



Client. Wales & West Housing Association
 Job No. 20022
 Date. September 2021

Kingsley Circle Site Eaton Road Design and Access Statement



Job Title: Kingsley Circle Community Centre

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Report Title: T18 Design & Access Statement

Date of First Issue: September 2021

CONTROL SHEET

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DOCUMENT APPROVAL

Author	Checked	Approved by
KA	MG	MG

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Issue	Date	Description of Amendment	By	Checked
1	2021-09-09	Document issued for comment by client.	KA	MG
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1.0 Summary of the proposal

Kingsley Community Centre is located off Eaton Drive, in the Caia Park area of Wrexham. The site is a former community centre and had been sold by the council to a private land owner following the cessation of its use. WWHA have recently acquired the site from this landowner. The landowner gained planning approval for a scheme (P/2019/0792) of 16 one and two bed apartments. This is in the form of a three-storey building with a communal parking area. They also have SAB consent for the surface water drainage scheme on the site.

WWHA wishes to revise the current scheme and to provide a scheme of supported living and general needs accommodation working in partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council's adult social care department. WCBC are looking for an apartment scheme to provide supported living to assist people to live independently with on-site 24-hour care with staff facilities. This would be through an apartment with shared living and kitchen facilities and 4 individual ensuite bedrooms with staff bedroom. This apartment would have access to an outside garden area. The remainder of the ground floor would be a number of one bed apartments for to provide a further degree of independent living which will be supported through the same on-site care. Separate accesses and internal access points have been designed into the scheme to meet this requirement with a further separate access for the first and second floor. Two of the independent apartments would have private garden areas.

The proposed scheme provides for one 4 bed apartment and 4 one bed apartments on the ground floor and 10 one bed and 2 two bed apartments over the first and second floor. This makes a total of 19 apartments.

2.0 Brief and Vision

Proposed scheme requirements

A block of apartments to include;

Ground floor

Supported accommodation

- An apartment which provides 4 resident double bedrooms with ensuite bedrooms with showers
- An office with a single bed for sleep over and lockable cupboard located by the entrance door
- Separate WC
- Separate kitchen/dining and living areas for 4 people to meet DQR, Lifetime homes
- Garden space which is accessed by French doors from the shared living space of the apartment

4 one-bedroom apartments to meet DQR 46m² served off a separate internal lobby to the shared apartment but can use the same entrance door.

First floor

7 one-bedroom apartments to meet DQR 46m²

Second Floor

7 one-bedroom apartments to meet DQR 46m²

To provide sufficient parking spaces for the apartments which meet DQR and Secured by Design. To provide soft landscaping to meet any SUDS requirement and to enhance the site.

3.0 Design Vision

“Wales & West Housing’s vision for all developments is ***“to create a place to achieve strong, sustainable growth to make a difference to people’s lives, homes and communities.”***”

Overarching strategic objectives

- A scheme of 100% affordable homes for social rent to provide house types to meet identified local needs.
- A range of sizes and features within a consistent architectural style that complements the local vernacular.
- A coherent design with landscape finishes to create distinctive development that ties in with the local landscape character.
- A sense of place - to meet Welsh Governments Placemaking Agenda and the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.
- To create sustainable patterns of development which link within existing settlements to encourage walking and cycling and improve access to public transport
- A sustainable home that meets the required standards of DQR Lifetime Homes and Secured By Design.
- To create an attractive place that people respect and want to live in which will create a sustainable and thriving community

Site specific objectives

- To create an apartment building which fits in with the local urban form and enhances the built environment with no adverse issues to local amenity caused by over looking
- Retention of parking areas for the adjacent shops and creation of a specific parking area for the residents of the apartments
- To have amenity space for use by the shared apartment and landscaping around the building to meet the Suds requirement while minimising service charges
- To ensure the use of the site topography creates a building with level access and parking to meet DQR Lifetime Homes but does not lead to significant retaining features
- To retain the easement required for the sewers which cross the site
- To retain the roadside trees or make adequate roadside provision

WWHA are now in a position to develop the scheme further to acquire planning approval.

4.0 Site and context analysis

Culture and Community

Site location

The site is located to the east of Wrexham town centre in the Caia Park area of the town.



