level.⁷
- 1.16 There are two Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the neighbourhood and the average deprivation score across these LSOAs have been provided in this section to represent the deprivation within the

⁴ Office for National Statistics, 2021. 2021 Census. [Online].

⁵ Office for National Statistics, 2011. 2011 Census. [Online].

⁶ Office for National Statistics, 2020. Population Estimates. [Online].

⁷ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2020. Welsh Government. [Online].

neighbourhood. Each LSOA encompasses a minimum population of 1,000 residents (400 households) although typically averages 1,500 residents.

- 1.17 The data shows that the neighbourhood level (Holt Ward) is within the 50% least deprived LSOAs nationally, with an average IMD rank of 1,568 (out of a total of 1,909)⁸. As shown in Table 1, the neighbourhood level ranks within the 11%-20% most deprived on a national level for the 'Access to Services' indicator and within the 10% most deprived for the 'Community Safety' indicator.

Table 1: Domains of Deprivation for Neighbourhood Level – Holt Ward

Domain	Rank	Decile*
IMD	1,568	50% least deprived
Income	1558	50% least deprived
Employment	1574	50% least deprived
Health	1736	50% least deprived
Education	1397	50% least deprived
Housing	1581	50% least deprived
Access to Services	1053	11%-20% most deprived
Community Safety	786	10% most deprived
Physical Environment	1418	50% least deprived

*where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs in England

Economic Profile

Employment & Economic Activity

- 1.18 Economic activity relates to the percentage of the working age population, excluding students, that are either in employment or actively seeking employment. Approximately 51.1% of the neighbourhood population is economically active, lower than both the borough (59%) and national (54.4%) averages⁹. Of the economically active population at the neighbourhood level, 2.6% in the ward are unemployed, which is lower than both the borough (2.9%) and the national (3.1%) levels. The percentage of usual residents aged 16 years and over who were economically active and unemployed was greater in England (3.5%) compared with Wales (3.1%). There is a similar level of unemployment in economically active people in the Chester Borough (2.8%) compared to Wrexham (2.9%).
- 1.19 In terms of benefits, such as Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), the borough rate (0.6%) is slightly lower than the national rate (1%) in 2022. The borough rate is also slightly lower than Cheshire West & Chester Borough (0.7%) and English National average (0.7%).¹⁰
- 1.20 The percentage of adult residents (16 years and over) that are educated to a degree level (or above) at the neighbourhood level is 35.4% which is higher than the borough level (29%) and the national level (25%). At the neighbourhood level 16.2% have no formal qualifications, which is lower than the borough (20.9%), national (19%), and English (18.1%) levels, but higher than the Cheshire West and Chester Borough (15.8%).

⁸ It should be noted that due to the deprivation figures being based on averages

⁹ Office for National Statistics, 2021. 2021 Census. [Online].

¹⁰ Office of National Statistics, 2020. Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). [Online]

- 1.21 In the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2021 Provisional Results¹¹, the average income per year for the borough is £31,218 compared to the national average of £28,459. The average wage per week in the borough is £763.00 compared to the national average of £565.20. Therefore, average income within the borough is higher than the national level. Although the borough has a higher annual income (£31,218) than the national average (28,459), it is lower than the neighbouring borough of Cheshire West and Chester (£37,609), and lower than the English average (£37,828).
- 1.22 The neighbourhood ranks averagely for both income and employment deprivation compared to Wales.

Occupation & Industry

Occupational Class

- 1.23 The 2021 Census data shows that a higher percentage of residents (51%) in the neighbourhood work in high-skilled occupations compared to the national level (40.5%) but more than the borough level (36.1%). There is a greater proportion of people who work in high skilled occupations in the neighbourhood compared to the English average (46.5%) and the neighbouring borough of Cheshire West and Chester (47.7%). High-skilled occupations include management, professional and technical occupations; mid-skilled occupations include administration, skilled trades and services; while low-skilled occupations include sales, process and elementary occupations. By contrast, 18.4% work in low-skilled occupations in the neighbourhood compared to 19% in the borough and 17.5% at the national level.¹²

