



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT – SITE AT 9-11 REGENT STREET WREXHAM LL11 1SG



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of the application for Change of use – shop/office space to 24no. Apartments Regent Street Wrexham. The statement is intended to demonstrate that the proposals are in accordance with relevant National planning Policy Guidance and Development Plans, and to show that the proposals take account of the principles of good design as set out in the Councils Urban Design Guidelines.
- 1.2 The Statement reviews the planning considerations that are relevant to determining the application and identifies important matters which support the proposals including the approach to the design of the development and accessibility.
- 1.3 The images accompanying the text are a combination of photographs and exploratory drawings completed during the design stage.
- 1.4 The accompanying design solution is illustrative of the development proposals for the regeneration of this area. The Statement has been written to reflect the content and form of the document published by CABE 'Design and Access Statement: How to write, read and use them' (2006) and adhered to the advised structure:

Design

- Use -What buildings and spaces will be used for.
- Amount – How much will be built on the site.
- Layout - How buildings and public and private spaces will be arranged on the site, and the relationship between them and the buildings and spaces around the site.
- Scale – How big the buildings and space will be.
- Landscaping – How open spaces will be treated to enhance and protect the character of place.
- Appearance – What the buildings and spaces will look like, for example, building materials and architectural details.
- Access – How everyone can use the place comfortably, safely & easily.

In addition, a statement on designing out crime is provided.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

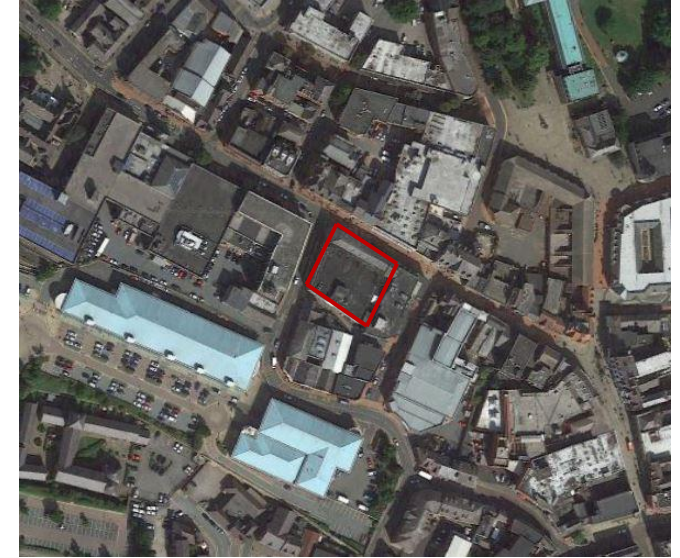
1.5 Identity

The proposed site is situated within a mixed use area in Wrexham town centre. The building is currently empty and was once a Waterstones shop on the ground floor with artspace/offices on the above two floors. The change of use involves developing the upper two floors into apartments. Numerous shops, restaurants, public spaces & schools are within close walking distance and amenities to suit already exist/being developed. The proposed development positively utilises a recently vacant space within an already established area, making use of a derelict building with in a going town.

1.6 Urban Grain and Enclosure

The proposed development has been designed to take into account the relevant urban grain of the surrounding area, massing and use of materials. This proposed application is for 242no. 1 & 2 bedroom apartments. The envelope of the existing building has highly influenced the apartment size and shape and the overall design outcomes. The main features of the proposal respects the arrangement of the locality. The surrounding network of commercial streets consists of different size and typology of buildings including local shops, clothing stores, cafes and bars. Many of the larger buildings with shops on the ground floor also house apartments on their upper floors and purpose built apartment blocks on near by roads.

The existing typology is replicated by the new development in order to maintain a consistent theme between the two. In general the new development should create, preserve and enhance the enclosure to the street scene & create a cohesive urban space. The development aims to create an urban form of enclosure in which the buildings do not dominate the site.



Site Location Plan: Not to scale

2.0 USE

2.1 The site lies in the centre of the newly granted city status Wrexham, approximately an 8 minute walk from Wrexham General train station. The site lies 15.6 miles from the city of Chester approximately 30 minute drive. The proposed development is located close to all main public transport routes to the city centre including several bus stops and train lines. The proposal is within walking distance of shops, schools, parks and other community facilities.