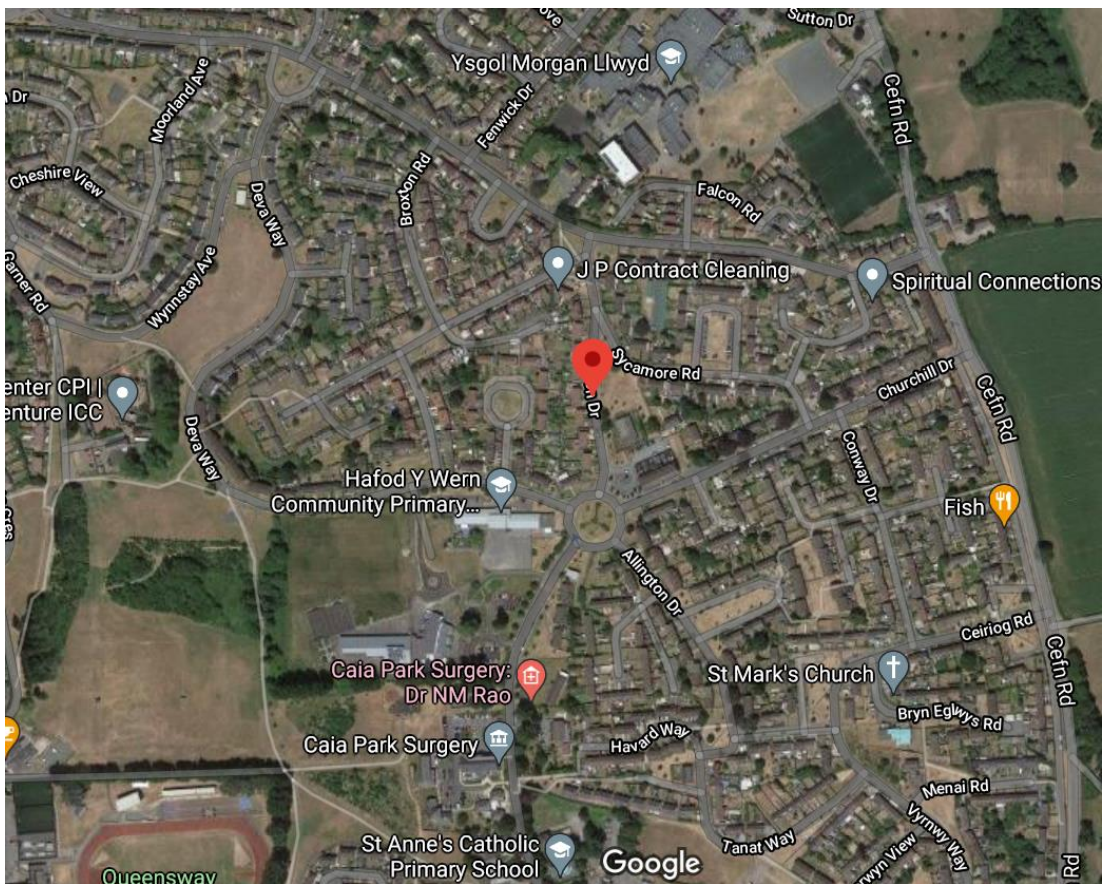
It is located in the heart of the community adjacent to the parade of local shops and an area of informal open space.



