

# PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

Proposed demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of a replacement dwelling, and associated minor development  
at  
High Barton, Marford Hill, Marford, Wrexham, LL12 8SY



**OWEN DEVENPORT** CYF LTD

Cynllunwyr Tref Siartredig • Chartered Town Planners

**Agents Ref: - DH296/09/22**



5 Stryd y Cae / 5 Field Street,

Llangefni,

Ynys Môn / Anglesey,

LL77 7EH

01248 724 356

23 Lôn Wynnstey / 23 Wynnstey Road,

Bae Colwyn / Colwyn Bay,

Conwy,

LL29 8NB

01492 536 024

20 Stryd y Dyffryn / 20 Vale Street,

Dinbych / Denbigh,

LL16 3BE

01745 816 145



**Author:**

**Name:** Jamie Bradshaw Director

**Date:** 02/02/2023

**Reviewed By:**

**Name:** Lowri Frances Williams Planning Consultant

**Date:** 06/02/2023

**Issued/Approved By:**

**Name:** Jamie Bradshaw Director

**Date:** 08/02/2023

## PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

### HIGH BARTON, MARFORD HILL, MARFORD, WREXHAM, LL12 8SY: PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF AN EXISTING DWELLING AND THE ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT DWELLING, AND ASSOCIATED MINOR DEVELOPMENT

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this Planning Support Statement is to examine the proposal in its planning context, with the conclusion reached that it would allow for the replacement of the existing building on the site, which is in a poor condition and cannot be feasibly renovated, with a new dwelling of a high quality of design that would be suited to its site and setting.

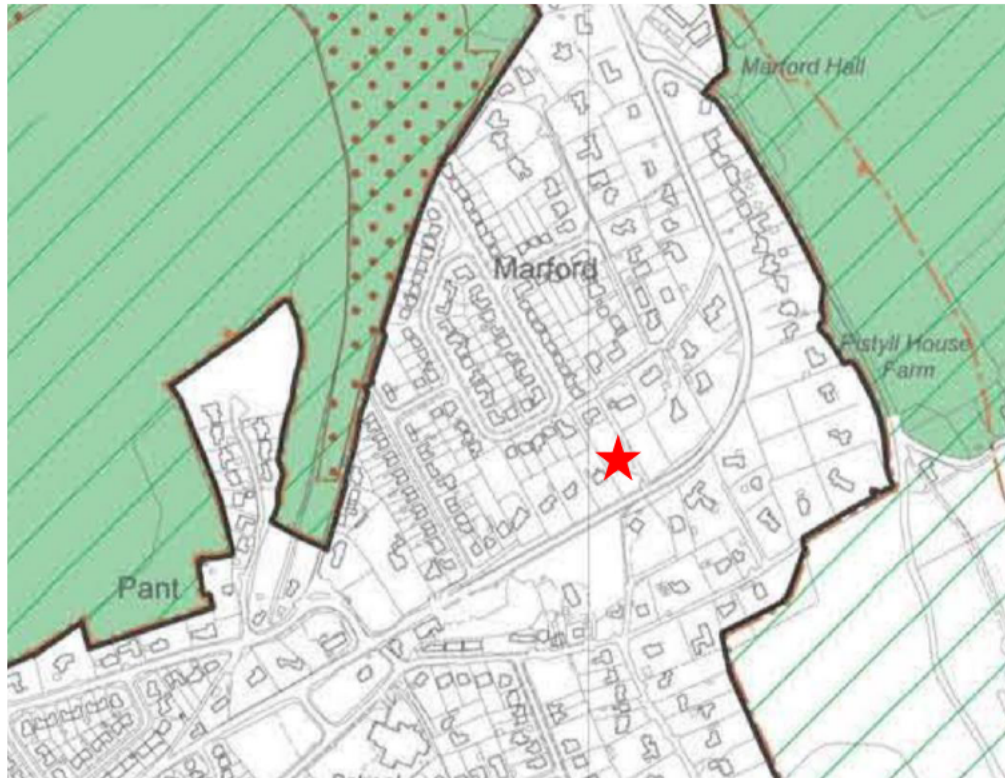
1.2 The following documents have been used as the basis for this statement, and are understood to form the application submission:-

