

CHAPTER COURT

WREXHAM TOWN, WALES

Client: TBE Southern (Limited)

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

12th October 2023

CA·UK·IN
studio

DESIGN TEAM / PROJECT DIRECTORY

Client:

TBE (Southern) Limited
Care of
2nd Floor
The Atrium
31 Church Road
Ashford, Middlesex
TW15 2UD

Project Management:

SP Projects Ltd.
Web: www.sp-projects.com
Contact:
Craig Davis (Director)

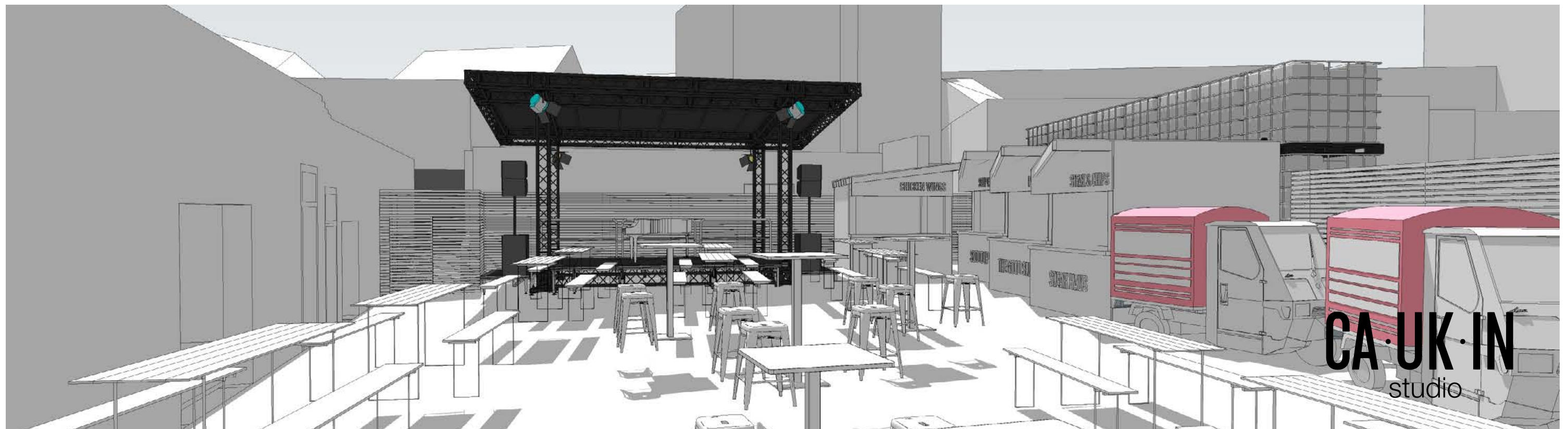
Contractor:

To be appointed by Client

Architectural Designer:

CAUKIN Studio Ltd
The Coach House
1 The Convent Rising Lane
Baddersly Clinton
Lapworth, Warwickshire
England
B93 0DJ

Tel: +44 7792 384846
Email: joshua@caukinstudio.com
Web: www.caukinstudio.com
Contact:
Joshua Peasley (Director)



CA·UK·IN
studio

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Chapter Court - ushering a new consumer experience into the heart of Wrexham, North Wales. Exciting retail and leisure facilities utilizing ‘Micro Retail’ and ‘Micro Food Vendor’ areas within existing, unused, commercial properties. Through unlocking a rear courtyard area along Hope Street, Queen Street, Argyle Street and Rhosddu Road, in the town centre.

Job Reference No. 23.09 - Chapter Court
October 2023

1	PAGE 06 INTRODUCTION	1.1 Introduction 1.2 Vision Statement / Background
2	PAGE 12 CONTEXT	2.1 Location 2.2 The Site 2.3 Context Analysis 2.4 Planning Policy
3	PAGE 24 FACTORS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT	3.1 Parking 3.2 Existing Ground Conditions 3.3 Archaeology 3.4 Existing Services 3.5 Grading of the Site 3.6 Flood Risk
4	PAGE 28 DESIGN OBJECTIVES	4.1 The Brief 4.2 Related Planning Applications 4.3 Design Concept and Principles
5	PAGE 36 CHARACTER	5.1 Layout 5.2 Scale 5.3 Amount 5.4 External Spaces 5.5 Demolition + Remedial Work 5.6 Appearance + Materials

6	PAGE 44 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	6.1 Biodiversity 6.2 Energy Efficiency / Carbon 6.3 Climate Resilience 6.4 Sustainable Design Standards 6.5 Sustainable Materials 6.6 Water 6.7 Waste Management
7	PAGE 50 ACCESS	7.1 Approach to Accessibility
8	PAGE 54 MOVEMENT	8.1 Integration / Connections 8.2 Transport Modes
9	PAGE 58 COMMUNITY SAFETY	9.1 Secure By Design 9.2 Boundary Treatments 9.3 Surveillance
10	PAGE 62 CONSULTATION / CONCLUSION	10.1 Consultation / Conclusion



INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by CAUKIN Studio Ltd in support of a full planning application at the following site:

The site is located at the rear of existing commercial units along Hope Street, Queen Street and Rhosddu Road in Wrexham Town Centre. It is highlighted for improvement, as an opportunity site (Key Site 4), within the Aspirational Town Centre Designation of the Town Centre Master Plan (Fig 2.1.2)

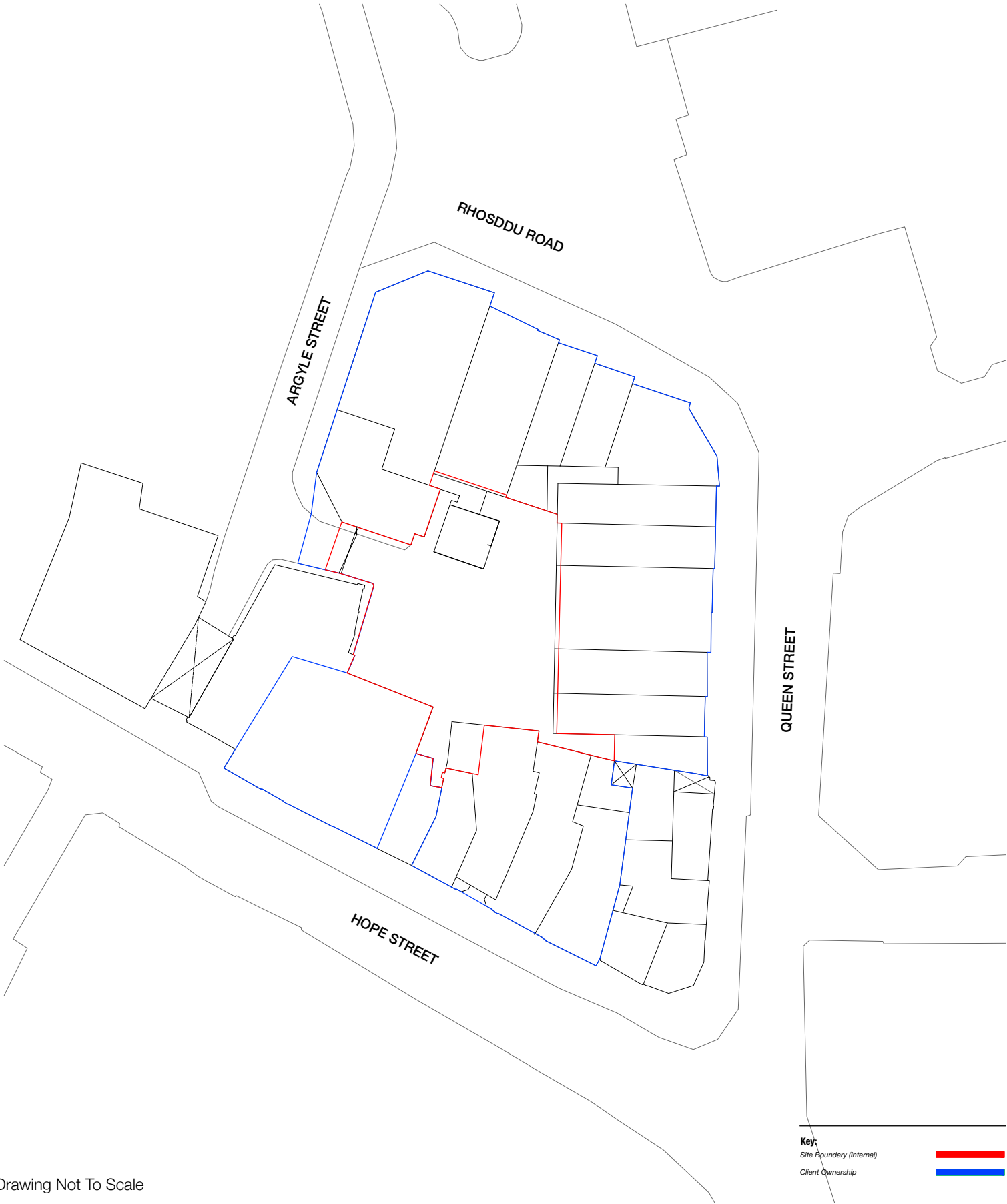
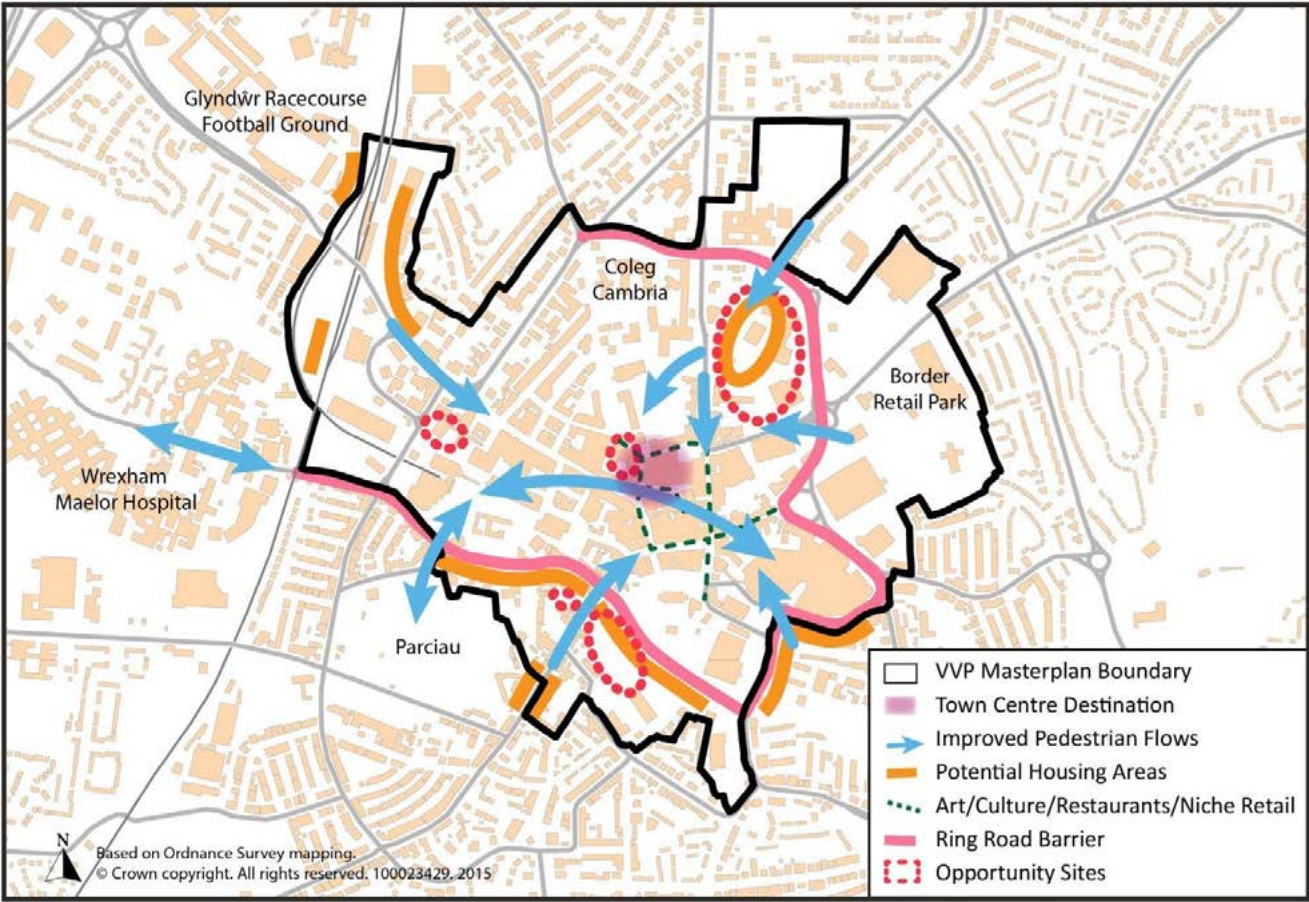
This document describes the key considerations which influenced the design proposed for the application site. It proposes an appropriate design response based on, and informed by, a clear understanding of the context.