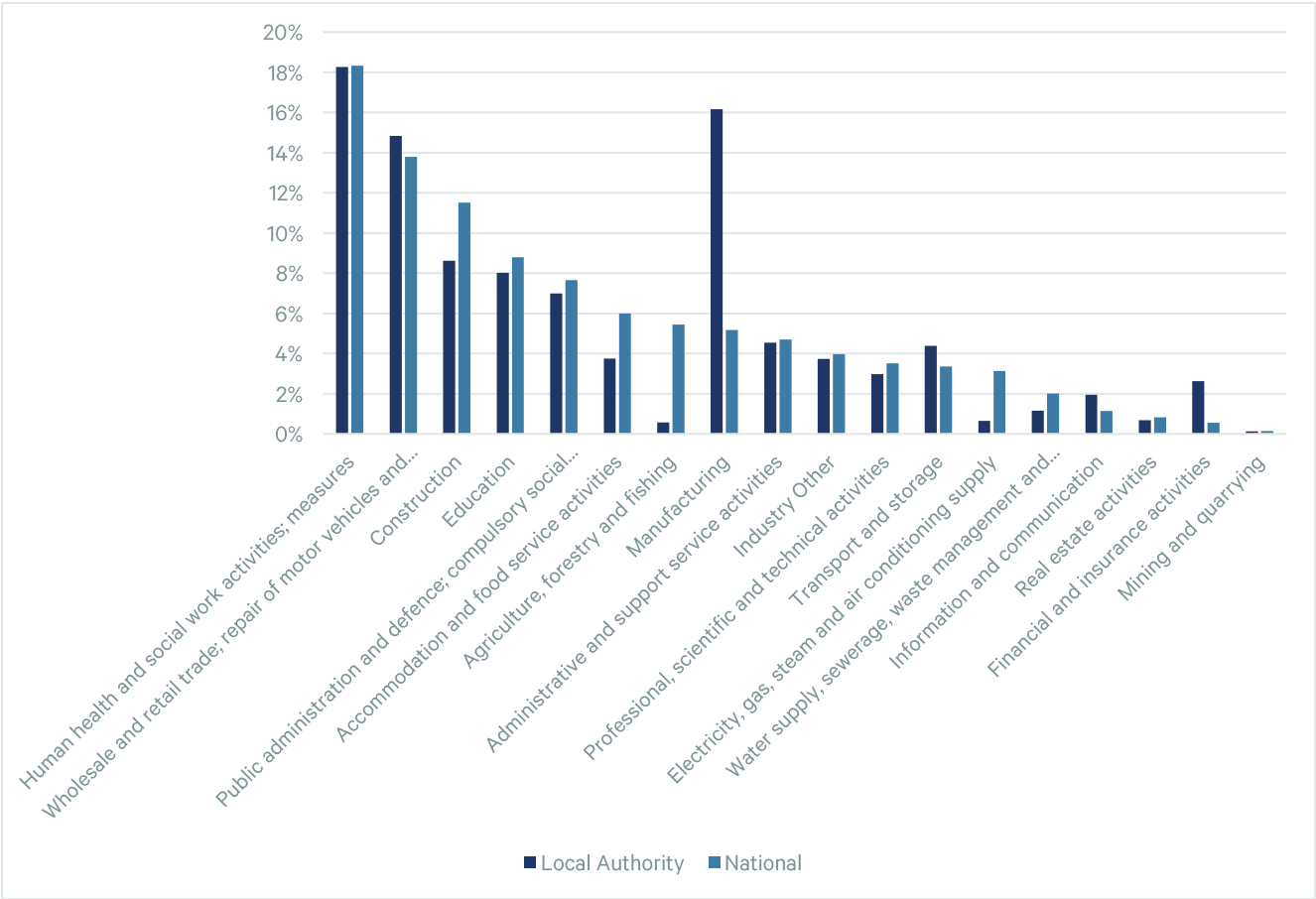
Industry of Employment & Business Structure

- 1.24 Figure 1 shows the industries of employment at the borough level and national level. It can be seen that the industries of employment in Wales and the borough are similar although levels vary. Within the borough, the highest percentages are in 'Human Health and Social Work' (18%), 'Retail Trade and Motor Repairs' (15%), and 'Manufacturing' (16%). At the National Level, the highest percentages are also 'Human Health and Social Work' (18%), 'Retail Trade and Motor Repairs' (14%), and 'Construction' (12%). There is a significantly higher level of people employed in the manufacturing industry at the borough level compared to the National level.