- Location plan - Ref:- Ty/1090/SU05 - Scale:- 1:1250 @ A4
- Existing and proposed plans as follows:-
  - Topographic Survey (existing site plan) - Ref:- 22\_074/01 - Scale:- 1:200 @ A1
  - Existing ground floor plan - Ref:- Ty/1090/SU01 - Scale:- 1:50 @ A3
  - Existing first floor plan - Ref:- Ty/1090/SU02 - Scale:- 1:50 @ A3
  - Existing elevations - Ref:- Ty/1090/SU03 - Scale:- 1:100 @ A3
  - Existing section through A-A - Ref:- Ty/1090/SU04 - Scale:- 1:100 @ A4
  - Proposed floor plans - Ref:- Ty/1090/PL01 - Scale:- 1:100 @ A1
  - Proposed sections (A & B) - Ref:- Ty/1090/PL02 - Scale:- 1:200 @ A3
  - Proposed sections (C & D) - Ref:- Ty/1090/PL03 - Scale:- 1:200 @ A4
  - Proposed site plan - Ref:- Ty/1090/PL04 - Scale:- 1:200 @ A3
  - Proposed elevations - Ref:- Ty/1090/PL05 - Scale:- 1:100 @ A2
  - Proposed site section - Ref:- Ty/1090/PL06 - Scale:- 1:200 @ A4
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment - Dated:- 25/04/2022
- Bat Emergence and Re-entry Surveys - Dated:- 11/08/2022
- Arboricultural Appraisal - Ref:- SC:720 - Dated:- 23/01/2023 - inclusive of the following plans:-
  - Plan 1: Tree Constraints Plan - Scale:- 1:750 @ A4
  - Plan 2: Tree Protection Plan - Scale:- 1:750 @ A4

## 2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is situated on the northern side of this section of Marford Hill (the B5445), which is the principal route through the village and runs up to the A483 Chester/Wrexham Road to the north. As a result, the site is set firmly within the developed area of Marford, per the UDP map extract below:-

*Figure 1 - Extract from WUDP showing site (marked with a red star)*



- 2.2 At present the site is occupied by a single dwelling (and its associated curtilage & garage). This building is in a poor condition as a result of its standard of construction, age, and historic issues with maintenance. As such, this proposal is for its demolition and the erection of a replacement property.
- 2.3 The site is defined on its frontage/southern side by a low wall that together with a large group of mature trees separates the site from Marford Hill, which runs parallel to the boundary. One of the vehicular & pedestrian accesses for the site is set on this boundary, and leads up from its junction with the road to the 'site proper'. Opposite, are more trees that screen and separate the large detached dwellings set off Pistyll Hill from the properties set on this side of Marford Hill.
- 2.4 Mature hedgerows and individual trees then define the site's eastern and western boundaries, which screen and separate it from Sunnymead to the west (which is set above the site) and Briar Patch to the east (which is set below). Edenfield and Bache Lodge also partially adjoin these boundaries. Development in either direction along this part Marford Hill is defined by other substantial detached two-storey properties set in large grounds.

- 2.5 The northern edge of the site is also defined by vegetation and boundary treatments that separate it from Eaton House, which is itself a substantial two-storey dwelling, though set in a more modest plot. Development to the north is somewhat denser, but is still defined by detached properties.
- 2.6 The main access for the property is set on this side of the site and runs along the boundaries of Eaton House and Bache Lodge onto the single-track road that serves this and other properties in this part of the settlement.
- 2.7 From the above it can clearly be seen that the site forms part of the existing built form of the settlement, and indeed that it is set amongst other substantial dwellings.

### 3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposal is a full application for the demolition of the existing dwelling on the site and the erection of a replacement dwelling. The proposal also includes associated minor development such as the provision of hard surfaced areas around the property, inclusive of areas of raised balconies at ground floor level, as well as those within the building at first floor level.
- 3.2 This section will examine the key material considerations for the scheme and assess the development against them in order to demonstrate that it is an acceptable scheme.

#### *Background and principle*

- 3.3 The proposal has been brought forward due to the issues with the existing building on the site. This is a poorly constructed two storey structure with an associated garage and hard-surface areas. Following the Applicants' purchase of the property in January 2022 investigations commenced as to the feasibility of renovation of the building and resolving issues in the property that were apparent at the time of purchase.
- 3.4 However, during these investigations it became apparent that the building suffers from a number of defects that would preclude a successful renovation of the property.
- 3.5 In brief these include:-
- Poor construction
  - External walls would need stabilising
  - Internal floors need replacing
  - Poor layout
  - Windows need replacing
  - Reroof
  - Kitchen and bathroom replacement
  - Rewiring and replumbing
  - New heating system
  - Lack of insulation
  - Damp
- 3.6 These works extend considerably beyond what could be considered usual for renovation, and bearing in mind the age of the building and the nature of the issues it is clear that the building can be described as 'life expired', with expensive renovation leading to costly running repairs in the future that would slow rather than halt its decline.
- 3.7 Therefore, it is suggested that the best solution would be to replace the existing property with a new dwelling, as this would allow for considerable improvements in the standard of construction of the building and in its design, together with a significant reduction in its heat loss with a resulting substantial improvement in its sustainability.
- 3.8 In this case, the site is set within the development boundary of the Marford/Gresford settlement within the adopted Unitary Development Plan (and also within the forthcoming LDP). As such there is no in principle barrier

to the proposal, and indeed a general presumption that residential development is directed to sites such as this. There is no particular policy in the UDP that applies to replacement dwellings within settlement boundaries, and thus other more specific development considerations apply.