Open space to the north of the site Parade of shops to the south of the site



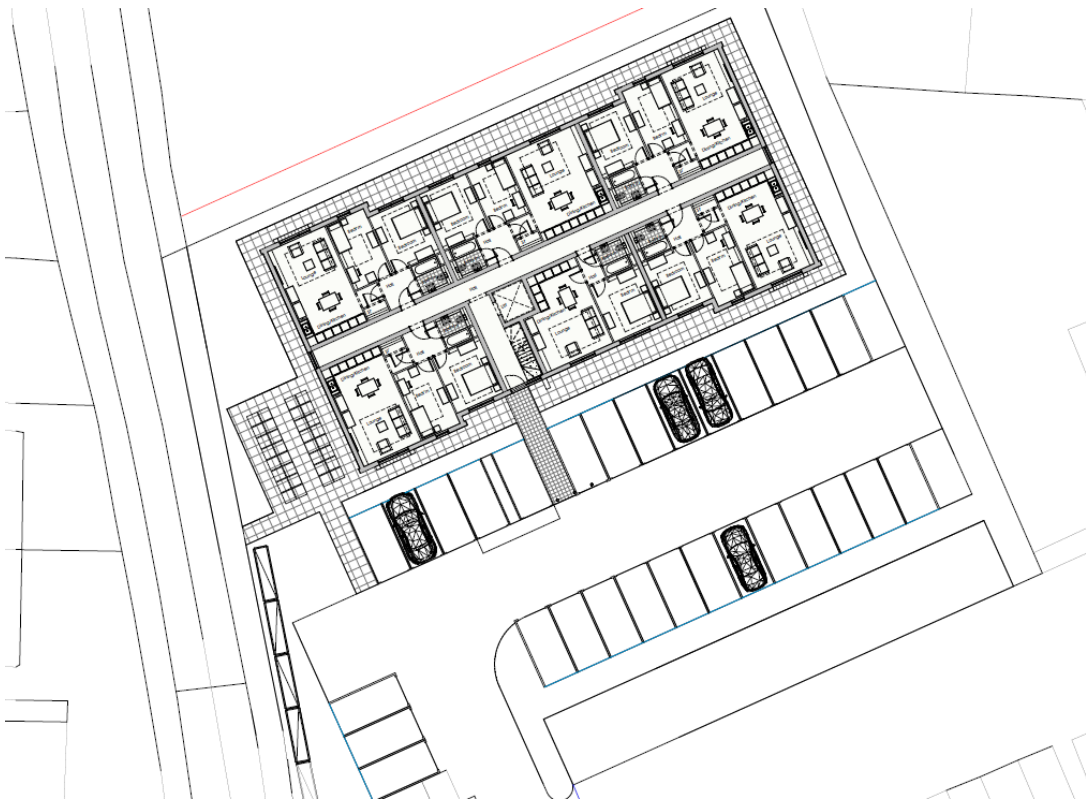
The site is served by an existing access and pedestrian footway which served its former use as a community centre and also serves the shops.



The area is predominantly residential with a Primary and Secondary school and health care facilities within walking distance.

5.0 Planning context

The site is within the settlement boundary of Wrexham which is a major town in North Wales. The site is a brownfield site with a vacant community centre, previously owned by the Borough Council. The site benefits from full planning permission (P/2019/0792) granted on 5th March 2021 and SAB consent for a scheme of 10 two bed and 6 one bed apartments. The proposed apartment block has a similar footprint and massing to the approved scheme. Although there are slightly more units the proposed apartments are predominately one bed rather than two bed.

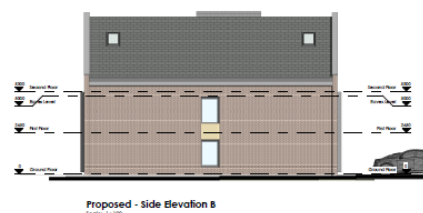
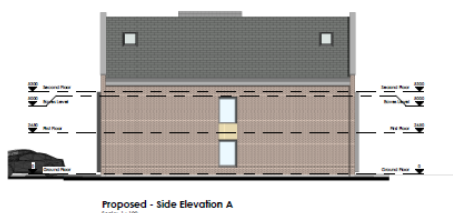


Approved scheme



Proposed scheme

The proposed block is two and a half storey and has a similar design to the consented block.