This design proposal and associated drawings, surveys and reports have been developed over a period of approximately 18 months. The structure and content of the statement have been informed by Technical Advice Note 12: Design (March 2016) which sets out guidance on the preparation of Design and Access Statements. Therefore it will endeavour to explain the guiding

- design concepts and principles that have been applied which relate to;
- Character (including amount, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping)
 - Environmental Sustainability.
 - Accessibility and movement to, from and within the development.
 - Community Safety

The content within these elements, has been carefully considered to relate to and incorporate the thinking and guidance of TAN and Welsh Government's design definitions in the PPW.

An ongoing and successful dialogue with the Wrexham Local Authority, has meant progress has already begun within other phases of the development. With local vendors taking up rental space in the internal units of Queen Street, adjacent to the application site. The overall Chapter Court development is already contributing positively to the local community. The success of this applicant site is directly linked to the success of these other spaces physically, economically and socially.



CA·UK·IN

CAUKIN STUDIO LTD.
@caukinstudio
info@caukinstudio.com
www.caukinstudio.com

- Notes:
1. Do not scale from this drawing.
 2. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other consultants' drawings and specifications for the project. Representation of structural elements is purely indicative. All structural elements to be specified by a certified structural engineer.
 3. This drawing is the copyright of CAUKIN Studio Ltd (registered in England).
 4. Reproduction without the express consent of CAUKIN Studio Ltd is prohibited and the information contained on this drawing may not be used for any purpose other than that which is stated on this drawing.
 5. The construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM) is the responsibility of the client/contractor unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Revisions:

Status: Stage 03 - Developed Design

Job No: 23.08

Project: Chapter Court 1B Room 03

Drawing: Proposed Site Location Plan

Project North:

Key:
Site Boundary (Internal)
Client Ownership

Scale: 1:500 @ A3

Date: 20.07.23

Drawn By: JP



D001

1.2 VISION STATEMENT

Wrexham town has long been a focal point for social, commercial and environmental activity in the north of Wales. With direct links to neighbouring big cities (~45mins drive to Liverpool, Manchester, Chester) and within a short drive of both the beautiful Clwydian Range & Dee Valley and Snowdonia National Park, Wrexham it is poised to continue its relatively healthy growth. With offerings from arts and culture through to national sporting teams and venues, the town has the potential to regain its thriving tourist and local economy.

Although the town currently enjoys a strong offering in one area of retail and leisure, it lacks in a more independent nature. Within this is the number of high quality, evening venues for arts, culture, food and entertainment. This is supported by the fact that the town centre has seen significant growth over the last 20 years but there is still a sense that it lacks an identity.

The traditional centre of town is dominated by discount retailers and in some areas beginning to look tired and unattractive. The new aspirational town centre (Queen Square area) plans to fill the identified void in the restaurant sector and the higher quality retail sector (Fig 2.1.2).

The applicant site has seen a down turn in recent years, with lots of retailers moving out of the area to the new Eagles Meadow shopping complex in another area of the town. This area also competes with other retail parks near to town which offer customers the convenience of free parking, longer opening hours and shops 'all-under one roof'.

Chapter Court aims to attract a different type of retailer and therefore add a unique customer offering to the towns current patchwork. Quality high street retailers, bring a vibrant, dynamic feel back to the original centre of town, whilst focussing on smaller, more independent local businesses, will instill the idea of locality. Creating a 'micro retail' and 'micro food vendor' space for Wrexham will be the first of its kind in this area. With 'go-to' places to eat and drink, the development of the rear courtyard will have the ability to host year round events. Offering local and visiting customers a new, cultural shopping and leisure experience; giving people a reason to come back again.

The proposed design aims to achieve this by;

- Building on the town centre's strong sub-regional position, as a major shopping destination, by diversifying Wrexham's offer. Filling the gaps in restaurant, cafe, coffee bar and evening economies; developing complementary leisure, cultural and arts attractions in an engaging environment.
- Developing an attractive and distinctive environment with high quality buildings, streets and spaces to enhance the character of the town and support the town centre strategies for retail and visitors.
- Ensuring high quality access to and through the town centre by a range of modes, prioritizing walking, cycling and public transport, but maintaining high quality road access to the centre;
- Improving the quality of the public realm to improve places for people to meet, use and enjoy.

Wrexham Local Service Board, 2013-2024 and Wrexham Town Centre Master plan have three interlinked objectives which are;

1. Making Wrexham a place where people can live independently and are healthy and active;
2. Making Wrexham a place with a strong, resilient and responsible economy; and
3. Making Wrexham a place that's safe and where everyone feels included;

The proposed design takes into consideration these interlinked objectives, to create the feeling that Wrexham town centre is a happening place, modern and full of energy.

This will be achieved as there will be more;

- New businesses starting up or locating in Wrexham County Borough.
- Unlocking the currently underutilised attractive assets within the town (historic core of the town centre). Improving the identity of the town.
- Quality long term jobs.
- More people will have confidence in Wrexham County Borough. As a place to live, work, learn, visit and spend money.
- More people will feel they belong in their neighbourhood and Wrexham County Borough.
- More people would have a reason to return.



A render looking to the focal point events stage and F+B vendors, at the rear of Hope St

2

CONTEXT

2.1 LOCATION

Wrexham is the largest town in North Wales. It is adjacent to the national boundary with England. To the east are counties Flintshire (Broughton and Mold) and Denbighshire (Rhyl, Ruthin and Denbigh), to the south are Powys (Llanfyllin and Llanwddyn) and Shropshire (Oswestry) (see Figure 2.1.1).

The Wrexham County Borough has a population of over 136,000, with the town itself home to approximately 65,000 people. Wrexham is just 50 minutes' drive from major airports in Manchester and Liverpool and 90 minutes from Birmingham. Being well connected to most of the UK, through road and rail links, train services go directly to and from London. The Bidston railway corridor provides a sustainable link between Wrexham and Deeside and also provides connections to the Wirral and Liverpool. Wrexham General also provides a direct train link to Cardiff and Chester, then linking on to Manchester and London.

The applicant site is located within Wrexham Town Centre and has been highlighted for improvement as Key Site 4 within the Aspirational Town Centre Designation Wrexham Town Centre Master Plan (Fig 2.1.2). Utilizing existing commercial units along Hope Street, Queen Street, Argyle Road and Rhosddu Road in Wrexham town centre (shown in Figure 2.1.3).

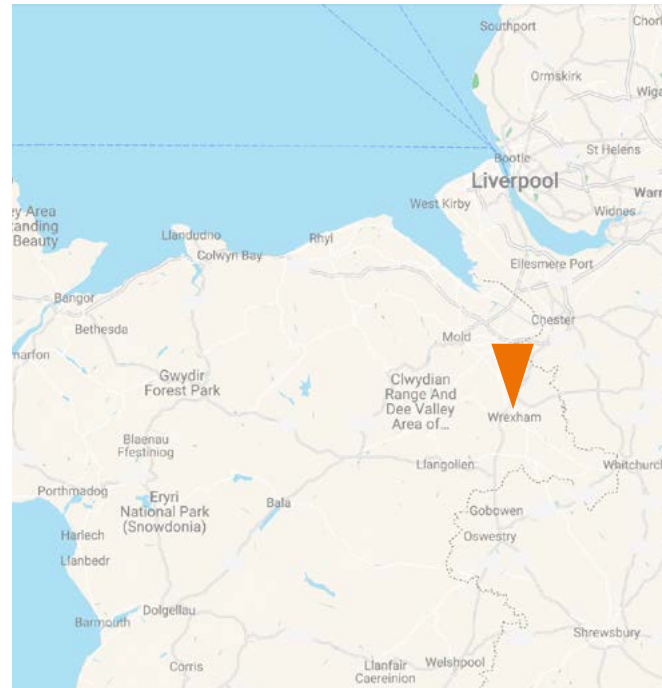


Fig 2.1.1 Regional Context



Fig 2.1.3 Satellite image showing the location of the applicant site (orange) and the existing Eagle Meadows shopping centre (blue)

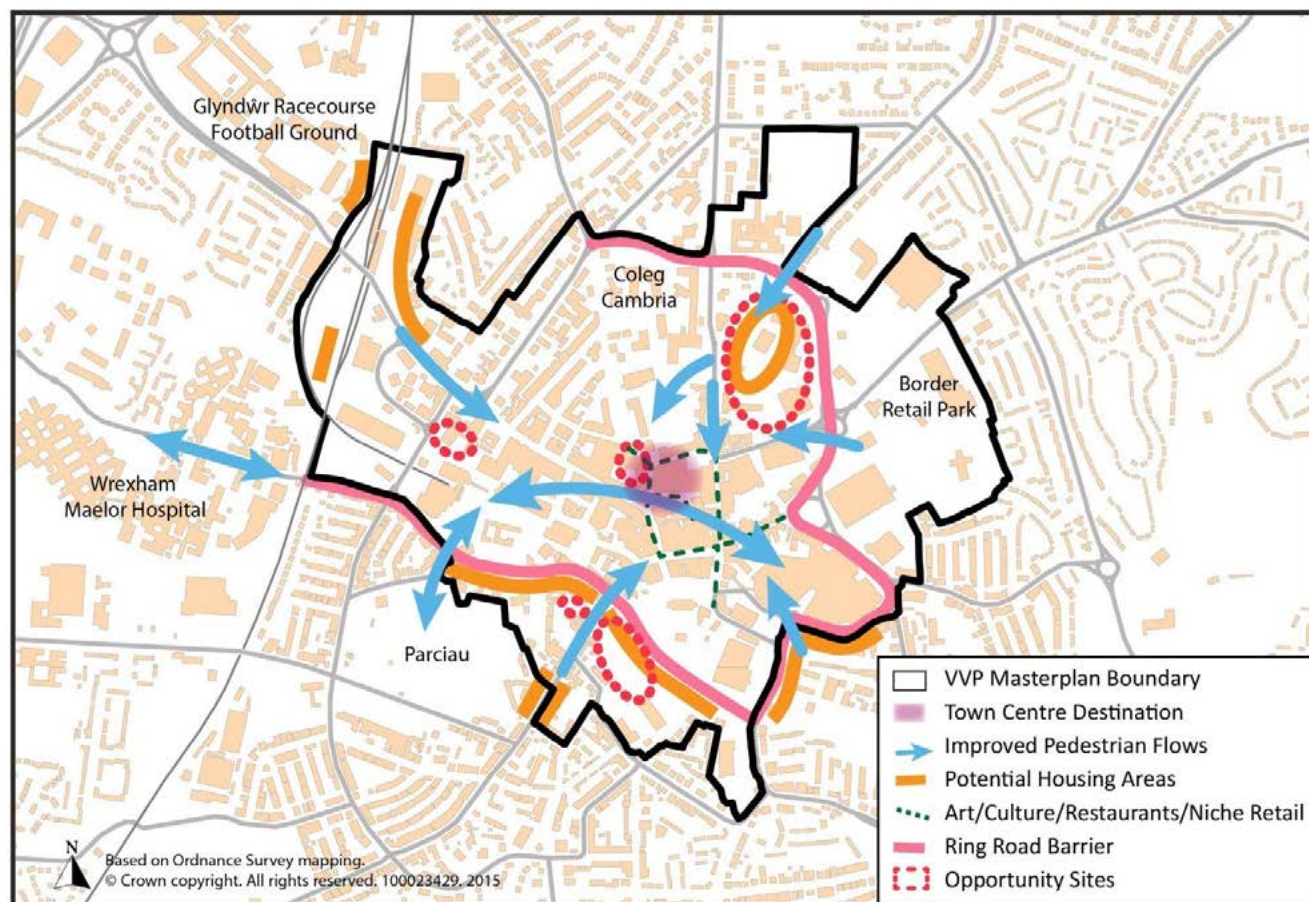


Fig 2.1.2 'Key Spatial Diagram' - Aspirational Town Centre Designation Wrexham Town Centre Master Plan