### ***OTHER KEY MATERIAL ISSUES***

#### ***Visual Amenity and Character & Appearance***

- 3.9 When assessing the design of the proposal the first step is to assess its context. It is clear that the proposal would assimilate easily into the existing townscape. Similar development is present all along Marford Hill, which is typified by large detached two-storey houses with a mixed vernacular reflecting the varying stages of development and nature of the built environment in this part of the settlement.
- 3.10 A key objective of the scheme has been to achieve a high-quality development that would successfully integrate into its setting with a positive impact upon the character and appearance of the site and the broader value of the landscape. This has been achieved through the careful design of the proposal, with a traditional form and typology proposed with modern design features to reflect the era of the development, and a suitable palette of materials that will reflect those seen in the area.
- 3.11 The result would be a development that would be a suitable addition to the locality that would reflect and complement existing development in the area, and would be an attractive building in its own right.
- 3.12 The proposal would be set in a suitable position that is centred within the plot and although extending beyond the original building's footprint is actually set back from the front elevation of the existing building. This would maintain the property's relationship with the front garden, and would ensure that it forms an acceptable addition to the existing pattern of development in this part of Marford and consequently would not form a prominent or intrusive feature in the area. This, coupled with the extensive mature trees and boundary planting set around the site which would almost totally screen the property from wider views, would mean that the proposal would form a suitable addition to the settlement and the pattern of built development with this part of it.

#### ***Residential Amenity & Privacy***

- 3.13 The submitted design would respect the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring properties as the proposal is set at a suitable distance from them and the proposal has been carefully designed to ensure that potential for impacts upon privacy are addressed (through placement of windows and internal accommodation, use of obscure glazing etc.). It would also be of an appropriate height and form to ensure that it would not have an overbearing impact upon the neighbouring dwellings. This is especially the case when the proposal is considered in the context of the existing dwelling on the site, and the relationship between the site and neighbouring properties in terms of levels and existing established boundary features.

- 3.14 Activity generated by the proposal would not be harmful to neighbours due to the level of separation involved and the existing residential character of the area. There would also be little change (and certainly no material change) from the existing situation at the site in respect of activity.
- 3.15 A suitable level of amenity space will be provided for the proposed dwelling, with more than sufficient space provided around it to meet its occupants' needs. Similarly, the occupiers of the proposal will enjoy a good standard of privacy and amenity due to the careful design approach adopted. Again, there would be no real change from the existing situation in this regard.
- 3.16 Any **construction impact** from the proposal will be modest and limited in duration, and the site provides adequate space to manage construction impacts entirely within its boundaries. However, if concerns do arise in this respect, then it is submitted that a proportionate approach would be to require a Construction Method Statement through a pre-commencement condition to address construction impacts and management of traffic. Model condition no. 35 of WGC 016/2014 would be ideal for that purpose.
- 3.17 Similarly, controls on construction operating hours may be appropriate in this case and it is submitted model condition 65 of the same circular should be used and that 08:00-18:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00-17:00 on Saturdays & Sundays would be appropriate hours for this site.

#### **Access & Accessibility**

- 3.18 Access to the proposal will be provided via the existing access points serving the site, with the main entrance being from and onto Sunny Ridge Avenue. These arrangements provide an adequate level of visibility at their junction with the highway bearing in mind the vehicle speeds that can be expected on the section of road at the access point. The highway is of sufficient capacity to accommodate the vehicle movements generated by the proposal with no impact upon safety or its operation. The proposal also accommodates replacement parking provision, which will be entirely suited to serving the proposal and ensuring that there is no requirement for off-site parking.
- 3.19 Notwithstanding the above, the proposal would maintain vehicle movements from the site at or very near to their existing level (and will provide improved parking & turning arrangements from the current situation). Therefore, it will not materially impact upon the operation or safety of the highway.
- 3.20 The site is also easily accessible via non-car modes of transport, with a good range of services and facilities set within easy walking distance of the site, including a school, health centre, and post office. Regular bus services are also available within Marford (with these stopping a short distance from the site on Marford Hill/Chester Road) which allow easy access to key local settlements such as Wrexham and Chester, and the broader range of shops, services, facilities, and employment that they offer. The site is therefore well placed to foster the adoption of non-car modes of transport by its residents.
- 3.21 The proposal also includes provision of home office space for use by the Applicants (or any future occupier) which is of course key to improving the sustainability of residents working patterns and a welcome step in any new development.

### *Built sustainability*

- 3.22 The proposal will minimise the energy consumption and reduce the overall environmental impact over the existing outmoded property by meeting or exceeding all current building standards. Indeed, it is intended that all practicable steps will be taken in the detailed design of the dwelling to reduce its energy consumption through high levels of insulation and the specification of energy efficient technology and fittings, along with well specified fenestration. Also, all practicable steps will be taken to specify appliances and fittings that reduce the use of water.