Approved scheme of 16 apartments



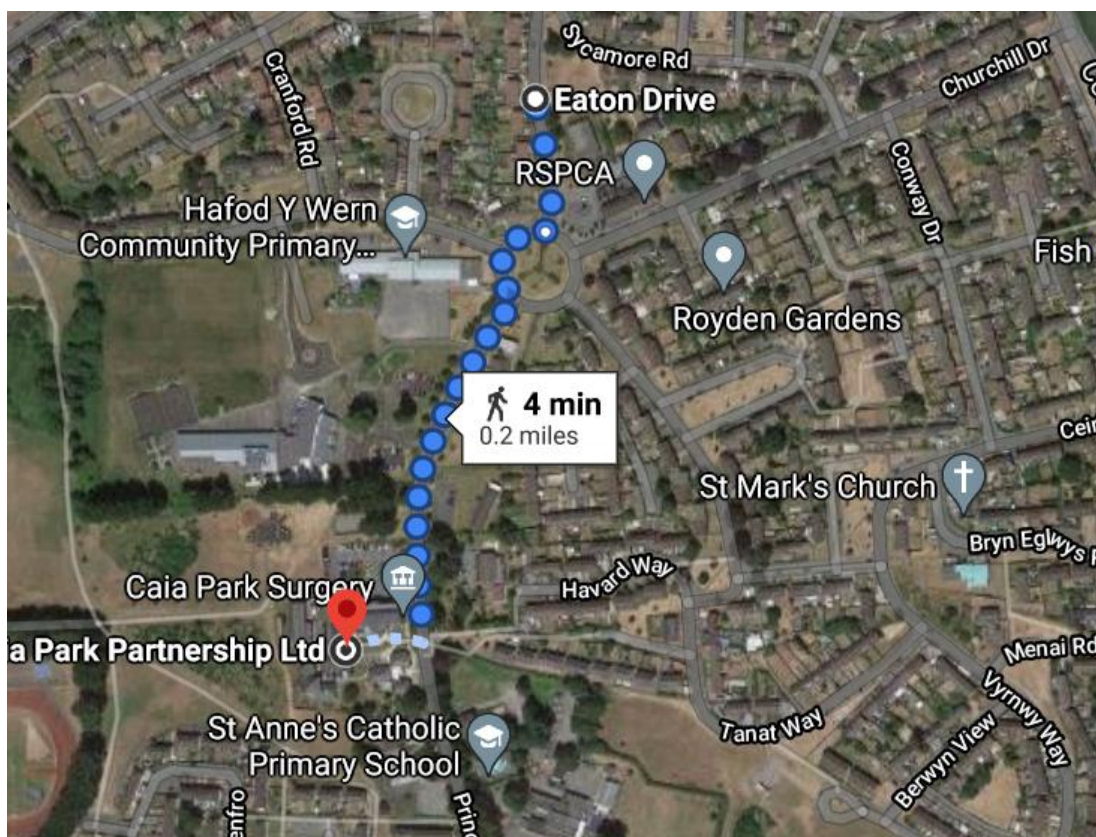
Proposed scheme of 19 apartments

Surrounding land and building use

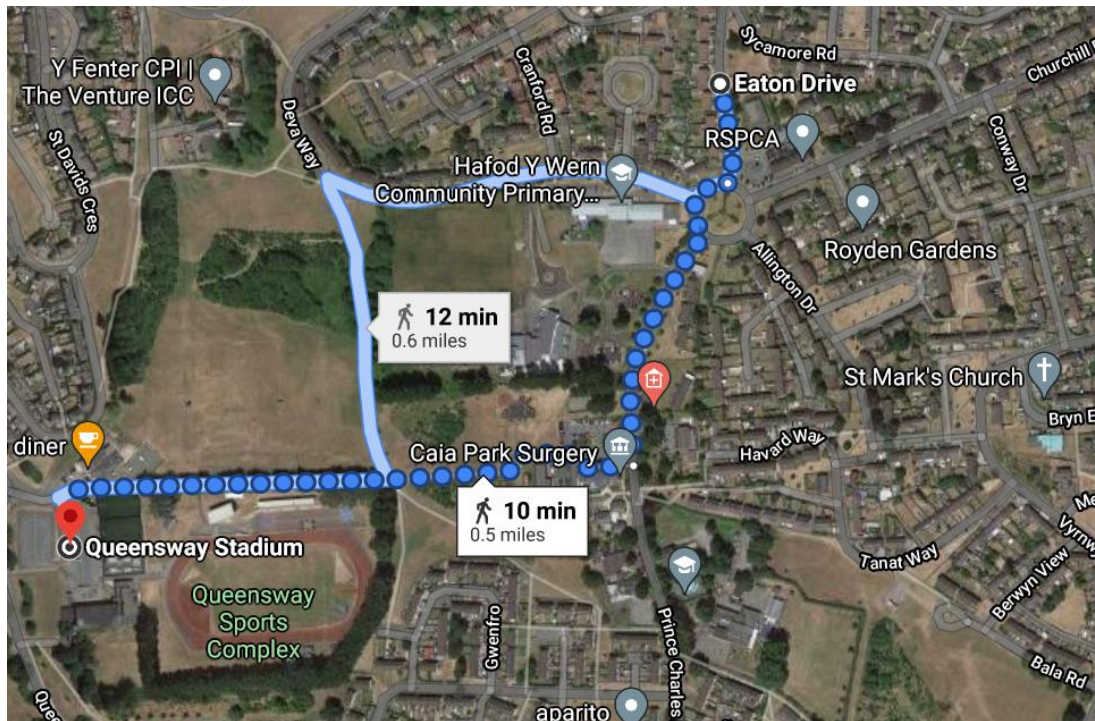
The site is situated in a suburban area with existing housing to the western and eastern boundaries. To the north of the site is an informal open space and is to be a wildflower meadow, which is part of a project to create a network of open spaces for ecological and environmental enhancement. There is a parade of shops to the south of the site. The siting of the development needs to consider the separation distances with the surrounding residential properties to ensure there is no impact on privacy. There are no habitable rooms in the end elevations from habitable rooms to minimise any overlooking. Any windows in the side elevations would be obscure glazed and non-opening.