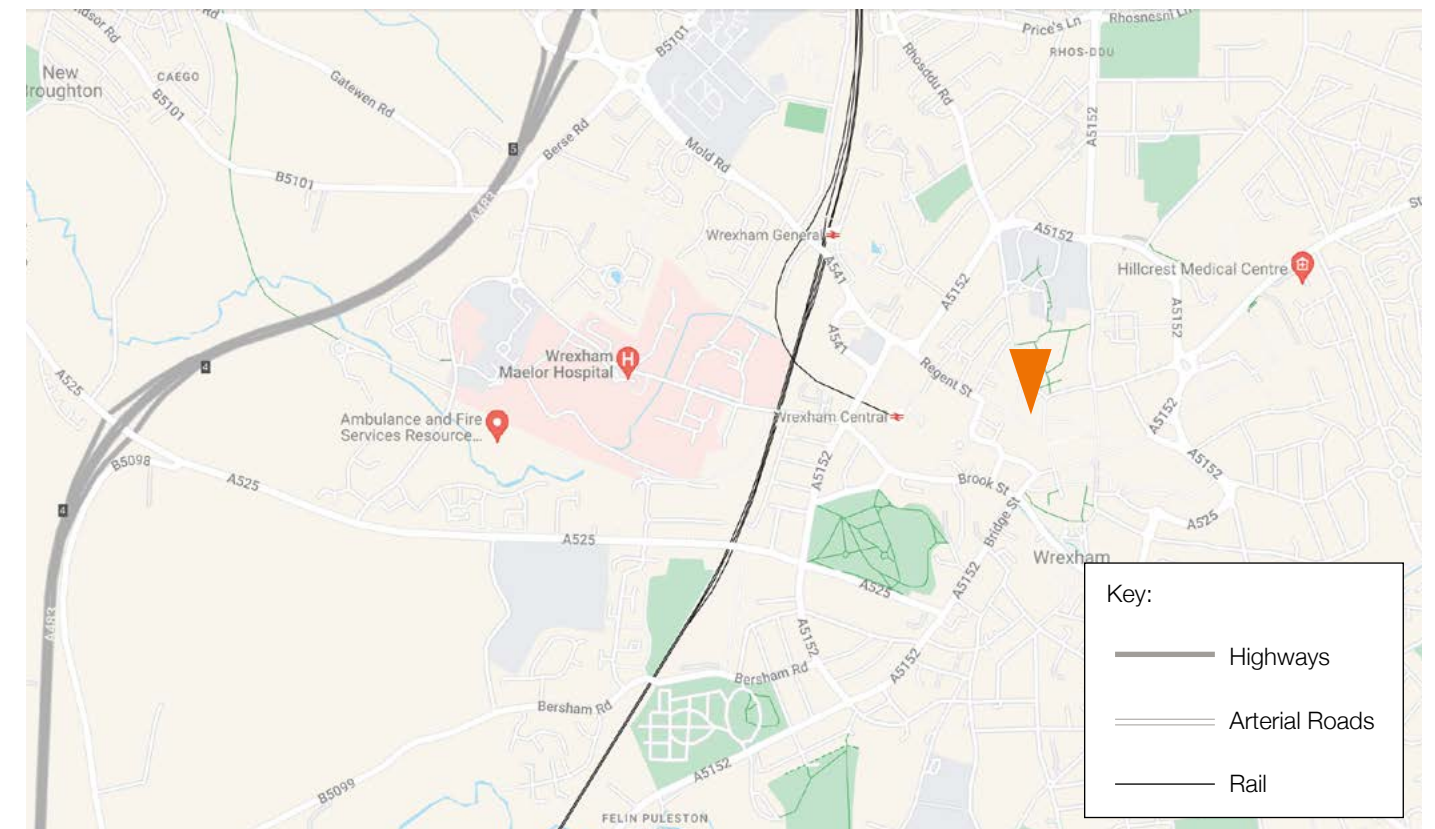


Fig 2.1.4 Map showing the transport connections in the local area

2.2 THE SITE

The 0.149ha site is predominantly taken up by the existing footprint of the loading bay, bin store and general parking forecourt that services Argyle Road, Rhosddu Road, Hope Street and Queen Street.

The service yard is currently used for access and deliveries and the site is essentially flat with minor changes in levels between the existing units.

The Chapter Court buildings (permission granted for development in Autumn 2022) and external courtyard, are located within Wrexham town centre with access from multiple existing transport links, making it a prime destination for local people and visitors.

The design proposals and ongoing development of this site will transform the currently disused units and parking forecourt, into a premier location for 'go-to' places to eat and drink including. This new aspirational town centre location will be able to boast, with the development of this rear court yard, a new selection external events space that can host all year round. This proposal will offer customers a new, cultural experience, bringing people together and encouraging return visits.

The site benefits from good links to local infrastructure including, bus stops, food stores, local areas of play,

sports facilities, restaurants, libraries and public houses, all within walking distance.

The application site is easily accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and users of Wrexham's numerous bus and train services. It is anticipated that a fairly high proportion of visitors and staff will travel to the application site by these sustainable means, and in particular Wrexham Central railway station and Wrexham Bus station which is a five minute walk away.

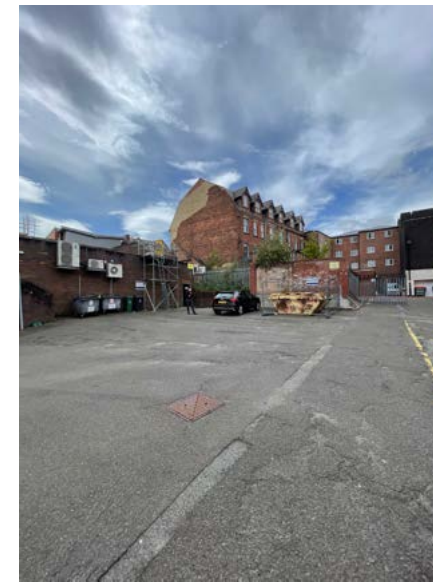
As the aspirational 'Town Centre Destination' - as shown in Fig 2.1.2 this site is going to be a prime location for commercial development and this proposal maximises the site to its full potential. Whilst consciously considering the Wrexham Local Service Board, 2013-2024 and Wrexham Town Centre Master plan's main interlinked objectives previously mentioned.



Fig 2.2.1 Site plan showing applicant site boundary (red) and the client ownership (blue).



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08



09

Various images of the external courtyard (top and middle), as well as external shots along Queen St (bottom) courtesy of SP Projects and CAUKIN Studio site visit.

2.3 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

The applicant site is located within the town centre of Wrexham, in what would be considered the historic side of Wrexham, within the Historic Core 1a (Fig 2.3.1). The use class of buildings around the site is now predominately commercial and residential.

With good links to local infrastructure, the site benefits from being in close proximity to bus stops, food stores, local areas of play, sports facilities, restaurants, libraries and public houses, all within walking distance.

The application site is easily accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and users of Wrexham's numerous bus and train services. There is a bus station located 0.2miles from the applicant site and the railway line is located to the west of the site - with the nearest station being 0.4miles away (highlighted previously, in Fig 2.1.4).

Architecturally, the local language is somewhat varied. With brickwork or rough cast rendered walls forming a vast majority of the buildings external decoration. Aesthetics including; brick pilasters, Dormers, Tuscan Columns, Ashlar Stone work, decorated fascia's, various brick bonds, Dutch gable, Fish scale slates, Gables, Jetty gables, mock timber work, polychromy,

polygonal roof's and Terracotta signs all being present. The windows are predominantly white timber. Although not all directly applicable to the applicant site, with it being to the rear of the commercial high-street units, and therefore not entirely visible from the main thoroughfares. The local character and contextual approach to design and how that creates the identity of a town is important for every project and new built development.

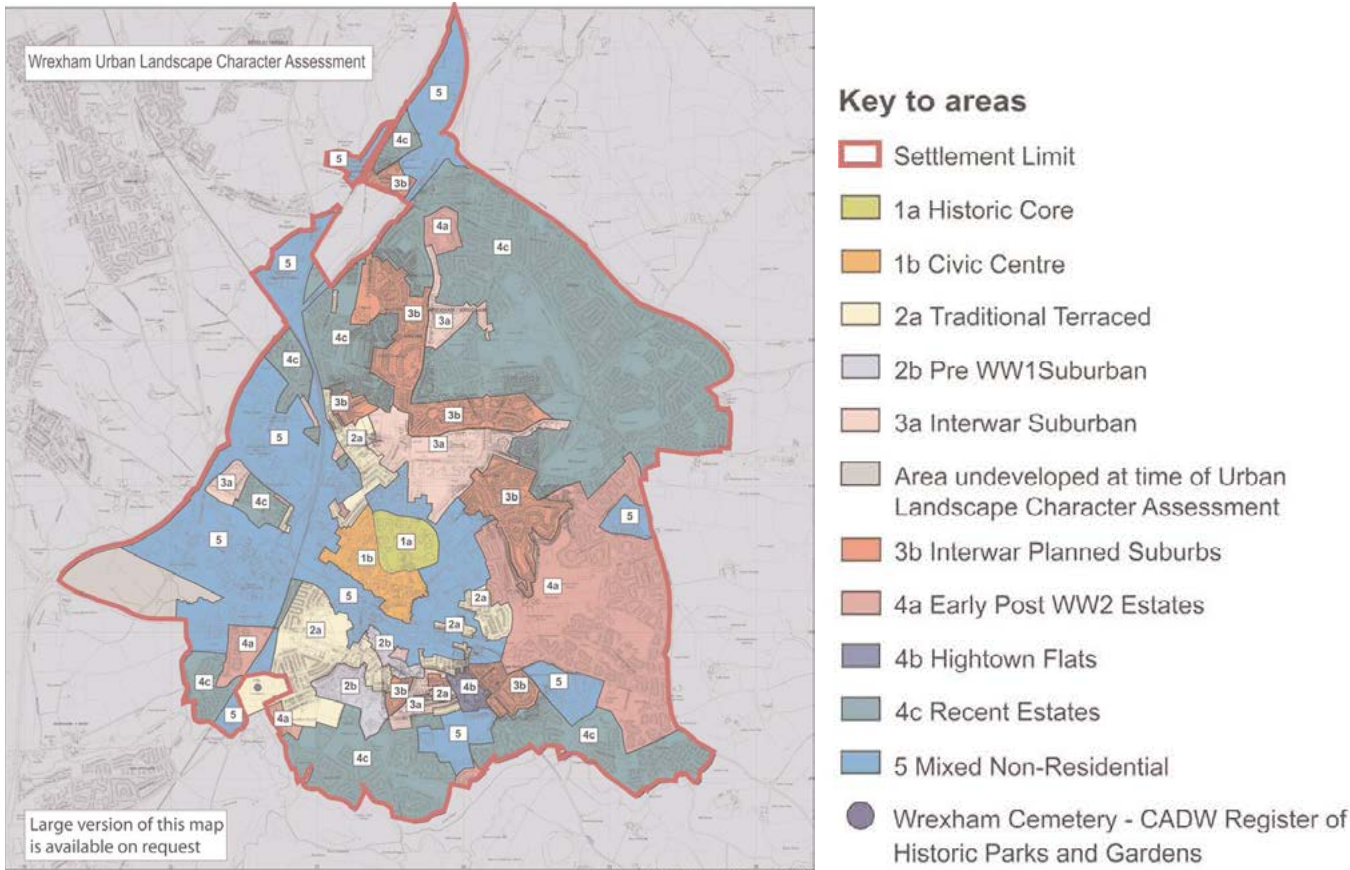
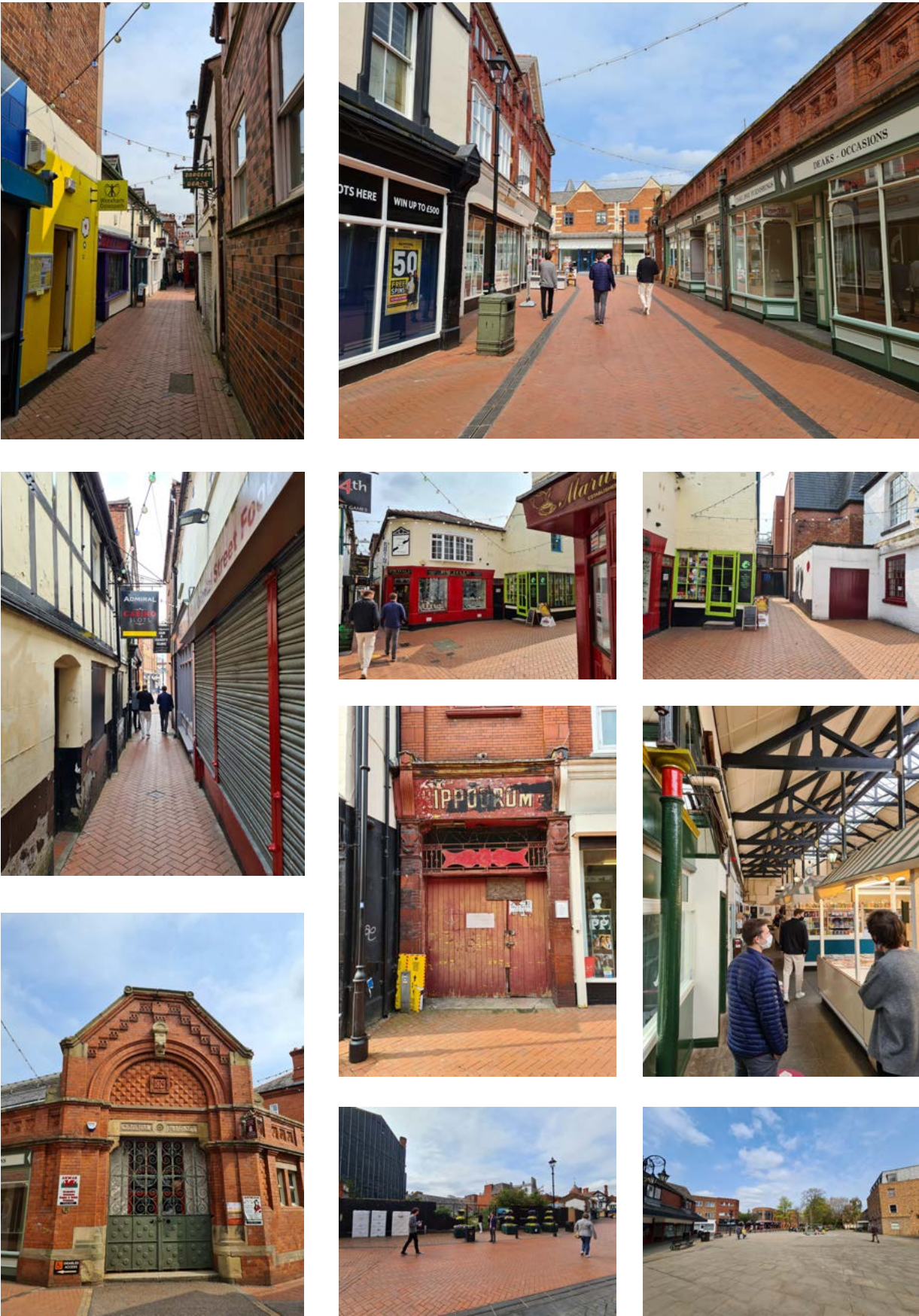