2.2 The proposed residential development has been designed to successfully integrate and preserve the appearance of the surrounding housing stock. The proposed location of the development will encourage people to walk and cycle which in turn has benefits for the environment, road safety, and residential amenity and for health. The development is located on a comprehensive network of attractive and safe pedestrian and cycle routes.

2.3 Situated in a prime location for both bus, rail & car transportation it's also of significant interest as it sits within close proximity to A483 and A5156 both leading in and out of Wales. Plugged into this area are multiple services and other main roads, thus creating a looped system around the edge of the town centre. These type of road connections maintains the site and provides it with multiple access both local and nonlocal.

2.4 Local amenities in the area consist of schools, parks, pubs, shops, recreational facilities (i.e. gyms & leisure centres), all well situated next to main roads/on public access routes through to the city centre and further afield. How well a region is connected, both internally and externally, will play a large part in how successful, inclusive, safe and sustainable it is. The proposed development would include public transport accessibility, and connections between different modes of transport (rail & bus), to ensure that all people have access to and are not excluded from any facilities or opportunities due to a physical restriction. Well established connections between the new development and existing amenities ensures that they are available to more people, more of the time.

2.5 The development is within walking distance of:

- Island Green Retail Park⁽¹⁾
- Belleview Park ⁽²⁾
- Wrexham Association Football Club ⁽³⁾
- Queensway Sports Complex
- Moss Valley Country Park ⁽⁴⁾
- National Trust – Erddig ⁽⁵⁾



4



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)

3.0 AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1 A total of 24 apartments houses specifically designed to meet the requirements of the site, in both scale, form and layout. The 2 varying types are 1 and 2 bed flats ranging between 40 & 72m². They provide the qualities and economies of scale sought after by the National and Regional Planning Policies and Guidelines. The level of development seeks to ensure that the project is economically viable for the client despite complicated social and economic restraints and policies implemented in the area.

3.2 The residential units can cater for single occupants to small families due to the house type. mall and large families due to the housing type. The infill nature of the scheme lends itself to be a sympathetic response to the site and its surroundings, ensuring that the vacant land is used whilst at the same time respecting the boundary line of existing building. The density of the entire development aligns well with the existing suburban character of the area, ensuring a density that makes efficient use of the land and creates demand for local services

3.3 To achieve long term sustainability for the development and in turn the area, the planning application seeks to reflect a mixed community of varying age groups. Accordingly the development includes a property type that can respond to the continued evolution of the area.

3.4 Affordability is an increasing problem across the area and a growing issue creating specific difficulties for the local population. The application supports the need for varying house types to sustain population levels and to address the issues of urban density. The gated development can contribute to the identified regeneration programmes of the area and reduce the worsening vacancy rates of the properties.

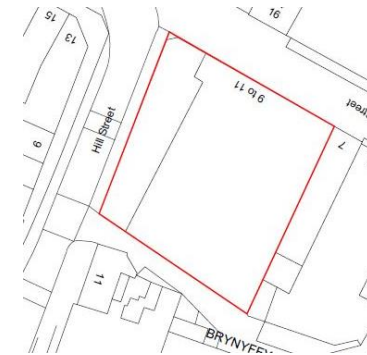
3.5 The national Planning Guidance that is relevant to this site is provided in:

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Developments
PPG3 Housing

The guidance in PPG3 accepts that the extent of the development will depend on the overall need for housing and the capacity for the existing urban area to accommodate additional housing. The proposal directly supports housing market renewal and would meet local needs or otherwise provide exceptional planning benefits, as well as supporting the renewal of housing markets and the creation of a sustainable community in this area.



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Current Site Condition



Proposed Development

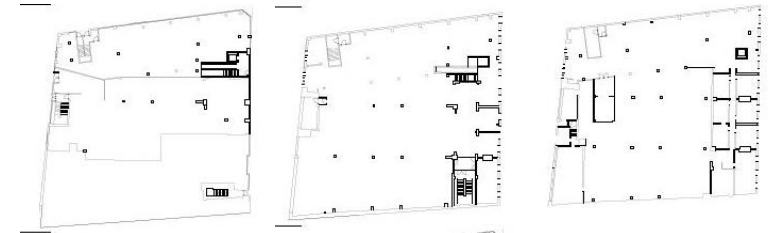
4.0 LAYOUT

4.1 The building is in the centre of Wrexham an established town in North Wales. It is designed around an ordered structure of formal avenues and streets that form a clear hierarchy of routes and public spaces. The proposed layout of the development seeks to build upon this quality to create a fully developed streetscape and build on the existing character so that all residents are within easy reach of local schools, shops, community facilities and recreation areas. The development is based on developing a currently vacant building.