### *Ecology & biodiversity*

- 3.23 Turning to the question of ecology, as the proposal involves the demolition of an existing building, a bat & protected species survey has been commissioned by the clients and this has been submitted alongside the application. The reports must be read in full but in brief they confirm:-

- **Bats** - Emergence surveys have confirmed that the building is utilised as a day roost of one common pipistrelle bat, which is roosting within the building. As such, the report recommends reasonable avoidance measures during the demolition works, compensatory roost provision within the site, and interim roost provision during the construction phase. These steps have been carried through onto the proposed plans, and the management aspects could be addressed through a suitably worded condition upon any consent coupled with the licensing regime in respect of protected species. Other measures such as lighting controls are also suitable for imposition under condition;
- **Birds** - No nesting birds were found to be present on the site, though the trees and hedgerow within it have potential value. Per the submission these will be largely retained, reducing any impact to negligible levels, and mitigation and enhancement will be provided through installation of bird boxes (with these carried through onto the site plans) which are also suitable for control through condition;
- **Other species** - Steps in the form of RAMS & site management requirements are also set out to prevent harm to badgers or hedgehogs which may utilise the site for foraging. Again, these can be imposed through a condition upon any consent;
- **Ecology & Habitat** - The habitat within the site was examined by the ecologist and no impacts were found to occur from the development. Some limited recommendations are provided for planting, which again are suitable for imposition through a condition upon any consent;
- **Invasive Non-Native Species** - Similarly no INNS were found to be present.

- 3.24 Overall, it is considered that these measures will protect the favourable conservation status of the species present on the site, and ensure that mitigation and enhancement is achieved for the limited impacts that would occur. These measures could and should be secured through a suitably worded condition/s upon any permission.

### *Trees*

**3.25** The proposal will involve work around a number of trees a detailed Arboricultural Appraisal (inclusive of an Impact Assessment and detail of Tree Protection Measures) has been submitted as part of the application, and must be read in full in order to appreciate the detailed arguments on this issue, but a brief summary is presented below:-

1. The proposal is for the removal of Trees 14T and 20T, which are C Grade and thus have low merit and their removal is deemed to be acceptable. Similarly, 23 metres of hedgerow 22H (Grade B) must be removed to allow modifications to the driveway, but this would also have a low impact. The scheme would also very slightly encroach upon trees 24T and 25T, and to a still lesser extent upon 13T. These are of a higher grade to the trees to be removed, but the level of encroachment is modest and thus the proposed work would not pose difficulties provided that suitable hand dig measures are adopted along with other protection measures. The remaining trees (which comprise the overwhelming majority of those on the site) will not be impacted upon by the proposal. Other works are recommended irrespective development, which arise from safety recommendations, but these are not detailed here as it is considered that they are a separate matter as they simply comprise proper management of the trees within the Applicants' land;
2. The report also considers shading from retained trees, with 12T and 13T noted as casting shade upon the proposal. However, it is material that the property will not extend further into the shade arc of either trees than the existing, and thus the impact will not be greater, and the author also states that the degree of shading is not excessive or a major constraint to the reasonable enjoyment of the property. As such, shading should not pose a future issue nor bar granting consent for the proposal;
3. To compensate for the loss of trees (individuals and groups) the report notes that new trees or hedgerows could be planted, but that this will need careful consideration as the site already has extensive cover. If this application is approved and it considered that replacement planting is needed, then replacement planting could also of course be subject of a condition requiring submission and approval of a scheme for the same;
4. There would be some potential for harm to the retained trees during construction if the development is not well managed, and so protection measures are specified in the report and on the proposed drawings that accompany it, including access barriers, ground barriers, and other measures within and around protected areas. The report recommends that these matters are best conditioned, with the report providing a detailed AMS and TPP which allows for full consideration of the expected approach. If this application is approved then this report should be conditioned to be followed.

- 3.26 As such, it is submitted that although the proposal will result in the loss of a small number of trees (individuals and groups) that there is a sound justification for their removal as their quality is not sufficiently high to present a barrier in principle to approval of this application, the vast majority of trees on site will be retained, and there will be other planning benefits arising from the development that would outweigh the very modest 'losses' that are proposed. As such, there is a clear justification for the proposal, and therefore it is submitted that the proposal complies with relevant planning policy.