Fig 2.3.1 - Wrexham Urban Landscape Characteristic Assessment - Local Planning Guidance Note 19 (Wrexham Town Character Areas)



Images showing streetscapes and local building styles within Wrexham Town centre.

2.4 PLANNING POLICY

Planning Policy Wales and TAN 12 Design

This Design and Access Statement [DAS] explains the approach to creating a sustainable development through good design in accordance with Planning Policy Wales and TAN 12. This goes beyond aesthetics to include the social, environmental, economic and other aspects of the development, as outlined in the Design Concept and Principles in section 4 of this Statement. The application site is located within the town centre and will be providing employment, commercial, leisure, tourism, and infrastructure to the area in order to strengthen the towns regional function as a location of national importance. The proposed development will enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre by helping to provide a vibrant, diverse and competitive local economy with a range of job opportunities. Whilst enabling new and existing business to grow within Wrexham, the design will be of high-quality, with sustainability at its core, aiming to create local distinctiveness and character. It also aims to promote social inclusion, improve health and well-being and attract investment, business and visitors.

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan

Local Planning Guidance has been sought and taken from the Unitary Development Plan [see planning statement]. The principle Development Plan for the site remains the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan whose plan policies are currently being used for Development Control purposes. The Authority has embarked upon a replacement for the UDP in the shape of a Local Development Plan (LDP) which will cover the plan period 2013 to 2028, but the plan has not been through examination. In 2018 the LDP had been placed 'on Deposit' supported with a full suite of evidence base and draft policies and allocations. However, it remains a draft document and has not been the subject of a binding inspector's report [see submitted planning statement]. In consideration of the proposed development scheme the following local and national planning policies and guidance have been considered.

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan

Policy PS1: New Development.
Policy PS2: Impact on New Development.
Policy PS4: Settlement and Character.
Policy PS7: Shopping.
Policy PS11: Biodiversity.
Policy GDP1: Development Objectives.
Policy EC6: Biodiversity Conservation.
Policy EC7: Conservation Areas
Policy E7: Commercial Offices
Policy S1: Shopping Streets in Wrexham Town Centre.
Policy S2: Outside the Principle Shopping Streets of Wrexham Town Centre.
Policy S3: Non-Shopping Key Town Centre Uses.

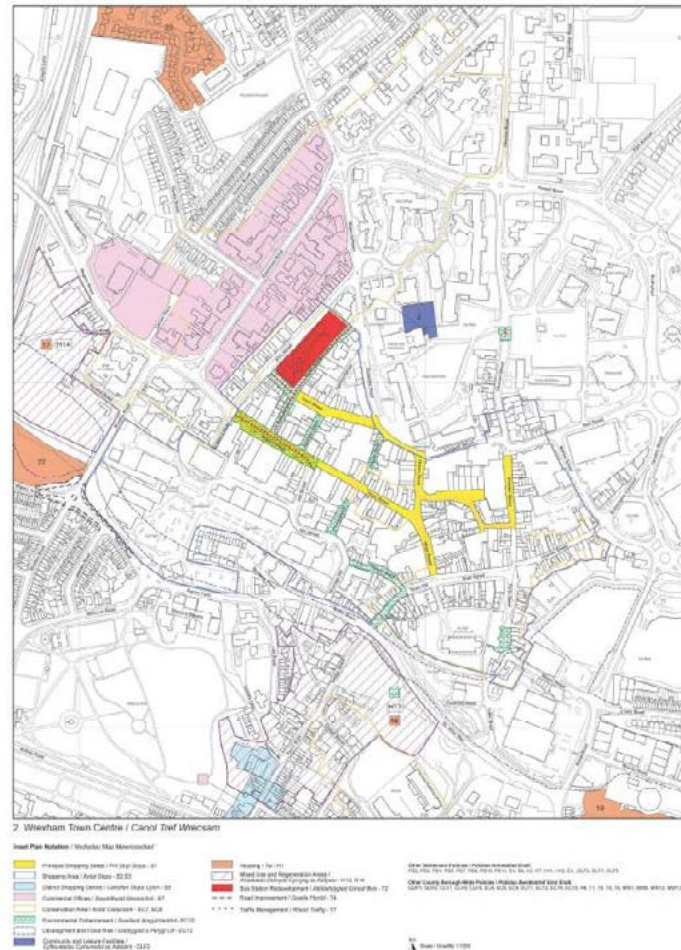


Fig 2.4.1 - Unitary Development Plan

Policy S4: Large Scale Retail Development.
Policy S6: Local Need Shopping.
Policy T8: Parking.

Wrexham Supplementary Guidance

Local Planning Guidance Note 1: Advertisements.
Local Planning Guidance Note 4: Conservation Areas
Local Planning Guidance Note 6: Access to and Use of Buildings.
Local Planning Guidance Note 7: Landscape and Development.
Local Planning Guidance Note 9: Hot Food Take-Aways.
Local Planning Guidance Note 12: Shopfront Design and Security.
Local Planning Guidance Note 15: Cycling.
Local Planning Guidance Note 16: Parking Standards.
Local Planning Guidance Note 19: Wrexham's Town Character Areas.
Local Planning Guidance Note 21: Space Around Dwellings (in relation to amenity distances).
Local Planning Guidance Note 24: Designing Out Crime.
Local Planning Guidance Note 30: Design.
Local Planning Guidance Note 32: Biodiversity and Development.

Wrexham Town Centre: Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan.

National Planning Guidance

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Wales) Regulations 2012 Planning Policy Wales [PPW] - Welsh Assembly Government [Edition 10 December 2018].
PPW Technical Advice Note 4: Retail and Commercial Development.
PPW Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning [2009].
PPW Technical Advice Note 7: Outdoor Advertisement Control.
PPW Technical Advice Note 11: Noise [1997].
PPW Technical Advice Note 12: Design [2014].
PPW Technical Advice Note 18: Transport [2007].
PPW Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language [2017].
PPW Technical Advice Note 23: Economic Development.
PPW Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment.
Manual For Streets : Department for Transport / Communities and Local Government [2007].
Manual For Streets 2 : Department for Transport [2010].

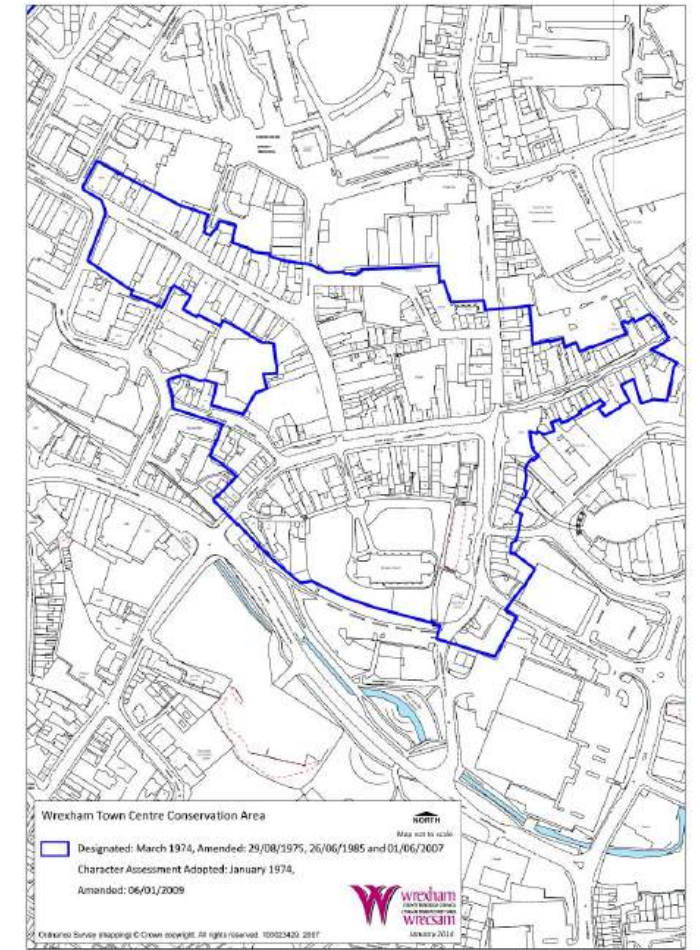


Fig 2.4.2 - Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area

2.4 PLANNING POLICY

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan

Local Planning Guidance has been sought and taken from the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan [see Planning Statement]. Examples of relevant Policies that have informed the DAS are;
GDP1 - All new development should:-

- a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.
- b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces.
- c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.
- d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.
- e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.
- f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.
- g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.
- h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.
- i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.
- j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.
- k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

Comment: All of the above general development objectives have been fully considered within the design process.

S2 - Outside the principal shopping streets of Wrexham Town Centre, encouragement will be given to ground floor retailing proposals. Mixed use commercial development will be allowed only if it enhances the vitality and environmental quality of the area.

EC7 - Within, and in close proximity to, conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and / or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.