¹¹ Office for National Statistics, 2021. Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) Provisional Results. ONS. [Online].

¹² Office for National Statistics, 2021. 2021 Census. [Online].

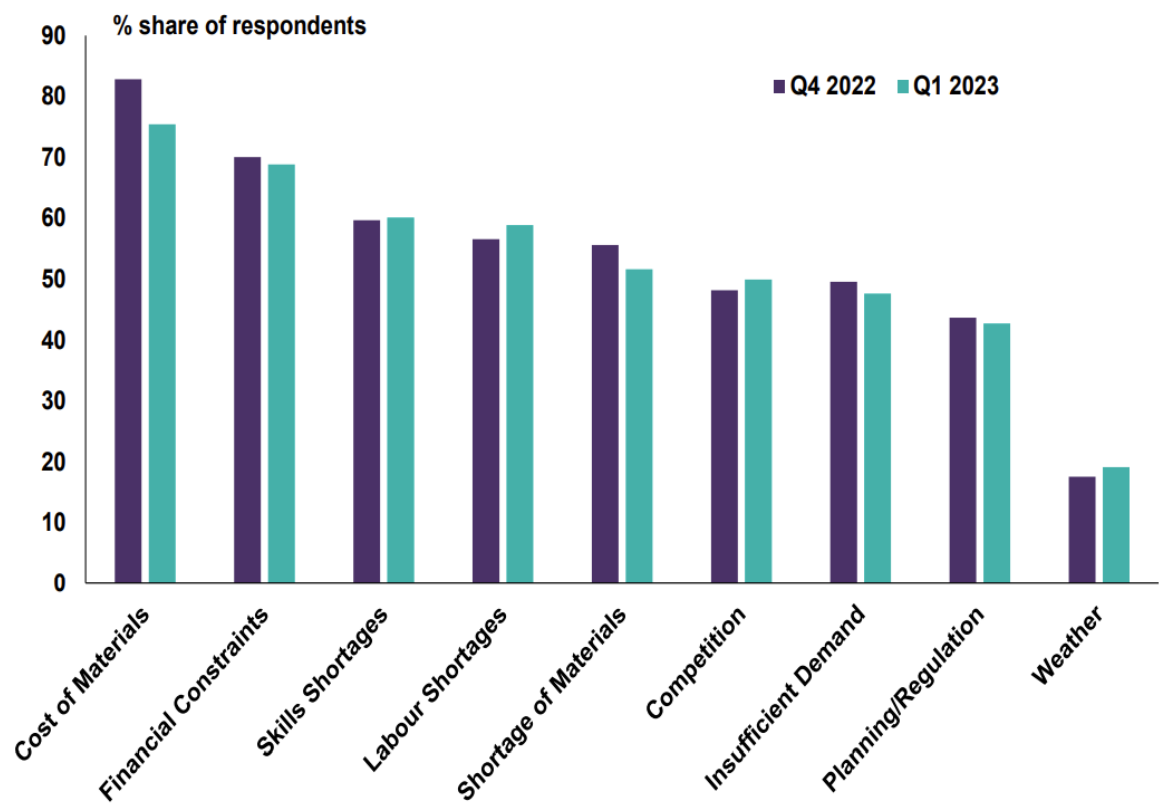
Figure 1: Borough and National Total Employment by Industry %



Construction

1.25 The construction industry provides approximately 9% of employment in the local authority. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) produces a quarterly Construction and Infrastructure Monitor. From the fourth quarter of 2022, results have shown As shown in Figure 2, material costs remain the most frequently cited impediment to market activity across the globe. That said, the share of respondents viewing material costs as a barrier, although still very elevated, has eased back in each of the last four quarters (from a high of 91% in Q1 2022 to 75% this time around). Alongside this, just over two-thirds of contributors report that financial conditions are hindering activity which is unsurprising given the ongoing tightening in monetary policy seen from the world’s largest central banks. Labour and skills shortages also remain a significant headwind for the construction industry, with a little over 60% of respondents reporting such insufficiencies in the Q1 results (little changed compared to the previous feedback). Interestingly, the proportion of contributors noting a lack of availability of materials has moderated to 52%, down from a high of 74% in Q2 2022.

Figure 2: Factors Limiting Building Activity



Thank you

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