#### *Welsh Language*

- 3.27 Due to the scale of the scheme, it is considered that neither a Language Statement nor a Linguistic Impact Assessment are required as the scheme does not meet the relevant thresholds (individually or cumulatively) for residential development set out within the UDP (nor within the 'draft' LDP).
- 3.28 However, the Welsh Language is a key material consideration and as such the implications of the proposal for the language and the local Welsh speaking community must be considered as part of the scheme.
- 3.29 In this case it is clear that there would be no impact as:-
1. The proposal is very modest in scale in relation to the size of the local resident population, as such any 'impact' from its occupiers would also be modest and therefore would not have significant or material impacts upon the local community or use of the Welsh Language;
  2. The proposed dwelling is suited to meeting a requirement for family dwellings in the area, which is key to ensuring the future success and growth of Welsh Language use by providing accommodation suited to meeting the needs of local residents with children;
  3. The proposal replaces an existing dwelling and as such any impact is still further reduced.

#### *Affordable Housing & Planning Contributions*

- 3.30 In this case it is submitted that as the proposal will replace an existing dwelling the requirements set out in **policy H7 of the UDP** are not triggered.
- 3.31 Similarly, as no new dwelling would be created none of the other requirements for **planning contributions** apply.

#### *CONCLUSION*

- 3.32 Overall, the proposal will allow for the construction of a suitable and well-designed dwelling that would replace the existing building on the site, which is in a poor condition and cannot be feasibly renovated. The submitted design would ensure that the dwelling would form an appropriate feature in the site and locality. There would be no harm to residential or general amenities, the operation and safety of the highway, or any other acknowledged interest.

## 4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 There are a number of policies relevant to this proposal. These are briefly detailed below, with the following section summarising the key material considerations for the proposal and referring to the relevant policy where required:-

### *NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY*

#### *Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 11th Ed. (2021)*

- 4.2 There have been a number of changes to PPW in the latest editions, chief amongst these is the concept of Placemaking, which is set out in Chapter 2 and is considered to be fundamental to the goals of the planning system. The key principles underlying placemaking are set out in this section.
- 4.3 Chapter 2 also sets out, and in particular Figures 4 and 5 and the accompanying text, the general planning and sustainable place marking principles which are intended to underpin decision making for all development. In particular the principles of:-
- Growing our economy in a sustainable manner
  - Making best use of resources
  - Facilitating accessible and healthy environments
  - Creating and sustaining communities
  - Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact
- 4.4 Turning to the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes (Figure 5) the following are particularly relevant:-

#### *Creating and Sustaining Communities*

- Appropriate development densities
- Homes and jobs to meet society's needs

#### *Growing Our Economy in a Sustainable Manner*

- Fosters economic activity
- Enables easy communication
- Vibrant and dynamic
- Adaptive to change
- Embraces smart and innovative technology

#### *Making Best Use of Resources*

- Makes best use of natural resources
- Prevents waste
- Prioritises the use of previously developed land and existing buildings
- Unlocks potential and regenerates
- High quality and built to last

### ***Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact***

- Resilient biodiversity and ecosystems
- Distinctive and special landscapes
- Integrated green infrastructure
- Appropriate soundscapes
- Reduces environmental risks
- Manages water resources naturally
- Clean air
- Reduces overall pollution
- Resilient to climate change
- Distinctive and special historic environments

### ***Facilitating Accessible and Healthy Environments***

- Accessible and high quality green space
- Accessible by means of active travel and public transport
- Not car dependent
- Minimises the need to travel
- Provides equality of access
- Feels safe and inclusive
- Supports a diverse population
- Good connections
- Convenient access to goods and services
- Promotes physical and mental health and well-being

**4.5** The proposal would entirely accord with these requirements as it would:

- Utilise a site that meets the definition of previously developed land;
- Be located within walking and cycling distance of local facilities & services and the frequent bus services serving the area;
- Be built to relevant sustainable building standards which will be a considerable improvement from the existing building and will therefore minimise the sustainability and environmental impact of the building;
- Provide a good quality replacement house that would assist in meeting the Applicants' housing needs;
- Will respect and retain the environmental value of the site, and the character & appearance of the area;
- Is well designed and suited to the site & setting.

**4.6** Thus, the proposal will also comply with the key objectives and requirements for good design that are set out in para's 3.3-3.16, with key themes being inclusivity & accessibility (3.5-3.6), environmental sustainability (3.7-3.8), character & context (3.9-3.10, 3.14), community safety (3.11), movement (3.12-3.13).

