



**Bob Dewey
PLANNING**

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
PROPOSED RETENTION OF AN EXTENSION TO CLUB
TOWN HILL, WREXHAM

Background: The proposal is within the settlement limit as defined in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan and within the Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area.

Planning History:

The development was undertaken to assist the operation of the business during the COVID pandemic. The Council indicated that it was accepted that it could be considered as permitted development under the temporary provisions allowed by the Welsh Government.

An application for this development (ref: P/P/2022/0060) was submitted on 19/01/2022 and refused by the Council 04/03/2022.

Reason(s)

1. Due to the prominent siting on Town Hill the development has a detrimental impact upon the Wrexham Conservation Area and therefore conflicts with policies GDP1a PS2 and EC7 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

Wrexham Planning Guidance

The Wrexham Unitary Development Plan was adopted in February 2005. This shows the site as part in a conservation area and only the front part is so designated.

Policy PS1 requires developments to be directed to settlement limits and PS2 requires developments not to detrimentally affect townscape character. Policy S2 indicates that the site should be permitted for mixed commercial uses if they enhance the vitality and environmental quality of the area. Policy ED7 (referred to be the Council requires that development of alterations and extensions within Conservation Areas must "reflect the design and character of the area as a whole".

With regard to the Conservation Area, the Council has adopted Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Assessment & Management Plan. This was first produced in January 2009 and extracts from (an undated version) are copied below.

Specific reference is made to the appeal site (22 Town Hill)

"Gap sites at 22 Town Hill,, detrimentally affect(s) the visual continuity of the street scene."

Helpful encouragement is also given to uses such as appeal premises:-

“The retention of retail units and encouragement of mixed uses is essential in ensuring the vibrancy of the Conservation Area both throughout the day and evening. There remains a lack of activity throughout the centre after normal business closing times”

Planning Policy Wales 11 says that planning:
must reconcile the needs of development and conservation, securing economy, efficiency and amenity in the use of land,

the granting of planning permission for developments, ...which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level. In exceptional cases, the presumption may be overridden in favour of development considered desirable on public interest grounds.

GROUND'S OF APPEAL

For clarity it should be fully understood that the brick wall and iron railings were clearly shown on the proposals granted planning permission in 2014. (P/2014/0381) and were built soon after. Thus the appeal should be considered as a request to grant permission for a sheeted roof.

The Council is clearly (and understandably) unhappy with the site as a “gap” within the otherwise continuously built frontage along the north west side of Town Hill.

It also wishes to encourage developments which will create a “vibrancy” in the Area throughout day and night time.

The result of the development is a semi-permanent filling of the gap and by its semi-openness will introduce a vibrant atmosphere during the opening hours of the club.

The choice of materials was inevitably chosen to allow a speedy construction to reflect the urgent need to allow the premises to trade safely. It is our belief that 99% of passers-by will never notice the roof material and if that is the sole reason for refusal, the Council should have invited an amendment to the scheme to allow a darker coloured sheet with a dark coloured fascia,

The Council describes the siting as “prominent”. This is emphatically refuted. The site is on the established building line (which presumably the Council seeks to reflect in removing gaps in the frontage. Prominent (according to the Oxford dictionary) means “jutting out, projecting” Clearly not the case here. The brick wall has been in place for many years (photos shows it there in 2014) so has become lawful.



Dec 2014

Thus the objection can only relate to the roof. The roof sheeting is not prominent and does not extend as far forward as the wall and could be further cut back if that is an issue.

It can only be viewed against the main building from the opposite side of Town Hill. A small view is possible from the same side but is extremely restricted and it is limited to the end of the roofing sheets. The sheets can be painted or replaced by pre-coloured sheeting if that appears to be significant. A wooden fascia board is intended to conceal the cut edges of the sheets.

CONCLUSION

The inspector is asked to walk up Town Hill from the Brook Street junction with an open mind, noting the wide variety of commercial advertising in the area. With respect, we suggest that he will have passed the site before he appreciates it. The roof has been in place for many months and so far as we are aware has not attracted the opprobrium of pedestrians.

The Council's aim to introduce vitality into the area will be better served by allowing the appeal (possibly taking account of the offers made above)

We ask the inspector to grant permission.

Bob Dewey
R A Dewey BA(Hons) MBA, Dip TP, Dip Est Mgmt, Dip Transp Studies
March 13 2022

EXTRACTS from Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Plan



Figure 1 Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area

Wrexham Town Centre
Conservation Area Assessment &
Management Plan

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3.7 Town Hill rises and curves from the west into High Street and although containing a number of early and listed buildings, **the physical fabric, particularly on the north side of the street, would benefit from repair and renovation**

3.8 The properties along Town Hill and High Street are built on long narrow burgess plots probably of medieval origin. Characterised by a dense and compact form where houses and shops were intermingled and often properties consisted of a shopfront with accommodation above for the shopkeeper, and a workshop and yard to the rear. Some of these yards survive to the rear of properties along High Street and Town Hill but most have been filled in and developed