Comment: It is considered that the minor alterations to the parking forecourt will enhance the Wrexham Conservation Area. There is no demolition within the Conservation Area, nor will there be impact upon any enhancement scheme.

3

FACTORS AFFECTING
DEVELOPMENT

3.1 PARKING

There will be a service yard located behind the courtyard area, this will be used for deliveries and any staff parking, if required. The site currently has no provision for customer parking. There are plenty of public transport options to reach the applicant site, as previously mentioned, but as well as this car parking is available close by, within a short walk, for customers to utilize. See Figure 3.1.1.

3.2 EXISTING GROUND CONDITIONS

The existing ground conditions appear to be healthy with limited evidence of damage to the existing forecourt and the perimeter of the existing buildings.

3.3 ARCHAEOLOGY

There is no archaeology remit on the site.

3.4 EXISTING SERVICES

Subject to further investigation the existing services will be utilized wherever possible.

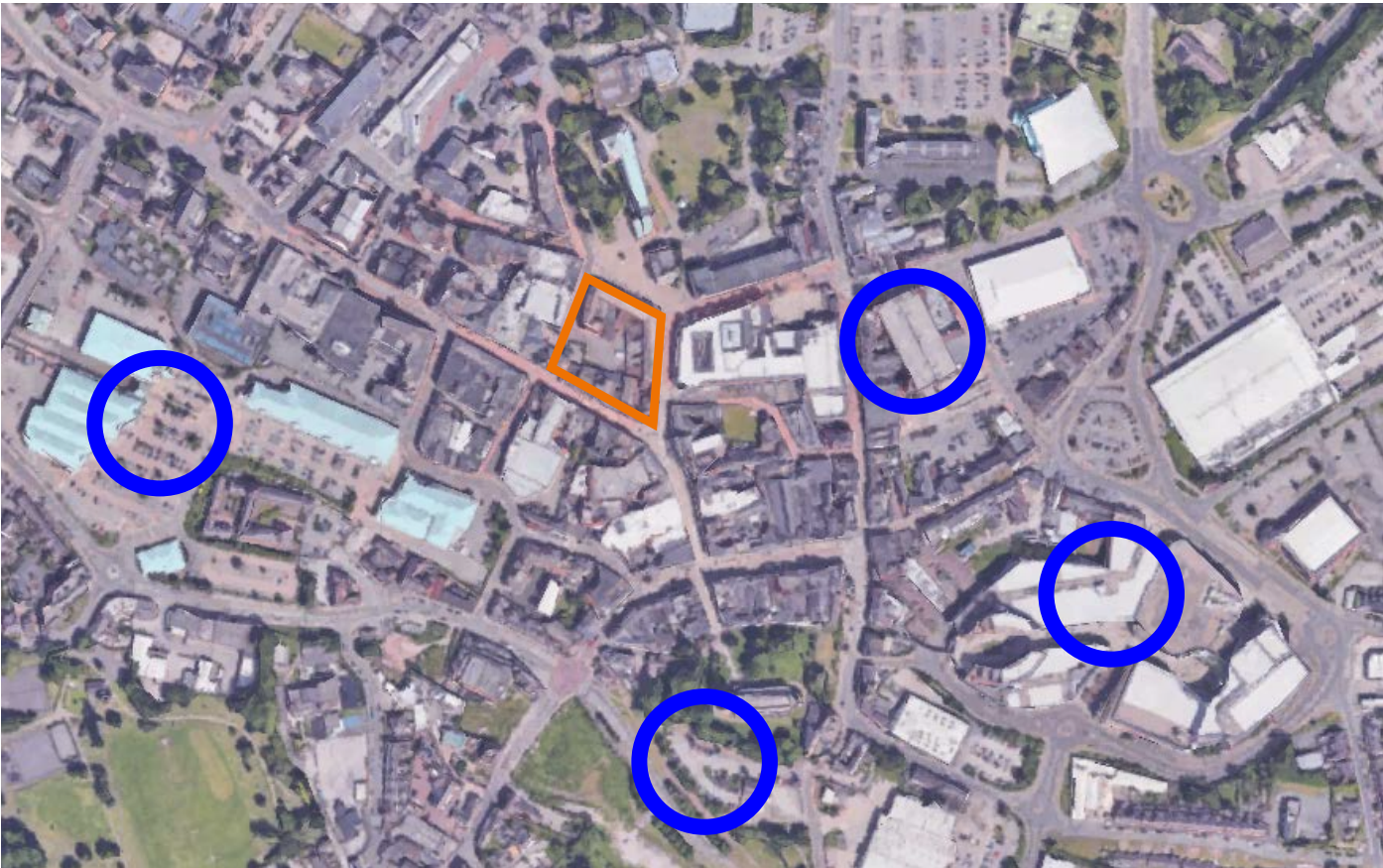


Fig 3.1.1 Aerial View - Existing public car parking options, in relation to the applicant site

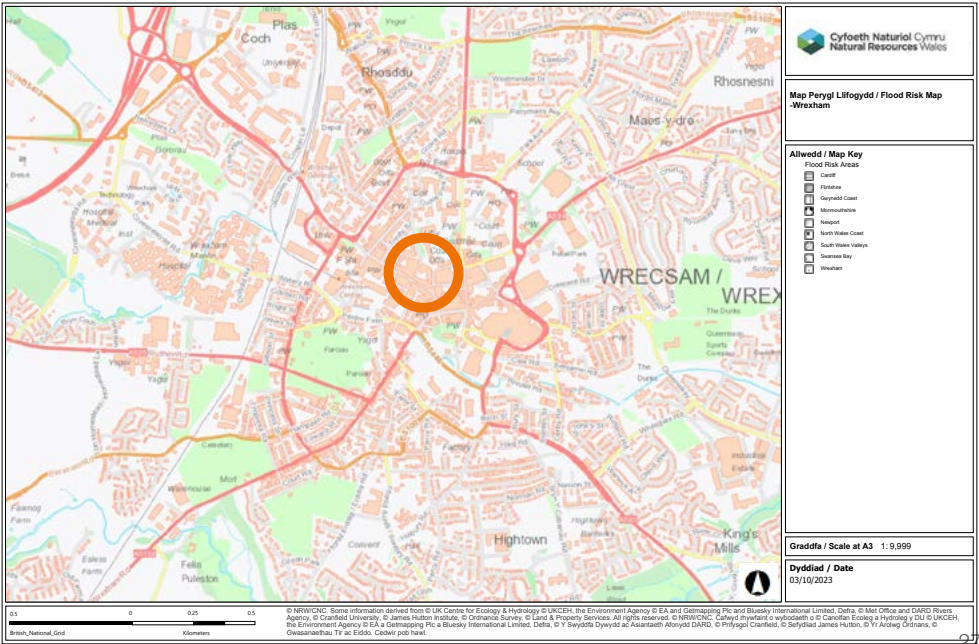
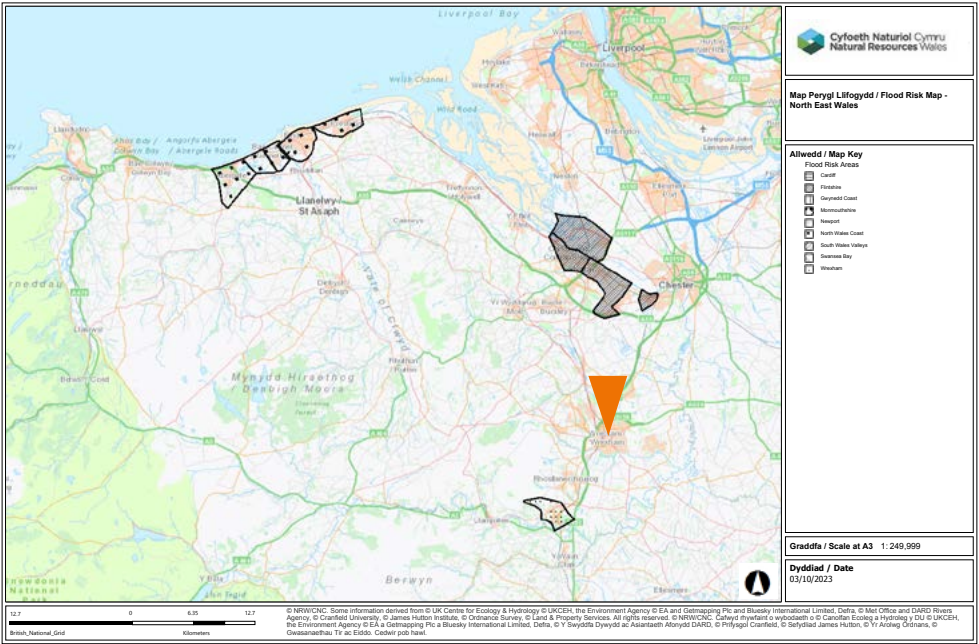
3.5 GRADING OF THE SITE

The site is predominantly flat to look at. There is a slight gradient along Queen Street and Hope Street due to the natural lie of the land, this will not pose any issues during construction.

The courtyard area is also predominantly flat with a level difference between Hope Street and the courtyard area. There are existing stairs located here to take the change in level should access to the rear be required.

3.6 FLOOD RISK

Flood risk has been checked on the NRW website (see Figure 3.6.1 for relevant flood map) and confirmed to not be within a flood zone.



4

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

4.1 THE BRIEF

The development aims to attract smaller, independent, local businesses to create a ‘micro food and drink’ hub for Wrexham. Creating THE ‘go-to’ place to eat and drink with the development of a semi-hidden rear courtyard space. Hosting year round events will offer customers a new, cultural and entertainment-based experience, giving them a reason for return visits.

Developing the currently under-utilised and somewhat forgotten part of the site will maximise the potential of this area, whilst respecting the local vernacular and street scene. Re-utilising the site as outlined in the UDP (Unitary Development Plan) and producing a good mix of high quality units for a range of potential users.

The proposal at the applicant site will:

- Provide access without interfering with existing routes and roadways.
- Provide commercial spaces for smaller F+B retailers that will appreciate and thrive within an urban location with strong transport links.
- Provide a space that is welcoming, vibrant, diverse and competitive within the local economy.
- Create a range of job opportunities to enable new and existing businesses to grow within Wrexham.
- Attract new customers to the area that would have ordinarily visited other providers, in different parts of the town.
- Provide infrastructure to the area in order to strengthen the city’s regional function as a settlement of national importance.

As a town Wrexham needs a balance between day and night visitors. Increasing dwell time in the town is a key priority to generate greater spend in the local economy. This intervention and development of the site will be able to attract visitors, of different demographics, throughout the day and into the evening / night. The proposal looks to create a flexible space that can be adapted to accommodate all sorts of different events for an array of visitors.

The quality of development and public spaces is currently an issue for Wrexham and contributes to a sense of lack of identity. The disjointed public realm, segregated heritage and amenity space, vehicular dominance, lack of green space and public squares are all contributing factors. Recent developments in the town centre, with an influx of new shopping outlets have been in stark contrast with the historic heart of the town both in scale and style. This has disjointed and diluted large areas of the centre and impacted on the sense of place, identity and orientation. It is also difficult to understand where the true centre of the town lies and therefore what ultimately defines its identity.

- Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan, Wrexham Council.

This passage, taken from a council report that has identified the



Fig 4.1.1 - Bringing life back to the town illustration by CAUKIN

various needs and responses to improve Wrexham town centre, has directly driven some of the design decisions within the proposal. Quality of space, connection to public realm (directly to Queen’s Square), inclusion of green design elements and giving space back to the pedestrian user all heavily feature in the intervention proposed.

Another point from this report considered carefully has been the creation of “a vibrant and distinctive identity for the town centre” being part of a movement that will help to strengthen the retail and cultural offering for residents and also visitors to the town. In addition, doing this in a manner that is sensitive to the differing levels of accessibility required (see section 7.1).

Also part of the design brief is creating somewhere that is welcoming, safe and enjoyable for all. In doing so, on this particular applicant site, the knock on effect will be felt of the streets surrounding. One being the rather dimly lit, back street that would now be bathed in light and sound as people enjoy the courtyard’s offerings. This aligns perfectly with the ambition to create a network of attractive pedestrian routes to encourage mobility through the town.

Finally, the scale of the proposal has been thoroughly interrogated throughout the design process. The intervention will maintain an appropriate response to the surrounding context, nestling in between the existing 2 and 3 storey buildings. In terms of build response, the proposal is also of a transient, light-touch nature again reducing the visual and potential long term impact on the site itself.