- 4.7 Para's 3.15 & 3.16 provide guidance on how to consider issues of design, requiring Authority's to have policies and guidance to promote good design and provide a robust basis for refusal of poor quality design. This work should also take place for strategic issues including plan allocations. When considering design an Authority is required to seek to improve poor or average designs, and to reject them where they are not successful with clearly articulated grounds required in any refusal. However, it is clearly stated that *"they should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily and should avoid inhibiting opportunities for innovative design solutions"*. In this case the design is clearly of a good standard and is entirely appropriate for both the site and its setting.
- 4.8 Para's 3.25-3.29 identify the importance of the Welsh Language and requires LPA's to consider the likely effects of development upon the Welsh Language and include policies within the LDP's assessing impacts. In this case the Welsh Language impacts of the scheme have been assessed and are clearly both exceptionally modest and entirely acceptable.
- 4.9 Section 3.55-3.56 and the accompanying definition are relevant as the application concerns a previously developed site. This application clearly falls within this definition as it relates to a site already occupied by a dwelling that is set within a defined curtilage, which undoubtedly qualify it as previously developed land and therefore suitable for development.
- 4.10 Section 4.1 provides overarching guidance on issues of relevance to transport, with a key priority being to enable more sustainable travel, utilise existing capacity effectively, and managing demand (in particular by reducing reliance upon the use of private cars). In this case the proposal is fully compliant with the approach set out in that section as it will utilise a previously developed site set within an existing settlement and with good access to a wide range of services & facilities by non-car modes, and that also benefits from a good standard of access and will be provided with suitable parking arrangements.
- 4.11 Section 4.2 set out overarching policy and strategy on housing and key issues, with the key priorities being to:- deliver an adequate supply of housing land to meet needs of communities across all tenures; providing well-designed, sustainable, and good quality housing in all tenures to meet community's needs; and focusing upon the delivery of an identified housing requirement and the required land supply.
- 4.12 Para. 4.2.17 directs Authorities to maximise the use of previously developed and underutilised land for housing development due to its benefits in achieving regeneration and reducing pressure for use of greenfield sites, with this including sites allocated for other uses where they are under-used or underperforming. However, the policy also cautions against utilising sites genuinely required for recreation, amenity or nature conservation purposes. In this case the site is clearly previously developed and entirely suited to the proposal without any of the harmful impacts cited in the policy.
- 4.13 Infill and windfall sites are tackled in para. 4.2.23, with Authorities required to have clear policy criteria to assess them, their valuable contribution noted, and a direction that windfall sites within settlement boundaries should be supported where *"they accord with the national sustainable placemaking*

*outcomes*”. That is certainly the case here as a suitable scheme is proposed that would replace the existing property with a good design that balances the constraints and key issues well to ensure that all material considerations are respected.

- 4.14 Section 5.8 sets out guidance on the requirement to improve energy use and sustainability of new buildings, and to ensure that development takes account of these principles in its design and specification. These would be met by the proposed design, and indeed the proposal will be a considerable improvement from the existing ‘life-expired’ building.
- 4.15 Section 6.3 sets out policy concerning landscapes, noting that all landscapes are valued and that their special characteristics should be protected and enhanced whilst paying “*due regard to the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits they provide, and to their role in creating valued places*”. Again, the scheme will respect the value of the wider area as it is of a suitable design for the site and its setting, and will retain the existing mature tree cover set around the property. It will therefore integrate well into its setting.
- 4.16 Section 6.4 sets out the approach to ensuring that the planning system plays its part in reversing the decline in biodiversity and improving ecosystem resilience by protecting against losses and securing enhancements (6.4.1-6.4.8).
- 4.17 Para. 6.4.21 sets out more detail on the approach to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, with a step-wise approach set out requiring that losses are first avoided where possible, minimized where not, then mitigated, and as a last resort that compensation is provided. This includes opportunities for the use of conditions, planning obligations, or advisory notes, or in particular circumstances, off-site compensation. In particular the guidance set out in para’s 6.4.22-6.4.23 are of relevance due to the potential value of the site and the features around it to protected species, and as habitat in itself.
- 4.18 The proposal also accords with the aims expressed in those para’s as the ecology surveys submitted with this application show that the species that are present in and around the building have been identified and that suitable mitigation & enhancement measures have been proposed to ensure that no harm occurs to their favourable conservation status and the overall value of the site.
- 4.19 Similarly, as the site is set within influencing distance of trees the guidance in para’s 6.4.24-6.4.27 is relevant. Again, the submitted report on this issue assesses the very modest impacts of the proposal and clearly shows that there are acceptable, and also sets out detailed steps to retain the vast majority of trees on the site.

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

**TAN5 - Nature Conservation & Planning - 2009**

- 4.20 Again, this TAN is relevant due to the existing buildings on the site and the potential for it to host protected or priority species and/or habitats. Per the preceding, suitable detail has been provided to address this issue that shows that the scheme's impacts are acceptable, and that suitable mitigation & enhancement steps can be taken.

**TAN12 - Design - 2016**

- 4.21 The proposal entirely meets this TAN's requirements, as demonstrated earlier in this statement, in that the submitted plans demonstrate that an appropriate design can be achieved on the site that will be suited to the site and setting.