Neighbourhood structure

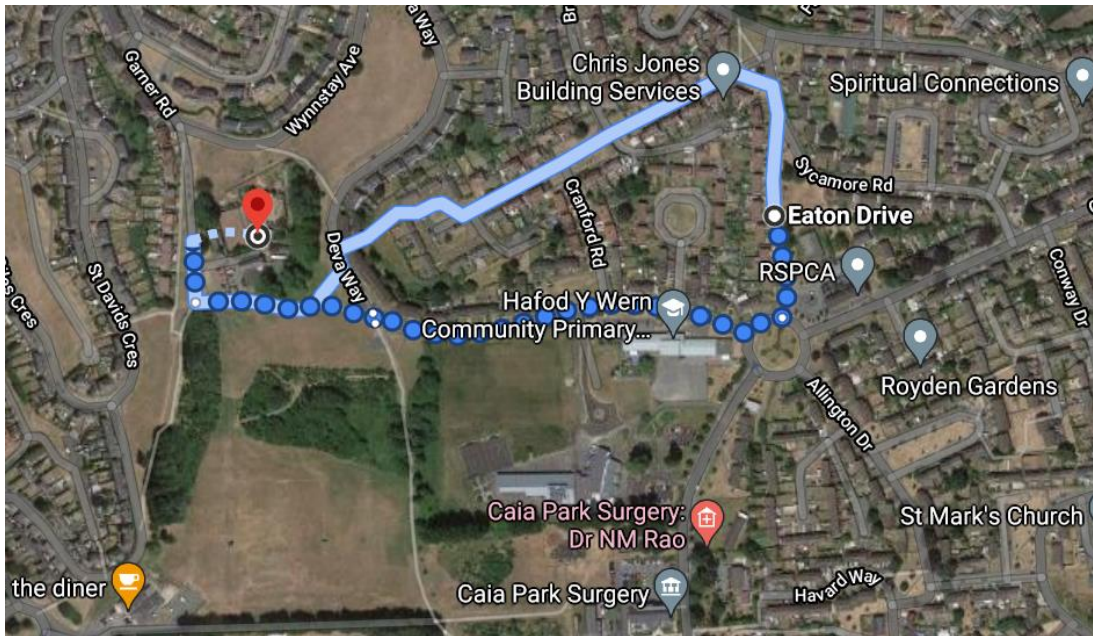
The site is within a 5 minute and 10-minute walking distance of a variety of uses. The local parade of shops which share the entrance accessed from Churchill Drive is a 1-minute walk which is home to a pharmacy, convenience store and 2 takeaways.