4.2 RELATED PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Prior to submitting the original planning application for a full Chapter Court application (P/2020/0007), pre application advice was assembled by Sharon Holman — Wrexham planning Case Officer Wrexham’s Local Authority. The advice received has been acted upon and was reflected in the planning application, which was subsequently granted. A second application, that outlined the lighter-touch development and required change of use (P/2021/0076) was also granted, with a later non-material amendment (P/2022/0909) submitted in 2022 and granted as well.

This ongoing and successful dialogue with the Wrexham Local Authority, has meant progress has already begun within the development. With some of the vendors taking up rental space in the internal units of the Queen Street section, the Chapter Court development is already contributing positively to the local community. Being able to offer a sought-after space, in a central location, has already meant that local businesses can promote their independent companies, displaying the entrepreneurial spirit of Wrexham.

The success of this applicant site is directly linked to the success of these other spaces physically, economically and socially. Having an external spill out space that supports and balances the dynamic inside retail areas, will serve to extend the reach of the development and in turn the visitors in Wrexham. Having been received well by both the authorities and the local business owners, this proposal will build on very solid foundations.

4.3 DESIGN CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

The courtyard has been designed to create a functional adaptable space that will draw people, from the highstreet outside, in.

Recent developments such as Camden Market in London and the Custard Factory in Birmingham have provided inspiration for this scheme; as examples of modern urban markets that have provided an uplift to town centres; previously tired and underused.

This proposal creates a focal point directing the local population and visitors to the old heart of the town. An area designated as the aspirational town centre of Wrexham and at an intended crossroads of future arts and culture routes - as per the guidance notes from the 'Aspirational Town Centre Designation Wrexham Town Centre Master Plan'. The design itself is organised in a way that encourages flexibility in use, and therefore also in the variance of user demographic.

Within the development proposal there can be considered two main areas; the performance end of the courtyard flanked by the food and drink elements with additional seating provision. On the whole the proposal is adaptable and flexible, through the use and implementation of transient furniture selection and with a light-touch approach to any building out of facilities. This means that the spaces, whilst being coherent as a series of designed elements, can be pushed and pulled to fit for different types of users and functions.

A main performance stage, located within one end of the courtyard, creates a visual and compositional anchor that will be used for various events. The stage is located towards one end of the courtyard, to create as much viewing space for crowds as possible. The stage also creates an audible point of interest as passers by hear what is going on, can see the hubbub of movement and colour, as people pass around the food vendors and are ultimately enticed in. This design decision greatly maximises the circulation space for all types of users, when getting between F+B units and the toilets.

A wall, constructed out of reused and refurbished IBC water containers, will be located at the rear of the courtyard, behind the F+B vendors. This will provide a physical division between the back of house/service area and the public courtyard entertainment space. With a creative lighting design the water tanks will act as an eye-catching feature wall for the rest of the development to anchor to.

The existing freezer unit is to be developed into a space that will contain several food vendors, in a semi-covered, transitional space, creating a bridge to future internal developments.

There will be a gated entrance within the dividing wall to provide emergency vehicle access, along with additional means of escape from the site in the event of fire. Within the courtyard there are to be moveable food vans that would operate within the courtyard area concealing the gated entrance.

RETROFITTED VEHICLES + TIMBER STORES

Breaking up the external space, are a series of re-furbished vehicles, turned into F+B vendors as well as purpose built stalls' built from recycled materials.



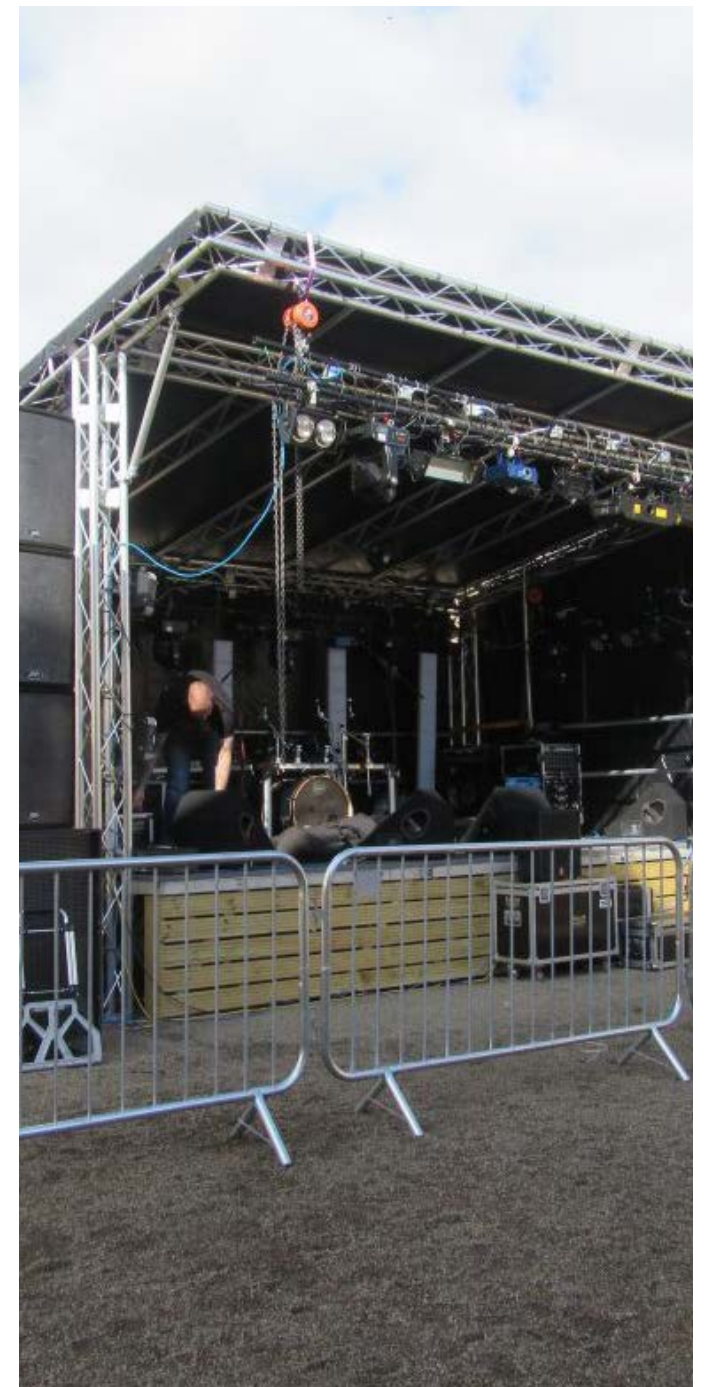
COURTYARD PLANTERS

Bringing greenery into the courtyard within set planting boxes will soften the existing fabric. Various potted planting will be provided within the court yard that can be relocated to adapt the courtyard for various uses.



FEATURE PERFORMANCE STAGE SET

A stage set will become the focal point of the scheme, it's design will be paired back and simple to remain in-keeping with the aesthetic of the rest of the scheme.



4.3 DESIGN CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

The courtyard has been designed to create a functional adaptable space that will draw people, from the highstreet outside, in.

Recent developments such as Camden Market in London and the Custard Factory in Birmingham have provided inspiration for this scheme; as examples of modern urban markets that have provided an uplift to town centres; previously tired and underused.

This proposal creates a focal point directing the local population and visitors to the old heart of the town. An area designated as the aspirational town centre of Wrexham and at an intended crossroads of future arts and culture routes - as per the guidance notes from the 'Aspirational Town Centre Designation Wrexham Town Centre Master Plan'. The design itself is organised in a way that encourages flexibility in use, and therefore also in the variance of user demographic.

Within the development proposal there can be considered two main areas; the performance end of the courtyard flanked by the food and drink elements with additional seating provision. On the whole the proposal is adaptable and flexible, through the use and implementation of transient furniture selection and with a light-touch approach to any building out of facilities. This means that the spaces, whilst being coherent as a series of designed elements, can be pushed and pulled to fit for different types of users and functions.

A main performance stage, located within one end of the courtyard, creates a visual and compositional anchor that will be used for various events. The stage is located towards one end of the courtyard, to create as much viewing space for crowds as possible. The stage also creates an audible point of interest as passers by hear what is going on, can see the hubbub of movement and colour, as people pass around the food vendors and are ultimately enticed in. This design decision greatly maximises the circulation space for all types of users, when getting between F+B units and the toilets.

A wall, constructed out of reused and refurbished IBC water containers, will be located at the rear of the courtyard, behind the F+B vendors. This will provide a physical division between the back of house/service area and the public courtyard entertainment space. With a creative lighting design the water tanks will act as an eye-catching feature wall for the rest of the development to anchor to.

The existing freezer unit is to be developed into a space that will contain several food vendors, in a semi-covered, transitional space, creating a bridge to future internal developments.

There will be a gated entrance within the dividing wall to provide emergency vehicle access, along with additional means of escape from the site in the event of fire. Within the courtyard there are to be moveable food vans that would operate within the courtyard area concealing the gated entrance.



5

CHARACTER

5.1 LAYOUT

The rear courtyard area will naturally form a spill out space from the internal, retail units within the Queen Street Chapter Court development. Creating a destination space for people to reach, as they pass along the thoroughfare, taking them from the streets outside, through the Queen Street space and into the courtyard beyond.

The grey denotes areas that are included within previously successful applications. This includes internal units for retail, bars, studio spaces and toilet facilities. The rear courtyard entertainment space is shown in green and then the service and parking area is indicated by the blue. The design solution integrates the development within its context and seeks to achieve the following;

- Good movement and access for public users between Queen Street and the courtyard.
- Efficient, secure circulation and uninterrupted access for commercial outlets based on Rhosddu Road, Queen Street and Hope Street.
- Allow adequate light to all areas of the development.
- Blend in with the context around it, whilst maintaining an individual layout.

5.2 SCALE

The scale of the application proposal has largely been determined through an analysis of their particular situation relative to the immediate and wider context.

The 0.094ha site is entirely comprised of the rear courtyard space, including the existing freezer block structure, and the surrounding required service areas

In the proposed design, this site would become a 'micro food and beverage' hub for Wrexham. This will include 'go-to' places to eat and drink and with the development of the courtyard that can host year round events which will offer customers a new, cultural shopping and leisure experience giving them a reason for return visits.

The Development is classed as a Minor Development due to the existing use classes on site and the proposed use classes do not increase the development size to be classed as a Major Application. This has previously been confirmed by Sharon Holman from Wrexham Planning Department.

Key

- Grey = previous granted applications
- Green = courtyard entertainment space
- Blue = service courtyard
- Orange = courtyard access through Queen Street



5.3 AMOUNT

The amount of development being provided is as follows:

Redline Boundary Area is **940.91m2**.

Divided into:

Stage Area - **24.00m2**

External temporary F&B vendor space(s) - **27.94m2**

Internal F&B vendor space(s) (within ex Iceland freezer unit) - **39.21m2**

Toilet Facilities (standalone temporary festival toilet block) - **18.11m2**

Bin store/Service area - **51.39m2**

Parking Area - **60.47m2**

5.4 EXTERNAL SPACES / LANDSCAPE

There is a very limited requirement for landscaping as part of the application proposal. The courtyard area will be landscaped to a very minimal degree, with no hard landscaped changes, dressing the surfaces and making good any areas requiring such.

The external areas have been designed to create an informal and interesting environment, it avoids regular edge transitions and looks to invite movement.

The increased amount of potted tree and shrub planting would aid in the ability to reduce the impact of building development.

The structure planting would include a blend of native and non

native species which would introduce variety into the site and soften the overall appearance of the development.

5.5 DEMOLITION + REMEDIAL WORK

The construction of the new development will only entail the partial demolition of two existing walls that make up an existing freezer room. This represents the only removal of existing material proposed under this submission. This will not reduce the amount of accommodation on the site and will aid in opening up another, currently disused space, within this development site.

An existing corridor protruding from the current Wrexham Hub co-working space and the freezer block is planned to be demolished. This will allow for a clear circulation route for services to the rear of the other retail units along Rhosddu Road

and Queen Street. Giving consistent service access to the various business owners.

All necessary demolition works will be carried out in accordance with the conditions set out in the planning permission.