**LOCAL PLANNING POLICY**

**Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2009)**

- 4.22 The Wrexham UDP is the current development plan for the area and as such it provides relevant policy for this application. However, the intended period of operation was up to 2011, and as such the plan is now out of date. Work has started on the preparation of a Local Development Plan to replace the UDP (following the withdrawal of an earlier draft after the start of the public inquiry). The LDP enquiry process is now at an advanced stage, but at this point there is no clarity on when an Inspector's report will be released and the plan formally adopted. As such, the UDP must be treated as the guiding local policy framework pending the adoption of an LDP.
- 4.23 The proposal will comply with strategic policies 1 and 2 as it will be an appropriate and modest redevelopment of a site within the settlement that will not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
- 4.24 The proposal will utilise use previously developed brownfield land, and therefore it complies with strategic policy 3.
- 4.25 The proposal also accords with strategic policy 4 as it will 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.
- 4.26 Policy GDP 1 of the UDP says that 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.

**4.27** Per the detail provided earlier in this report the proposal complies with all of these criteria. In respect of the Welsh Language in particular, though it is argued that Marford does not possess a strong Welsh cultural or Linguistic identity that is in need of protection, the provision of a replacement dwelling should not in this instance have a marked effect on the linguistic or social structure of the settlement.

**4.28** Due to the existing hedgerows and trees on the site Policy EC4 is relevant to this proposal. It is considered that the development would meet its requirements as care has been taken to retain the majority of the trees & hedges on the site, with only two trees and a short length of hedgerow to be removed all of which are of lower value, and suitable steps set out to retain the other trees on the site.

**4.29** The proposal also complies with policy EC6 (as far as it is relevant) as suitable measures are proposed to improve the biodiversity value of the site, as well as to mitigate for the very modest impacts of the proposal.

**4.30** Policy H2 of the UDP says that residential development on unannotated land within settlement limits will be permitted subject to compliance with Policy GDP1 (see above). This weighs in favour of the proposal.

- 4.31 The proposal will comply with policy T8 as a suitable amount of on-site parking will be provided which will meet the development's needs, and especially so bearing in mind its accessibility via non-car modes of transport, and the expected level of car use of its occupants.

#### ***LOCAL PLANNING GUIDANCE (LPG) NOTES***

##### ***LPG 6 - Access to and use of buildings***

- 4.32 The proposal complies with the guidance set out in this Guidance Note. The proposed car parking arrangements are suitable in terms of the provision that is proposed, their arrangement and location, and size. As such, they would meet the needs of the development.
- 4.33 The surfaces and pathways within the site would meet the standards set in the policy and would provide for an accessible development.
- 4.34 Access into the proposed dwelling would be designed to avoid barriers to access for all. Similarly the internal layout of the buildings will be designed to provide for clear, simple, and un-encumbered access by all.

##### ***LPG 7 - Landscape and Development***

- 4.35 The proposal will comply with the guidance given in this note as it will retain the existing, entirely appropriate, landscaping on the site.

##### ***LPG 16 - Parking Standards***

- 4.36 The maximum standards set out in LPG16 are noted, and in this case the parking requirements of the development would be more than met.
- 4.37 Notwithstanding this, the site is set within easy walking distance of the local shops, services and facilities available within Marford/Gresford, and the local bus services serving the settlement which allow direct access to Wrexham and Chester, and the surrounding area. Regular rail services are also available within Wrexham. As such the provision of a lower level of parking than would otherwise be expected in less accessible locations is appropriate in this case.
- 4.38 The proposed dwelling will also have suitable space available for cycle storage.

##### ***LPG 17 - Trees and Development***

- 4.39 The guidance given in this LPG has been taken into account in the formulation of the proposal for the site. In this case the vast majority of trees and hedges that border the site will be retained with only two trees and a length of hedgerow to be removed, and with these all being of lower value. Detailed measures are set out to protect the retained trees during construction work.
- 4.40 It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of the LPG, and sets out a justified application in terms of its implications for trees on the site.

***LPG 21 - Space Around Dwellings***

- 4.41 The proposal complies with the requirements of LPG21, which sets out guidelines on the space between and around new dwellings.
- 4.42 The distances between the proposed property and its neighbours reflect the existing spacing and will not result in any additional overlooking, over and above the existing situation.
- 4.43 The proposal also retains sufficient garden space to meet the guidance set out in the SPG. No specific bin storage areas/structures have been proposed as part of the scheme, but these can be provided if required subject to discussions with the LPA on their requirements.
- 4.44 Adequate provision has been made for parking, and this has been laid out to avoid interference with the road or pavement.

***LPG 24 - Designing Out Crime***

- 4.45 The development would also accord with the guidance in this guidance note as care has been taken in the submitted scheme to design out crime.
- 4.46 A suitable layout is proposed that will ensure that a good standard of passive surveillance onto the more public frontage of the site and parking areas to the front of the dwelling.
- 4.47 The layout would also provide for secure private space for the proposed dwelling. All doors and windows, and their locks, would be specified to a suitable standard of security.