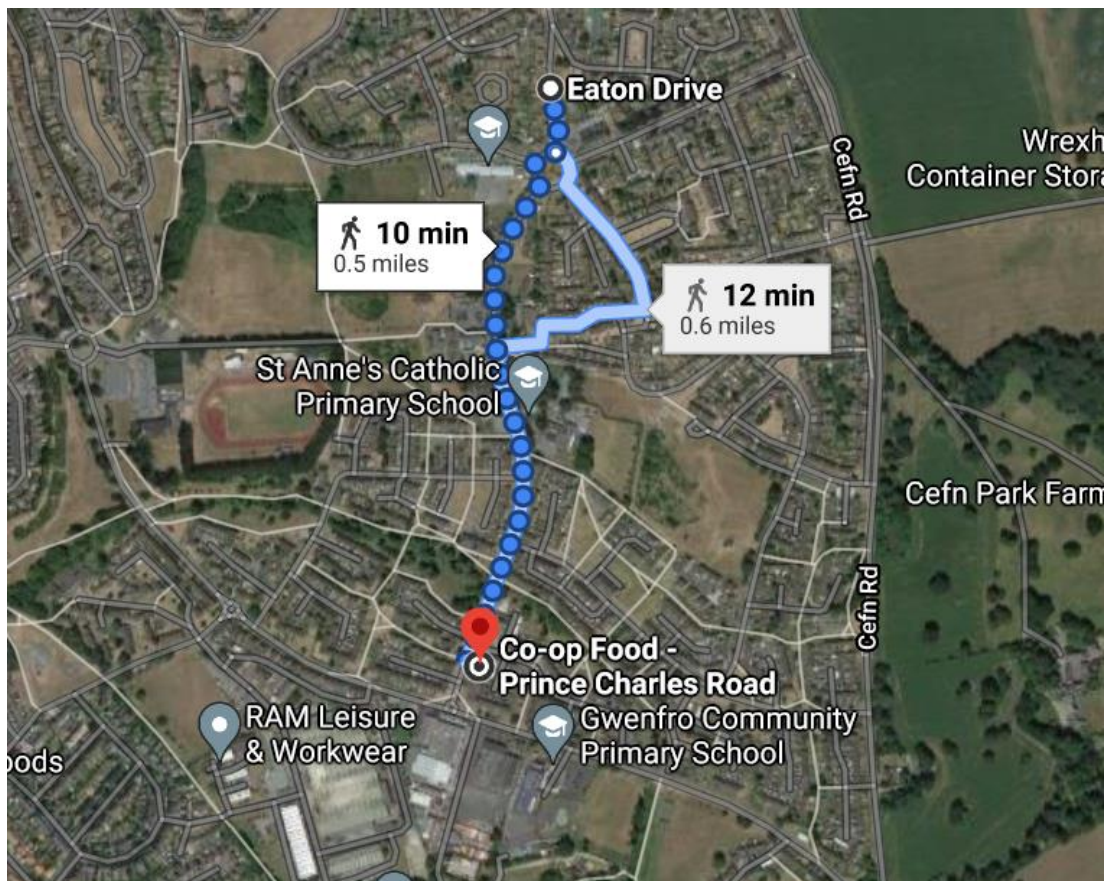
The Caia Park Centre, Prince Charles Road which replaced the former community centre on this site is a 4-minute walk and is home to the Caia Park Partnership who offer a community café, rooms to hire, craft groups, youth facilities, a day care nursery and training and development opportunities.



The local doctors surgery is less than a 5 minute walk, and the Queensway sports complex is a 10 minute walk. This offers a gym, squash courts, athletics club, gymnastics classes and 3g pitches available for hire and club uses for both adults and children. There are therefore a wide range of activities within walking distance which would benefit the residents being supported in this scheme.



There are some general needs units proposed and for those residents the site is within a short walking distance of both a Primary School and a children's centre.



Further afield there is a larger convenience store within a 10-minute walk away.

6.0 Consultation and engagement

As this project is at concept stage we have not yet undertaken public consultation on this scheme, however we have been working closely with the Council's social services, housing and estates teams to develop the scheme. A PAC was undertaken for the approved scheme and all the comments raised by statutory consultees have been addressed through the subsequent planning application. This mainly related to the design and location of the SAB scheme away from Welsh Waters assets, due to the location of a sewer on the site and its related easement.

One objection was received during the planning application. The matters raised were related to the form and height of the building and the nature of resident that this development will attract. The planning officer was satisfied with the form of the building and the separation distances from surrounding buildings. Our proposed scheme does not differ significantly from the previously approved scheme.

Socio-economics

The site is within the Caia Park area of Wrexham which is predominately social housing owned by the local authority. There is a strong sense of community and an excellent support network of facilities for residents in terms of both medical and supported social opportunities. The proposed accommodation would complement the existing provision in the area and provide specialist supported accommodation along with general needs apartments. There is a high demand for one-bedroom units in Wrexham and the scheme will go some way to meeting this demand. The supported living element on the ground floor is the first scheme of its type based on the 'Mental Health Recovery Model' to provide specialist accommodation within the community to assist with independent living.

Market Analysis

The previous planning consent had an apartment block accommodating 16 apartments of 10 two bed apartments and 6 one bed units. Due to the number of two bed apartments in the scheme we can accommodate 19 units on the same footprint with a similar height of building. This would have 5 supported units on the ground floor which would be one 4 bed unit and 4 one bed units. It is then possible to accommodate a further 7 units on each floor at first and

second floor with 12 one bed units and 2 two bed units. One bed units are in higher demand in this location, so the mix has been amended to reflect this. The mix of units in terms of supported and general needs is welcomed by the Council and would allow people to live independently within their own space. There are separate entrances to the ground and first/second floor which will be controlled by a BMS fobbed system. The supported apartment and two of the independent ground floor apartments would have private garden spaces which back on to the existing open space. The apartments would also have views out over this area of open space or across the active frontage. The entrance and car park area would have a scheme of landscaping to create a sense of place on entering the site and to create a softer landscape between the existing and proposed car parking areas to 'green' the space.