4.2 The main features of the proposal respects the arrangement of the locality. In general the town centre is made up of typically 3-4 storey buildings mostly shops or restaurants with flats on the upper floors and several purpose built apartment blocks. Redeveloping the existing empty building makes positive re-use of the spaces rather than developing a new building. The new development aims to create an urban form of enclosure in which the new dwellings do not dominate the existing, nor is it over developed.

4.3 The intention is to re-use the empty building. Privacy, amenities and public realms between the new and old intend to be kept, hence the placing of the dwellings and the density in which the site is developed.

4.4 Integrating the development into the already established street paths/roads has been considered carefully, ensuring the impact on the existing services are little too non-existent. The refuse storage will be incorporated into the ground floor of the building and collected from the rear. Within the site context, there are no trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders.



Existing Floor Plans



Site Plan



Existing Floor Plans

5.0 SCALE

5.1 In terms of the lateral arrangement of the elevations, a distinctive characteristic of the area is the dominance of buildings. The development tries to balance this characteristic alongside the desire to include variety into the built form.

5.2 The proposal has been designed to suit the existing building as well as the surrounding neighbouring buildings. The new proposed openings in the facades of the existing building have been made to suit the new internal layouts as well as respect the existing features.

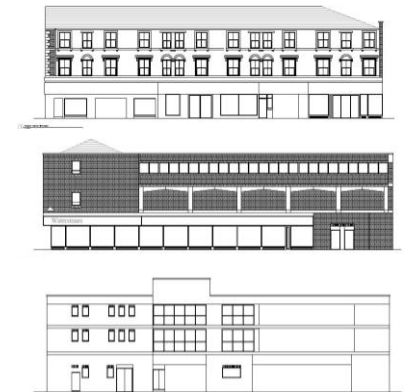
They maintain a sympathetic relationship and the placing of the dwellings aims to avoid any significant overshadowing. In general.

5.3 The proposed development responds to the physical and social dynamic, character and setting of the local area. The new development aims to respect the form and urban grain of the locality, taking into account local distinctiveness such as materials and features, and creates a new and interesting public face to an existing vacant building. The development has been conceived as making positive re-use of an empty building on a busy corner of the town centre. A missing fragment of a growing area with high quality, contemporary design using well proportioned elevations, new fenestrations adding references to the local tradition.

5.4 The main aim of the design concept was to achieve a residential space with high standards of local character and distinctiveness. The use of local materials, continuity of architectural detail and an integrated landscaped area ensure that the development relates positively to the existing townscape rather than becoming a disjointed add on.



Scale of existing site & surrounding dwellings



Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations

7.0 APPEARANCE

7.1 The proposed development has been specifically designed to be sensitive to the existing volume and massing of the neighbouring buildings. Careful consideration was given to the existing character of the area with the proposed development offering a sensitive and suitable approach.

7.2 The built form of the proposed development is mostly dictated by the existing building. The newly added windows have been designed to suit the internal layout as well as the character of the existing elevations and original openings. The additional openings will seek to limit excessive blank facades and give more character to the existing street. The building being situated on the corner of the growing town centre gives a higher degree of visibility and so that the regular character of the street will be accentuated by a continued building line parallel to the street edge.

7.3 National Planning Guidance emphasise the importance of acknowledging and making a positive response to the context. In this regard the built environment adjoining the site provides some design context and it is also relevant to consider the character and distinctiveness of the wider locality. The architectural form of the area as a whole is generally simple but bold, the development is a change of use of an existing building and isn't creating new buildings. This general simplicity creates a sense of uniformity and it is these design features and palette of materials that has informed the design solution of the proposed development.

7.4 The new openings mainly to the Hill St and Brynyffynnon elevations create more visual impact which creates more interest in the existing building complementing the vertical and horizontal rhythm of the windows and doors. The building itself has an architectural standard which has been interpreted with additional emphasis at windows and eaves level.