Existing Freezer Block images

5.6 APPEARANCE + MATERIALS

The aim of this development is to create an innovative, well designed, aesthetically pleasing environment.

The key factors influencing this design strategy have been the desire to create an attractive and secure public realm to enable the community to maximise the use of the space as well as its facilities.

Inherently Wrexham city centre comprises an eclectic mix of materials, building typologies, styles and architectural languages. Which, when combined with the largely 'individual' character of many of its buildings, offers the opportunity for a proposal to be considered that outwardly expresses individuality. This is typified by the functionality of a new Micro food court and Micro retail spaces being set behind the retained façades the high street has become accustomed to.

This approach to the overall Chapter Court development is carried through when it comes to the applicant site. The external courtyard to the rear will also continue the patchwork-quilt of Wrexham's architectural language; having individual stalls and units able to express themselves through the use of up-cycled materials that remain in keeping with the surrounding contexts. Sitting in the space, the development doesn't wish to overpower or impact the visual coherence of the surrounding built environment.

The existing materials on the site of the development are predominantly brickwork and various other standard urban construction materials; from rendering or painting of the existing brickwork, to a clip-on brick slip system. Due to the prominent town centre location it was determined that a low maintenance cost effective approach would be required.

Within this application, for the rear courtyard, there would be no changes to the existing material palette, other than the making good of any areas that require maintenance.

New elements of the proposal will also follow this palette of urban building materials. F+B units will be constructed of a simple timber frame design and then clad using up-cycled building materials; most of which will try to be sourced from the development's construction itself. The performance stage will be constructed of an off-the-shelf product; a metal trussed structure with a simple mono-pitched canopy roof - coloured either dark grey or black, so remain paired back.

EXISTING BRICKWORK



MOVABLE PLANTERS



TIMBER DECKING AND PERIMETER FENCE



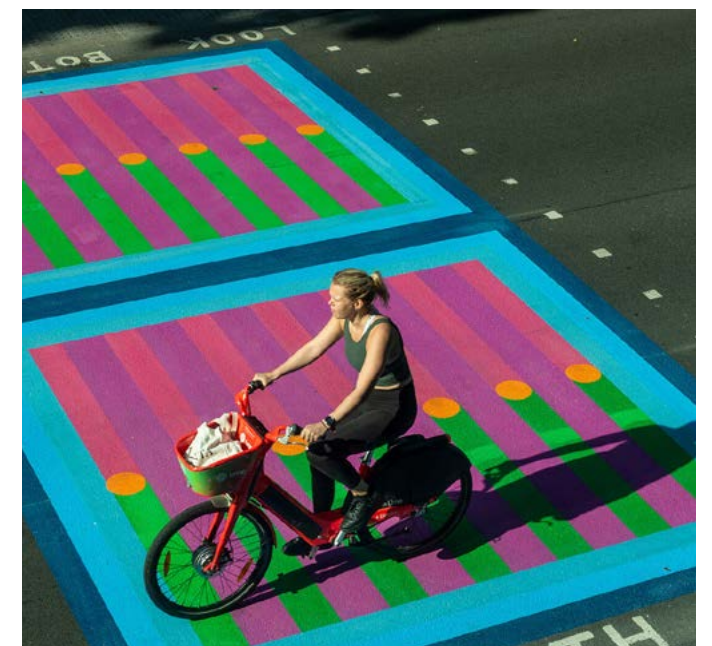
PAINTED BRICK FACADES



IBC WATER TANKS



PAINTED FLOOR SURFACES



6

ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY

6.1 BIODIVERSITY

An ecological survey has been undertaken on site and will be included within the planning application submission. The ecological survey highlights that there are no invasive or none native bat species have been recorded within the development zone. The development is considered to have a very low potential for use as bat roosts due to the construction details and materials currently present on site.

The ecological survey also highlights that the following have not been recorded on site;

- Great Crested Newt
- Badger
- Bats
- Birds
- Reptile
- Habitats (no floral species on site)

Precautionary measures during construction have been stated within the report as good construction practice.

In conclusion there are no major impacts on species or habitats identified during the assessment process, It is therefore the surveyor's opinion that the proposed development proposals are considered to have no long term impacts, the development therefore, will have no long term impact on the favourable conservation status of locally recorded protected species, or their ecological functionality if the works are carried out in accordance with the recommendations given within the report.

6.2 ENERGY EFFICIENCY / CARBON

CAUKIN Studio Ltd. have considered a number of alternative technologies that are mostly standard practice and all up to date in line with relevant experience. Some measures proposed are as follows:

Reduction in CO2 Emissions

The design aims to achieve reductions in the Emission Rate and Building Emission Rates for its walls and roof, so that the external envelope performs to a high standard

Low Embodied Carbon Materials

Throughout the scheme, where possible, materials with low embodied carbon will be favoured over the alternative options. This will aid in keeping the overall energy usage of proposal to a minimum.

Energy Efficient Lighting

Low energy light fittings will be used throughout the development where possible.

6.3 CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Over the next 50 years the climate is expected to change. Although we cannot be certain what these changes will be general trends have been predicted. The global mean temperature is expected to rise by between 1 and 3.5°C. In Britain this is expected to mean warmer summers and colder winters. We are also expected to have more extremes of weather, with greater risk of floods and droughts.

To ensure the development can cope with future changes the design will look at the current u-values across the site through the existing walls, floors and roofs and will be thermally upgraded to meet the new standards where necessary.

This means they will respond slowly to changes in external temperature.

The buildings will be designed to be as energy efficient as possible so as not to contribute further to climate change.

6.4 SUSTAINABLE DESIGN STANDARDS

The approach to sustainability on this project is to apply an 'Eco-minimalism' concept which focuses on 'getting the priorities right'. We are implementing a coherent holistic strategy, which makes the form and materials of the building do the majority of the work of moderating any internal climate and only applying technology when needed.

Wherever possible the design will promote, specify and use locally sourced materials which have a commitment to sustainability and the environment.

6.5 SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

Environmentally responsible methods of construction and a palette of sustainable, locally sourced materials have been chosen wherever possible, in pursuing a design that is both energy efficient and environmentally conscious.

The Design Team have selected a range of materials and systems, for both the building fabric and external works, that are rated highly in the BRE Green Guide.

Taking a practical approach to sustainability, there are some areas where lesser rated materials have been selected due either to design constraints or other overriding requirements e.g. robustness and longevity or low maintenance periods.

Internally, within the existing freezer block, all materials are selected for their robustness and low maintenance. Externally the existing buildings are brick clad and the built F+B units will be clad timber structures. These are retained and painted where necessary. This is continued throughout development, bringing a consistency and quality to the finishes.

The design where possible aims to;

- Minimise waste in demolition and site clearance/ re-use materials where viable
- Integrate material considerations into all components of building systems to achieve low-energy design, indoor environmental quality, and optimization of daylighting
- Endeavour to select materials, which have a low environmental impact in terms of extraction, manufacture, use and disposal
- Exercise care in selection of insulation and refrigeration materials so as not to contribute to ozone depletion
- Select locally extracted and manufactured materials where possible
- Select materials non-toxic to humans, such as can be found in carpets, floor sheeting, paints, sealants, fabrics
- Exercise care in selection of laminated or composite timber products, which may have formaldehyde content in adhesives
- Use recyclable materials where possible, e.g. aluminium, timber, roof membrane, etc
- Select permeable paving materials, where practical
- Oblige the contractor to procure all timber from Forestry Stewardship Council certified sources
- Natural and self finishing materials are used in preference to applied finishes
- Avoid the use of PVC for floor coverings, cables or other widely used elements of the building
- Work to the local Environmental Health requirements in terms of noise pollution and vibration from the site as a whole.

6.6 WATER

Sustainable Approach

In order for the development to utilise as little water as possible, certain features have been included in the specification. Water efficiency within the WC's will be implemented through the installation of low water use sanitary fittings and hand washing appliances including dual flush toilets and aerated taps.

Drainage

To employ a sustainable approach to water in terms of drainage, foul and surface water will discharge into existing public sewers.

Additional contribution to drainage will be kept to a minimum, with any toilet provision for the courtyard space already existing within the Queen Street development. In addition the types of F+B vendors will be carefully selected on the basis of their culinary offerings requiring the least amount of MEP and therefore minimising any additional impact on drainage.

6.7 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Consultation has been sought with Wrexham Council, Waste Management for the provision of waste and recycling collection at the site. The level of waste has been assessed and an appropriately sized bin store has been provided. Details of the bin store provision are as indicated on drawing D100. It is suggested that further consultation be sought to ascertain recyclable facilities requirements on site.

7

ACCESS

7.1 APPROACH TO ACCESSIBILITY

At present access to the courtyard, through Queen Street, for people with mobility difficulties or sensory impairment is reasonably satisfactory. The buildings have the benefit of being on a reasonably level site. This philosophy will be maintained and improved through the design development.

All areas of the development will be accessible for users with mobility difficulties or sensory impairment. It is intended that circulation areas will be designed to ensure unobstructed access. Clear lines of sight maximise the accessibility throughout the applicant site. This reduces confusion and dependence on signage.

All circulation routes will be splayed or radial corners wherever possible. Internal doors will be minimised, replaced by rolling shutters, to allow accessibility without compromising privacy, safety or security. Where swing doors are required, each door will provide at least the minimum effective clear door opening appropriate to the width and direction of approach.

Wherever possible we propose that the doors will;

- Not project into an access route
- Include manifestation if glazed
- Have at least 300mm alongside the leading edge of all doors to enable wheelchair users to open the door.
- Be light enough to be used by disabled people with limited mobility or strength.

Existing accessible toilet provisions that will service the courtyard within Queen Street

The toilet provisions where provided, will be designed to BS8300: 2009 and the requirements of Part M3 of the Building Regulations. Fully accessible toilet / showers are designed to address the requirements of people with a variety of impairments. These spaces will be fully equipped for use by disabled people.

The standard dimensions to provide adequate manoeuvring and transfer space for disabled people are:

- Unisex accessible corner WC layout 2200mm x 1500mm min.
- Accessible WC compartment for ambulant disabled people 800mm x 1500mm
- Disabled people should be able to find and use suitable toilet accommodation as easily as non-disabled people. The location of the toilet, basin and other accessories in relation to the space required for manoeuvring, is critical in enabling disabled people to use various transfer techniques that allow independent or assisted use of sanitary facilities.

Wheelchair users and other users of an accessible toilet often move more slowly than non-disabled people. Facilities therefore will be provided within a reasonable travel distance from anywhere on a given floor plate to ensure that disabled people have access to the facility via the shortest available direct route.

These spaces will be located together with, and have a similar finish to standard toilet and/or shower provision, and comply with the following requirements:

- Accessible, well-lit and clearly-signed
- Have fixtures and equipment that is operable by people with poor dexterity or limited strength (operable with one hand)
- Have good visual contrast between the main features, equipment and controls inside a cubicle
- Not have timed lighting systems
- Door handles to be easy grip D handles and located on the back of doors
- Have clothes hooks sited at 1050mm and 1400mm high
- Have heating pipes and heating equipment carefully located and fitted with thermostatic controls.
- Be fitted with an alarm and reset button that is linked to the alarm system

Signage should be clear, concise and consistent, and suitable for people with visual impairments and learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. We have developed the planning of the building to be simple and intuitive as the ability to navigate independently around a building is dependent upon the basic building layout. We propose that any signage should be grounded in the following:

- Internal signage to be provided in public as well as back of house areas
- Easy to see (visual contrast with surroundings), with low glare, and easy to understand (is written concisely and in plain English)

- Rules for clear print are followed (contrast between text and background colours, large enough text and easy-to-read fonts)
- Simple illustrations or pictograms and symbols should be incorporated whenever possible
- All directional signs to and within the premises incorporate directional arrows
- The height of signage should be carefully considered to accommodate people of varying stature, as well as maintaining visibility should crowds obstruct lower positioned signage.
- Signs are well lit with their own source of light
- Tactile signage to be provided where it will benefit users

BS 8300: 2001 indicates that universally recognised symbols should be used to replace text, as an essential aid for people with learning difficulties. Where other types of pictograms and symbols are used these should be supplemented by text, and not used in isolation.

Clear signage and wayfinding for people unable to use stairs without assistance, one or more refuge points must be provided on each level offering a place of relative safety until assistance arrives.