It is considered that the provision of private garden areas will assist with the mental recovery of the intended occupants and will create a high quality building in a well-designed landscape.

7.0 Landscape

Topography

The site is elevated from the road and slopes upwards in a south to north direction with the public open space to the north at a higher level than the site and the shops and car park to the south at a lower level. The current building is surrounded by landscape banks of grass. The houses on Eaton Drive to the west of the site are at a lower level than the site.



The current building is located within the centre of the site, whereas the proposed building is located further north in order to make provision for access and car parking.



The proposed site is therefore visually prominent from Eaton Drive and Sycamore Road. There is a pedestrian footpath from Sycamore Drive which runs along the amenity space to the eastern boundary of the site into the car park.



The site would utilise the existing access from Eaton drive which serves the car park to the parade of shops. This has existing footways and is sloping.



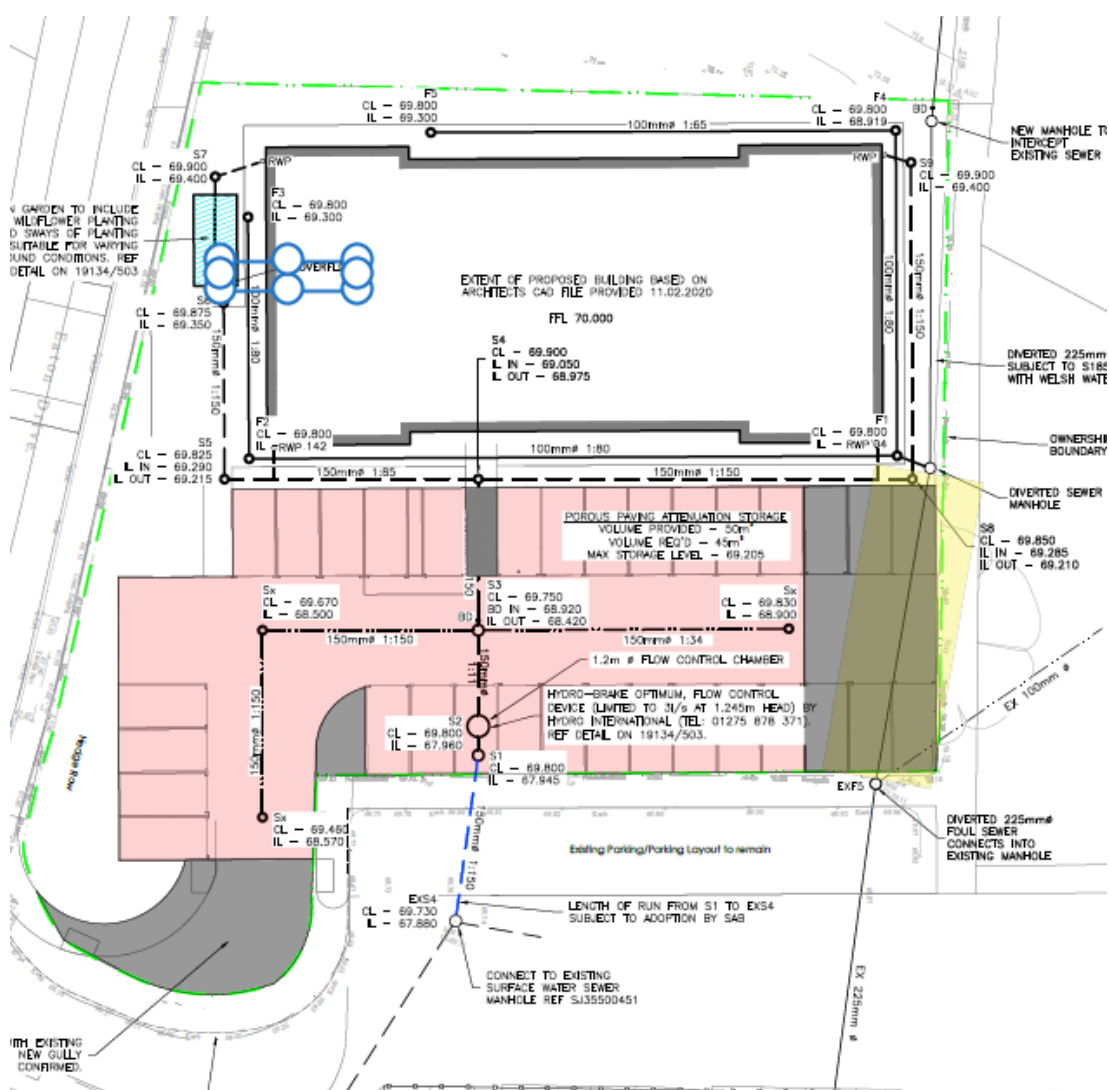
This would be extended into the site as part of the proposed scheme. The proposed car park can be created on a flat plateau with retaining features within the car park, landscaped to the road. Level access can be achieved to the building frontage and to the rear gardens. There will be a retaining wall to the rear of the building due to the difference in levels with the amenity space. This will be about 1 metre in height and will incorporate the boundary treatment.