***LPG30 - Design A Guide for Developers and Architects when Designing Residential Developments***

- 4.48 The proposal also complied with the guidance in this guidance note. It will result in a high quality, legible design and layout that will help maintain a strong sense of place. It will utilise suitable materials in a sustainable manner and retain existing landscaping. It will also maintain and ensure a good standard of amenity.

***LPG32 - Biodiversity & Development***

- 4.49 As per the guidance note an ecological assessment has been submitted with the application which assesses the current value of the building & site, and demonstrates that the development of the site is acceptable subject to a suitable set of mitigation & enhancement measures being put in place per the report & plans. Those measures are achievable and could be secured by way of a condition upon any permission.

***Emerging LDP***

- 4.50 As the LDP is at an advanced stage of examination it is considered to be helpful to briefly examine it even though the adopted development plan remains as the UDP, and no real weight can be placed upon the LDP at this stage.

- 4.51** The site remains within the development boundary in the current version of the LDP, and there has been no substantial change to matters of principle in that policy still seeks to utilise land within development boundaries as the primary focus of new development as well as allowing for redevelopment of existing sites where this is suitable. Indeed, Gresford and Marford are identified as being a service centre, which places them in the second highest tier of settlement after Wrexham itself, and thus a focus of development under the LDP.
- 4.52** Policy on detailed matters such as design, transport, accessibility, ecology & biodiversity, housing etc. have of course been updated. However, the overall thrust and general requirements of the new policy matches that of the UDP, and thus the proposal is equally acceptable under the LDP as it is under its predecessor plan.

### **CONCLUSION**

- 4.53** Overall, the proposal complies with Local and National policy as the scheme has been designed to respect the landscape character of the area, to preserve the trees and planting on the site where possible, and to ensure that it will maintain the wildlife & biodiversity value of the site and deliver enhancement alongside mitigating for its (modest & acceptable) impacts.
- 4.54** The proposal would be a suitable and high-quality scheme for the erection of a replacement dwelling on the site that would be a substantial improvement from the existing property in terms of its standard of construction and sustainability. The proposal has been designed to a high standard and would be suited to the site and locality in terms of its scale, form, character, and design. There would be no harm to highway safety, general or residential amenities, or the character or appearance of the local area or wider landscape.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 The following conclusions can be drawn from the sections above:-

- ☑ The existing dwelling on the site is in poor condition due to its age and the materials used in its construction, with resulting damp and insulation problems;
- ☑ It would need costly renovation and continuing maintenance costs, its wholesale replacement would provide a much more sustainable and flexible building;
- ☑ Therefore, the best solution is replacement with a new dwelling, with an improved standard of construction and sustainability (through improved heat retention);
- ☑ The proposal would be a high-quality development that would be suited to the site and area in terms of its design, materials, character, and form;
- ☑ As a result the development would be a suitable addition to the site and locality, that would reflect the character and scale of existing development in the locality and would form a low-key feature in the wider landscape;
- ☑ It would provide a good standard of amenity for its occupiers, and has been designed to respect and provide a good standard of amenities and privacy for neighbouring residents. Indeed, the existing and entirely adequate amenity/garden areas will be retained;
- ☑ The existing access serving the site will be retained and this provides adequate visibility onto the highway, which has sufficient capacity to cater for the small level of movements generated by the proposal. Suitable parking and off road turning space will also be provided as part of the scheme;
- ☑ The site is easily accessible via non-car modes of transport and as such it is well placed to foster the adoption of non-car modes of transport by its occupiers;
- ☑ The ecological report submitted with the application demonstrates that the development of the site is acceptable, subject to a suitable set of mitigation & enhancement measures being put in place. Those measures are achievable and could be secured by way of a condition upon any permission;
- ☑ Similarly, the proposal will retain the vast majority of the trees and hedges on site (with suitable measures set out to protect them during works), and only two trees a short length of here would have to be moved to accommodate the proposal with these all being of lower value and thus they should not pose a barrier to the approval of the application.

- 5.2 To conclude the proposal is an application for the erection of a high quality replacement dwelling in the place of an existing property that is in poor condition due to its age and manner of construction. The proposal offers an opportunity to considerably improve the standard of the building on the site and to provide an improved living environment.
- 5.3 The new dwelling has been designed to a high standard with the submitted plans showing a dwelling that would be entirely suited to the site and locality in terms of its scale form, character, and design. Care has also been taken to ensure that the proposal would not harm the privacy and amenities or neighbouring residents.
- 5.4 The development would also have a modest and entirely acceptable impact upon ecology & biodiversity, the operation and safety of the highway, residential & general amenities, and all other considerations of material importance. As a result, it fully complies with all National & Local Planning Policy.
- 5.5 Therefore, there should be no barrier to the approval of this application, and it is respectfully submitted that it should be approved.

*Jamie Bradshaw*

- BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI - February 2023

**Owen Devenport Ltd.**  
**Chartered Town Planners**