- A two way communication device will be provided at all refuge points
- The size and number of refuge points to be relative to the numbers of expected disabled people within a particular building or facility

8

MOVEMENT

8.1 INTEGRATIONS / CONNECTIONS

The development is located within the town centre and has various parking locations available relatively close to development.

The bus station is also in close proximity to the site providing access to the site within 0.2 miles from the bus station (see blue in Fig 8.1.1).

8.2 TRANSPORT MODES

The site benefits from good links to local infrastructure including, bus stops, food stores, local areas of play, sports facilities, restaurants, libraries and public houses, all within walking distance.

The application site is easily accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and users of Wrexham's numerous bus and train services. It is anticipated that a fairly high proportion of visitors and staff will travel to the application site by these sustainable means, and in particular Wrexham central railway station and Wrexham Bus station which is a five minute walk away. Shown in Fig 8.1.1 and 8.2.1.

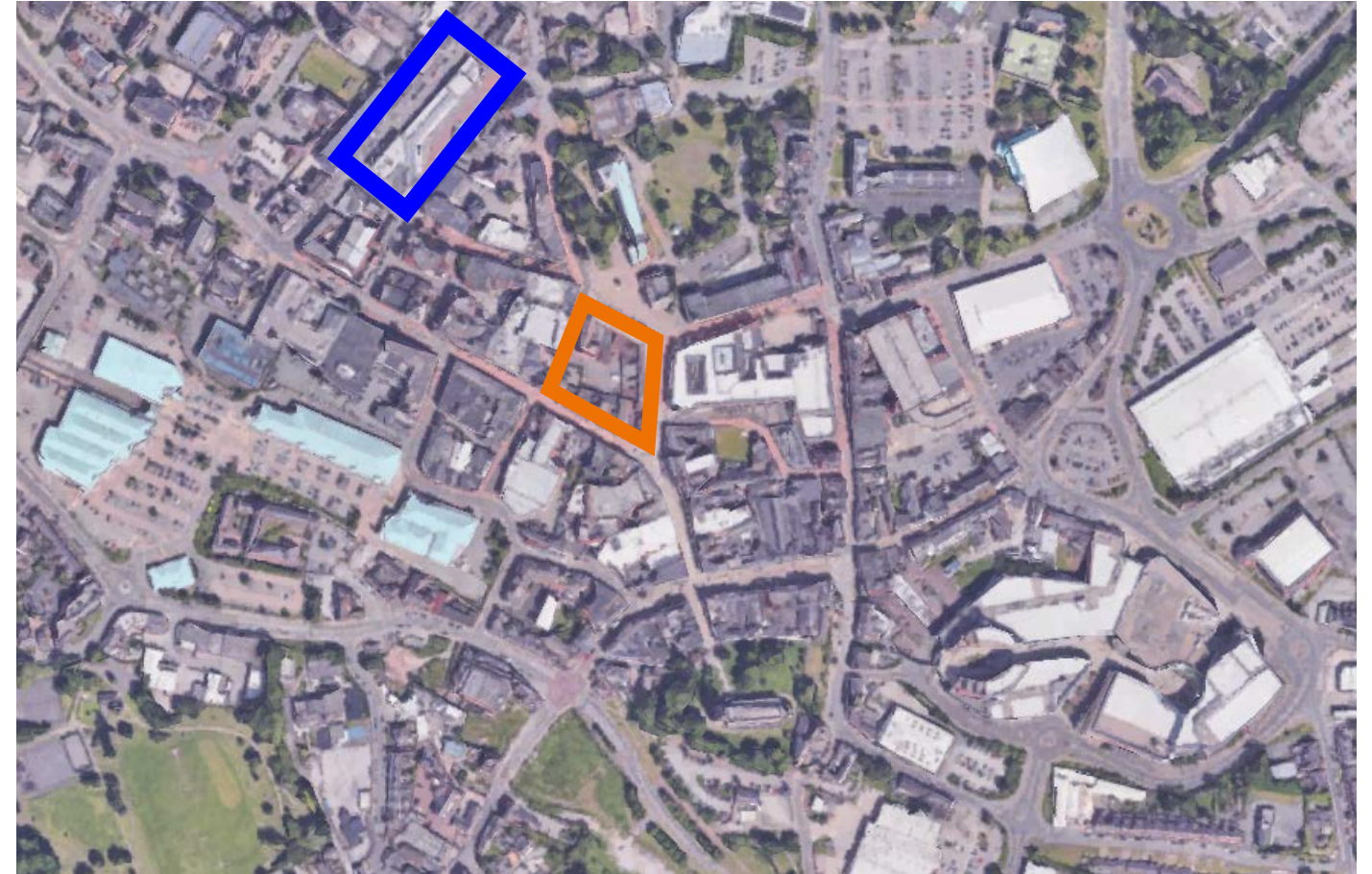


Fig 8.1.1 Satellite image showing the location of the applicant site (orange) and the existing main bus station (blue)

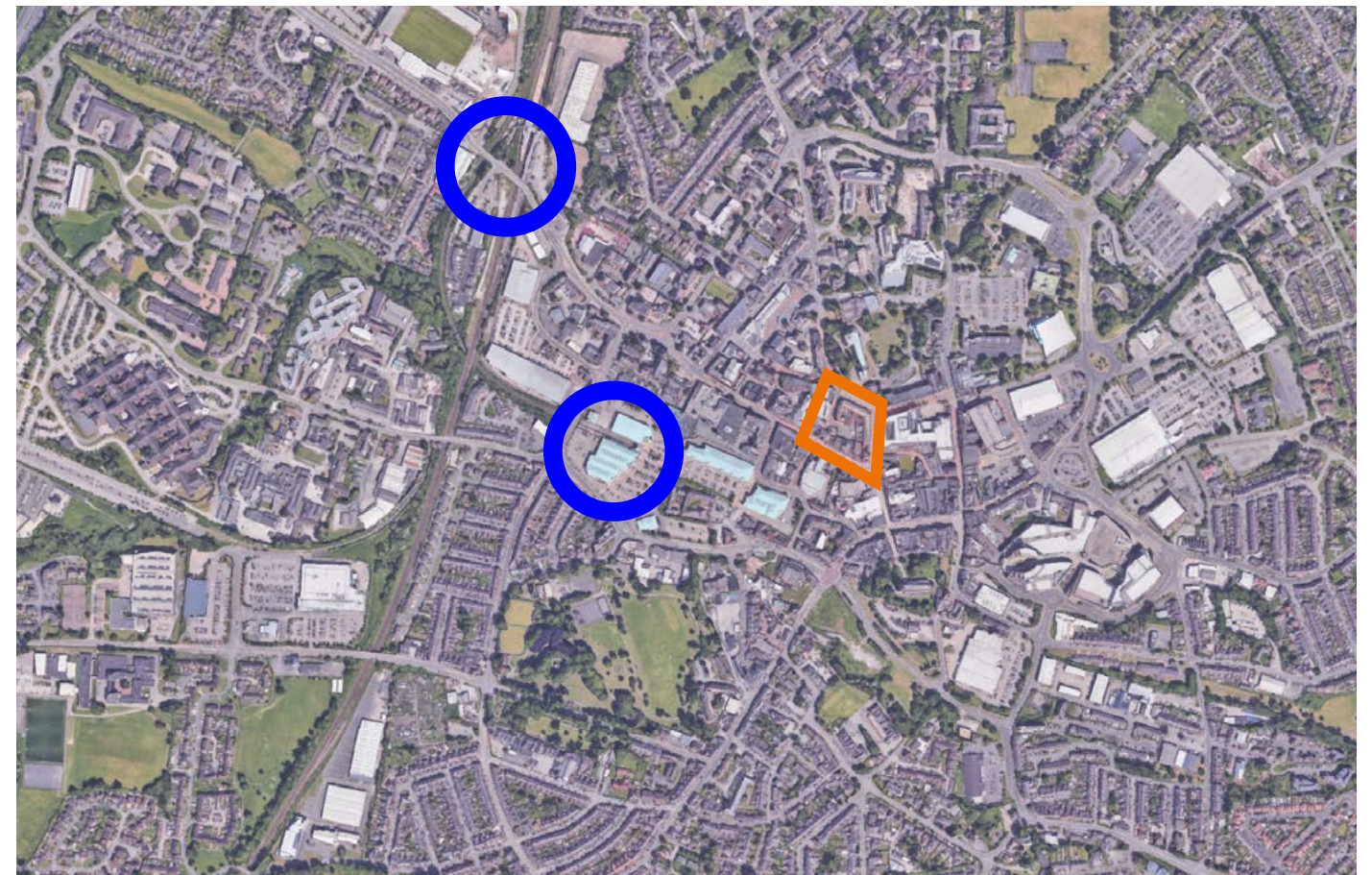


Fig 8.2.1 Satellite image showing the rail transport connections in the local area, in relation to the applicant site (orange)

9

COMMUNITY SAFETY

9.1 SECURE BY DESIGN (“SBD”)

The design promotes SBD in placing gated entrances to the entrances to allow views onto the courtyard area.

Visuals from windows to the courtyard area provide good natural surveillance.

The proposal is also designed to surround the applicant site with a timber, lap board, perimeter fence. Service access routes will then be available for vendors through lockable gates, keeping all back-of-house spaces closed to the public. In addition to this the only public access to the rear courtyard will be through the Queen Street retail spaces and thoroughfare - this will be monitored throughout opening hours.

9.2 BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

The courtyard is confined on three sides by the existing buildings creating the boundaries around the site with an IBC Tank wall as shown in the graphics to split the existing courtyard area into a service yard area and proposed F+B / entertainment courtyard space.

Existing boundary conditions will be maintained where applicable. Please see Planning Drawings.

The proposal is also designed to surround the applicant site with a timber, lap board, perimeter fence and the division between the entertainment area and service space will be made up of an IBC water tank wall. Service access routes will then be available for vendors through lockable gates, keeping all back-of-house spaces closed to the public.

9.3 SURVEILLANCE

Natural surveillance is provided to all of the site by the orientation of the units facing onto the courtyard area.

The rear courtyard space will have various members of staff monitoring and maintaining the area, whilst F+B vendors will also have a clear unobstructed view of the courtyard, from their units. In addition to this the only public access to the rear courtyard will be through the Queen Street retail spaces and thoroughfare - this will be monitored throughout opening hours.

10

CONSULTATION +
CONCLUSION

10.1 CONSULTATION / CONCLUSION

To conclude this document, every effort has been made to make the proposed development blend in the existing surroundings and street scene whilst still maintaining a level of individuality.

Environmental needs have been considered in terms of sustainable features, energy efficiency, layout and transport with a clear commitment to reduce carbon emissions.

This statement also demonstrates that the project is fully in line with national and local planning policy, and the supporting documentation demonstrates the technical acceptability of the scheme.

From its inception a consistent theme throughout the Chapter Court project has been that it must serve the needs and meet the aspirations of the people of the town as part of the wider masterplan for the regeneration of the city centre.

An ongoing and successful dialogue with the Wrexham Local Authority, has meant progress has already begun within the development. With some of the vendors taking up rental space in the internal units of the Queen Street section, the Chapter Court development is already contributing positively to the local community. Being able to offer a sought-after space, in a central location, has already meant that local businesses can promote their independent companies, displaying the entrepreneurial spirit of Wrexham.

The success of this applicant site is directly linked to the success of these other spaces physically, economically and socially. Having an external spill out space that supports and balances the dynamic inside retail areas, will serve to extend the reach of the development and in turn the visitors in Wrexham. Having been received well by both the authorities and the local business owners, this proposal will build on very solid foundations.

It is Wrexham's Council's belief, together with that of its consultant team, that the proposals contained in the application and explained in this Planning, Design and Access Statement provide an exciting vision for the redevelopment of the town centre, derived through a robust and inclusive process. The proposals will make a positive contribution to the town centre and help to bring a new level of vibrancy and activity to the town.



In collaboration with

TBE SOUTHERN (LIMITED)

Project no. 23.09

Chapter Court 2 - External Courtyard
Wrexham Town
Wales

Date issued: 12th October 2023

Contact Details

The Coach House,
1 The Convent, Rising Lane,
Lapworth, Warwickshire,
B93 0DJ
England

info@caukinstudio.com
www.caukinstudio.com

CA·UK·IN
studio