The form, rhythm and massing of the building reflects features in the surrounding buildings. Manipulating these elevations to incorporate windows offer a contemporary elegance while providing key spaces with large volumes of natural light.

7.5 In the design of the building we have endeavoured to respect the historical context in the area. We have sought to accomplish this with the use of a sympathetic palette of building materials and external finishes and we are dedicated to refine this further in close collaboration with the Planning Officer. Finally we have sought to proportion the building to sit comfortably in a context of predominantly traditional building types whilst maintaining a contemporary design ethos.

7.6 The redevelopment of the existing building optimizes the use of the land available and as a result regenerates the area making the positive changes and upgrade to the regenerated town.

7.7 The proposed development reflects Wrexham Councils strategy and land use development based on three main themes:

- Equality and social inclusion
- Sustainable development
- Regeneration.



8.0 ACCESS



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- 8.1 Wroot Design Ltd is committed to providing an inclusive development that allows access to everyone regardless of disability, age, ethnicity or social grouping. We are active in ensuring that any potential sources of discrimination are addressed in the physical characteristics of the scheme. The design has been developed to meet the latest legislation and good practice guidance on accessibility available at the design and construction stages. These will include for example the Building Regulations: Part M (Access to and use of buildings), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- 8.2 The apartments are defined within the edge of the building, with a large new additional void in the centre of the two floors allowing lights to flood the building. Careful consideration of the changes in level across the building has ensured that the properties will be able to meet the access standards required by Part M.
- 8.3 Pedestrian approach: The main approach to the apartments is from Hope St/Regent Street where there is an existing lift and staircase which is to be kept to service the upper floors. Access will be constructed from firm, durable and slip resistant material and will be well lit, designed and maintained to meet the standards laid down in BS 5489.
- 8.4 The site and building have to actively take consideration of the disabled and to provide sufficient access for disabled users. The design has been developed in accordance with the BS 8300: 2001 and the DDA Act 1995 Parts 1-4.
- 8.5 The application site is in a sustainable location close to several urban centres and to substantial employment areas. Bus and train services run near the site with easy access onto A483 and parking within a ten minute walk. Allowing for access to a wide range of services without dependence on the car.
- 8.6 As part of our proposals for our residential development we propose a full crime prevention system to provide a 'safe as possible' route for residents and visitors to the site.
- 8.7 Entrances will be well lit and additional lighting will be provided through the use of motion sensitive lighting.
- 8.8 If required a simple stair lift mechanism could be installed on the stairs in the building to allow disabled users to move freely about the property.
- 8.9 The site benefits from having a new void through the upper floors and roof which provides daylight to flood through the building. The service road to the rear of the building shouldn't encourage traffic but it does give access refuge collections.
- 8.10 Provision for cyclists is fairly limited within the site given the existing building.
- 8.11 The majority of bus services are located along Hill Street and Regent Street which is directly opposite the site at an acceptable walking distance.

9.0 DESIGNING OUT CRIME

- 9.1 As with all new developments designed by Wroot Design Ltd, a heavy emphasis is placed upon providing safe and secure environments for all those who use them. The success of a development is often illustrated after construction has been completed whereupon the buildings are being used on a daily basis.
- 9.2 If a project can be seen to be resilient to crime years after its completion, the initial groundwork of applying crime fighting measures at the design stage can be shown to triumph. When developing apartments we employ the principles of secure by design to our buildings. SBD is a scheme developed by the police and its requirements and recommendations ensure that the prime objective of providing safe and secure environments is met. To achieve this objective equal weight should be given to both environmental design and physical security.
- 9.3 Natural surveillance is the cornerstone in the achievement of community safety. The proposed development will ensure that the proposed front garden, footpaths and routes are open to view from adjoining occupied properties. Natural surveillance will principally be achieved by continuing the urban block, based on a composition of building frontages that frame and overlook adjacent streets. The location of windows and doors will seek to limit the blank facade.
- 9.4 The property will be clearly named and numbered to assist residents, postal workers and the attendance of the emergency services.
- 9.5 All external lighting to comply with BS 5489. The lighting will be designed to illuminate all external doors and vulnerable areas, and will be controlled by photo electric cells, a time switch or passive infra-red detectors. We propose the use of low consumption lamps with the units positioned to reduce glare, light pollution and possible attack.