Disused floor space and gap sites: The town centre experiences high vacancy and turnover and consistent under-occupation of upper floors. Many upper floors remain vacant resulting in a lack of maintenance and deterioration of the structural fabric, which degrades the overall appearance of the street-scene. The former Burtons at the junction of Hope Street and High Street is particularly detrimental in key views to and from the Church. The current condition with boarded up windows is visually poor and interim measures could be taken to improve this situation. Vacancy levels within Overton Arcade are also a concern in one of the more distinctive spaces within the town centre. **Gap sites at 22 Town Hill**, adjacent the Commercial Public House on College Street, to the east of the Wynnstay Hotel on Charles Street, the former Hippodrome site on Henblas Street and on Yorke Street, **detrimentally affect the visual continuity of the street scene.**

Vitality: The retention of retail units and **encouragement of mixed uses is essential in ensuring the vibrancy of the Conservation Area both throughout the day and evening.** There remains a lack of activity throughout the centre after normal business closing times.

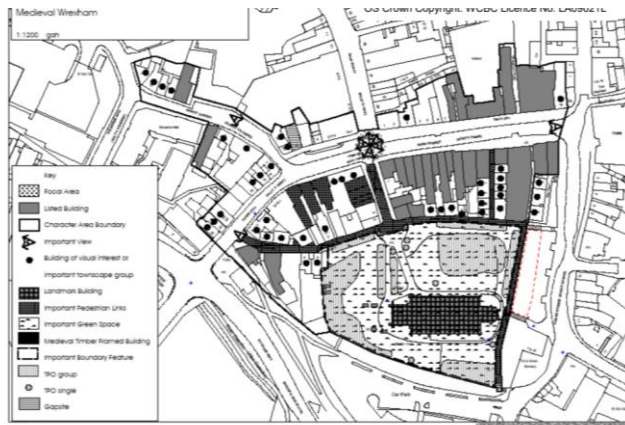


Figure 4 Wrexham Town Centre – Medieval Wrexham
Wrexham Town Centre

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COUNCIL OFFICERS' Report & Observations (on appeal application) :

The application site is located to the rear of the Penny Black public house, on Town Hill, and is very visible within Wrexham Town Centre conservation area. Town Hill is characterised by a dense and compact form of shops and houses (many now in alternative uses to the ground floor).

The area which is covered by the external shelter was a more open plot, with a brick and rail boundary to the front. The height of the shelter to the front section of the plot is at odds with the pattern of the street scene. The roof of the structure, in a modern sheet material is highly visible here and I have concerns regarding the appearance of this as it weathers.

The Conservation Officer objects to the application the shelter has an adverse effect on the character of the Conservation Area.

Explanation: In some ways having one shelter roof (or actually two, one to each level) is more unified than umbrellas that were used before. On the ground floor however, because there seems to be a level change from the street to the pub, it comes across as really dingy and oppressive.

The development does not enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is therefore contrary to policy EC7 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

P/2014/0381 Balcony Granted 28/7/2014

Application

Applicant PENNY BLACK

Code Number WRO P/2014/0381

Agent BLUEPRINT ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES LTD
REDWITHER BUSINESS CENTRE
ABBEY ROAD
WREXHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
WREXHAM
LL13 9XR

Date Received 19/05/2014

Decision Date 28/07/2014

Town and Country Planning Act, 1990

Location of application
PENNY BLACK, ABBOT STREET, WREXHAM, LL11 1TA

Description of application
ERECTION OF BALCONY FOR USE IN CONNECTION WITH EXISTING BAR / RESTAURANT (IN RETROSPECT)

In reaching this decision the Council has had regard to the relevant policies in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan which are as follows:-

EC7 Conservation Areas
GDP1 Development objectives

Particulars of decision that permission be GRANTED

upen area structures used as an existing using used as a smoking area.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Design: The balcony is both within and visible from the Conservation Area but is set back 4 metres behind the frontage of the adjacent buildings thus ensuring it is not unduly prominent within the street scene. The simple design of the balcony does not detract from the appearance of the surrounding area, preserves the character of the Conservation Area and is in keeping with the general appearance of this part of the site as an outdoor seating area.

Amenity: The balcony does not afford direct views into the habitable rooms of the adjacent student accommodation so does not result in loss of privacy.

Whilst noting the concerns about the balcony being used as a smoking area, this part of the site has been used as an external seating/smoking area for a number of years in conjunction with the operation of the bar now known as Penny Black. It could also continue to be used as such irrespective of whether the balcony remains or is removed. The retention of the balcony is therefore unlikely to result in the occupiers of the adjacent student accommodation or other adjacent properties suffering significant additional disturbance by way of noise or smoke.

Other Matters: It is not a material planning consideration whether the applicants have had permission from an adjacent landowner to connect the

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P / 2014 / 0381

Front Elevation

Ground Floor Plan

First Floor Plan

Wrexham County Borough Council APPROVED PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Rev	Date	Detail	Issued

Project:
Proposed Alterations at Penny Black, Abbot Street, Wrexham, LL11 1TA.

Title: As Built **Scale:** (AS) 1:100

Drawn By: S M Eltham **Date:** May 2014

Drawing No: T038/001 **Sheet:** 1 of 1

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