Green and blue Infrastructure and Ecology

The site is a brownfield site within an urban area. There are areas of amenity grass verge around the site which are maintained as visibility splays. There are a number of small trees within the site boundaries that will need to be removed and can be replaced. The site will be appropriately landscaped to create a greener surrounding than at present. The intention is for the adjacent amenity space to be part of a wider network of open spaces in the Caia Park area order to enhance biodiversity, with this site having a wild flower meadow planted.

As there is a building on site there is a low potential for bats and appropriate surveys will be undertaken prior to demolition. There is no other ecological habitat on the site.

The proposed SUDS scheme is for attenuation under the car park with a connection to the surface system as infiltration tests proved this was not possible. Water butts and a rain garden will also be incorporated to manage the surface water. The approved design will be adapted to suit the current layout with wildflower planting.



There is no requirement for on-site open space due to the proximity to the adjacent amenity area and a commuted sum was secured by S106 towards its future maintenance.

Ground conditions

Geotechnical reports and site investigations have been undertaken as far as possible with the current building on the site. No abnormal ground conditions that would need specialist foundations have been identified.

The building would need to be demolished and given the age and nature of its construction (1960's/1970's) an asbestos survey will be required prior to demolition.



Microclimate

There are no significant landscape or built features which would have an impact on the micro-climate. The building has to be orientated with the principal elevations facing north and south due to the surrounding residential properties and potential issues with overlooking and affecting privacy. The garden areas would be to the north as the car park is naturally to the south due to the access arrangements.

8.0 Movement and infrastructure

Road hierarchy and access

The site is accessed from Eaton Drive which is served with pedestrian footways. The proposed development will have segregated vehicle and pedestrian entrances. A Transport Statement has been prepared by Focus Transport to support the development.

Public transport

Access to buses

The closest existing bus stops to the application site are located on Churchill Drive, immediately east of Kingsley Circle shopping arcade, and therefore well within walking distance. Services 7/7S & 8/8S are accessible from these stops. Both services are circular routes, running from Wrexham Town Centre via Rhosnesni, Caia Park, The Dunks and

Hightown operating with a 30minute frequency in each direction. These services provide frequent access to key employment, education, retail and leisure opportunities in Wrexham, as well as further public transport opportunities available from Wrexham bus station (the terminus of the 7 & 8 services) and Wrexham Central Train Station (located less than 300m walk from Wrexham bus station).

Access to Rail

In addition to available local bus links, Wrexham Central and Wrexham General Train Stations are located 300m and 550m walk from Wrexham Bus Station respectively (Wrexham Bus Station accessible via the 7 and 8 bus services). These stations lie on the Borderlands Rail Line, and as such services from these stations provide regular (at least hourly) services to key employment and leisure destinations such as Chester, Holyhead, Liverpool, Birmingham and Cardiff.

Utilities and infrastructure

There is a sewer along the eastern boundary and the building has been sited to account for the easement required. Foul and surface water connections have previously been agreed with Welsh Water.

Built Form

Urban form

Following detailed site analysis and careful consideration of the site context and topography, the proposal has been developed to respond to the local character and streetscape. The building is sited to address the neighbouring properties and utilises the sloping ground to set the building within the local topography.

Building scale, heights and density

The building has been designed to complement the local area in terms of scale and height. The property is essentially 2 storeys in form with the roof space providing a further floor level. This aligns with the adjacent 3 storey property on Churchill Drive and the properties on high ground to the east.

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9.0 Building character and building traditions

The materials selected for the proposed building have been carefully chosen to respond to the local context. The surrounding properties are generally brickwork and render with tiled roofs. The selected materials are brick work and render with tiled roofs to maintain the local style.

The boundaries of the site are generally open, with soft landscaping to the perimeter of the site. The tarmac carpark is located to the south of the site utilising the existing access way.