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Heritage Impact Statement

Statement prepared for:

**8 No Residential Apartments on land adjacent to
2, Belgrave Road, Wrexham**

Explaining Objectives

Our clients main objective with this application is to obtain planning permission to develop the site to its full potential whilst enhancing the visual impression of the streetscene. The proposal will make better use of the garden space to provide a development opportunity for apartments.

With the parcel of land being located within the settlement limit, it is ideally suited for residential dwellings and will assist with the current shortage of housing land supply within the borough.

This is to be achieved with being mindful of the scale of the structure due to the sensitive nature of the site. Due this being such a prominent position at the junction of Belgrave and Sontley Road.

While many properties have additional turrets and higher level features all of the buildings are 2 storey structures and therefore the development has respected this element to ensure that it is not imposing on the area. The trees are to remain a key feature and the initial impression of the site will remain one of mature trees.

While our aim was to retain all the trees to minimize the impact to the street scene this has not been possible and a balanced approach has been taken. No important or significant tree will be removed.

Understanding Significance

The parcel of land which provided the extensive garden to No 2 Belgrave Road was originally allocated to be a building plot and the first dwelling on that side of the street. When the land was bought for No 2 Belgrave Road, the purchaser wanted both a larger garden and to prevent anyone building too closely to them, therefore purchased both plots.

The junction of Sontley Road and Belgrave Road, creates these corner plots and are the most sensitive plots on Belgrave Road having such prominence and impact from both streets. The opposite corner was used to construct No 10 Belgrave Road, a single dwelling positioned centrally within its grounds and benefitting from a large garden. This is currently used as offices.

Large plots on Sontley Road are essential to their contribution to the building character and dominance. This is not carried through to Belgrave Road, houses are set just back a short distance leaving a small landscape frontage or driveway, nothing to the sides with private garden space to the rear, most being of average size. Our site has a relationship with both streets, and the relation of structure to boundary was more important to reflect that of No 10 as opposed to the typical plot size of the majority of Belgrave Road.

The dwellings along Belgrave Road are all individually designed and there is great variation to the streetscene. The materials are fairly consistent with the majority being brick structures and natural slate roof coverings. The repeated use of material provides a key characteristic to the area and are deemed more significant than the designs of each unit.

Boundary treatments is another extremely sensitive aspect to this area and also recognised as a unifying feature to the street. All properties being fully enclosed with low level walls and supplementary planting.

The proposal provides a key feature and link between Sontley and Belgrave Road, as Number 10 provides on the opposite side of the street.

Identifying Proposed Changes including Assessing the Impact and Reasoning

As the development site is vacant/garden the trees are the only significant feature to retain.

To enable this development to take place, some of the smaller less significant trees have been removed. These are all detailed within the tree report and are either category U or C and therefore have little or no contribution to the Conservation area. The larger more mature trees remain untouched.

No changes are proposed to the existing building, No 2 Belgrave Road will remain untouched. A new boundary will be erected between this property and the new development site. To ensure that maximum privacy is maintained the fence will be timber post and panel with a height of 1.5m. Additional planting along this boundary will be introduced on the development site to soften this boundary and give a similar appearance to the existing 3 boundaries. These already benefit from planted areas.

The existing dwelling currently benefits from 2 vehicular access points. Both of these are direct onto Belgrave Road. Initially we planned to retain these. One to serve the existing house which will remain as existing. However, the other access which was to serve the site will mean the new driveway conflicts with the root protection area of one of the 'B' category trees. Therefore the access serving the development has been relocated, further towards the Belgrave Road, Sontley Road

junction by 2 metres. The tree providing a larger contribution to the street scene and Conservation area as a whole than the position of the access.

The design of the unit has been influenced with the surrounding form and materials of other buildings. No 10 specifically with regards to its positioning within its own grounds. The positioning of the new structure represents a similar relationship to the site boundaries and an approximate building line was carried through to ensure that our new structure does not dominate the junction.

As mentioned materials are a key factor in the area and these have been replicated. This includes both the brick elevations as well as the natural Welsh slate roof covering. Stone heads and cills together with horizontal brick banding details with coloured brick have also been used on the new design as these are a repeated feature throughout the varying properties.

The roof has been formed with hipped as opposed to gable roof structures. Although both are used with the street, the influence and proximity of No 10 resulted in this being deemed the most important to reflect.

Cast iron rainwater goods will be used throughout all painted black. All other ironmongery on the buildings including vent coverings etc, will also be black painted metalwork to avoid the use of uPVC

Boundaries are to remain as existing as again, boundary treatment is extremely sensitive to this area and also recognised as a unifying feature. The new boundary between the site and No 2 Belgrave Road, will not be seen from the highway and therefore not have an impact on the street scene or Conservation area.

Conclusion

The new development has been carefully designed and with the influence from No 10 Belgrave Road, both these properties will provide a balanced approach and link from Sontley Road into Belgrave Road.

It is interesting that the land was original proposed as a building plot. When viewed with this in mind it is clear that this corner plot doesn't currently provide the link between the two streets and is unfinished.

A development of 8 desirable apartments, within this location will provide good high value accommodation. This is in keeping with the properties of this superb location of Wrexham Town Centre.

With such positive contributions to the housing supply and visual enhancement to the Conservation Area we would hope that the Local Authority will be fully supportive of the scheme as submitted.

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