

Supporting Planning Statement

To retain an existing temporary track as a permanent track to
serve and improve safety at the farm and create a safer access
onto Newbridge Road

At

Chapel Farm, Newbridge Road, Newbridge, Wrexham, LL14 3JA

On behalf of

Mr and Mrs Edwards

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August 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This supporting statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr and Mrs Edwards by Fisher German LLP and submitted in support of an application to retain an existing temporary track as a permanent track at Chapel Farm, Newbridge.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with other supporting information supplied as part of the planning application including:
- Application forms;
 - Location Plan;
 - Proposed Plans;
 - Planning Statement.
- 1.3 The following sections of the statement provide a description of the site and context of the surrounding area, details of the proposal, alongside an overview and assessment of the planning policy context relevant to the proposed development.
- 1.4 This statement demonstrates that the proposal fully complies with all relevant local and national planning policy.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 Chapel Farm is located off Newbridge Road, Newbridge, on the outskirts of Cefn Mawr, in the administrative boundary of Wrexham County Borough Council.



Figure 1. Aerial view of Chapel Farm (Google Earth).

- 2.2 The nearest heritage assets to the site are:
- Cefn Bychan Baptist Chapel- Grade II Listed
 - Railway Viaduct over River Dee- Grade II* Listed
 - Cefn (Newbridge) Viaduct- Grade II* Listed
- 2.3 The site is not at risk of flooding or located within any ecological designations, it is adjacent to a Special Landscape Area/ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), however the application site is not within this.
- 2.4 Chapel Farm is located within the settlement boundary of Cefn Mawr. Figure 2 shows the extent of the yard and a field which is located within the development boundary. This area which forms this application is within this development boundary.

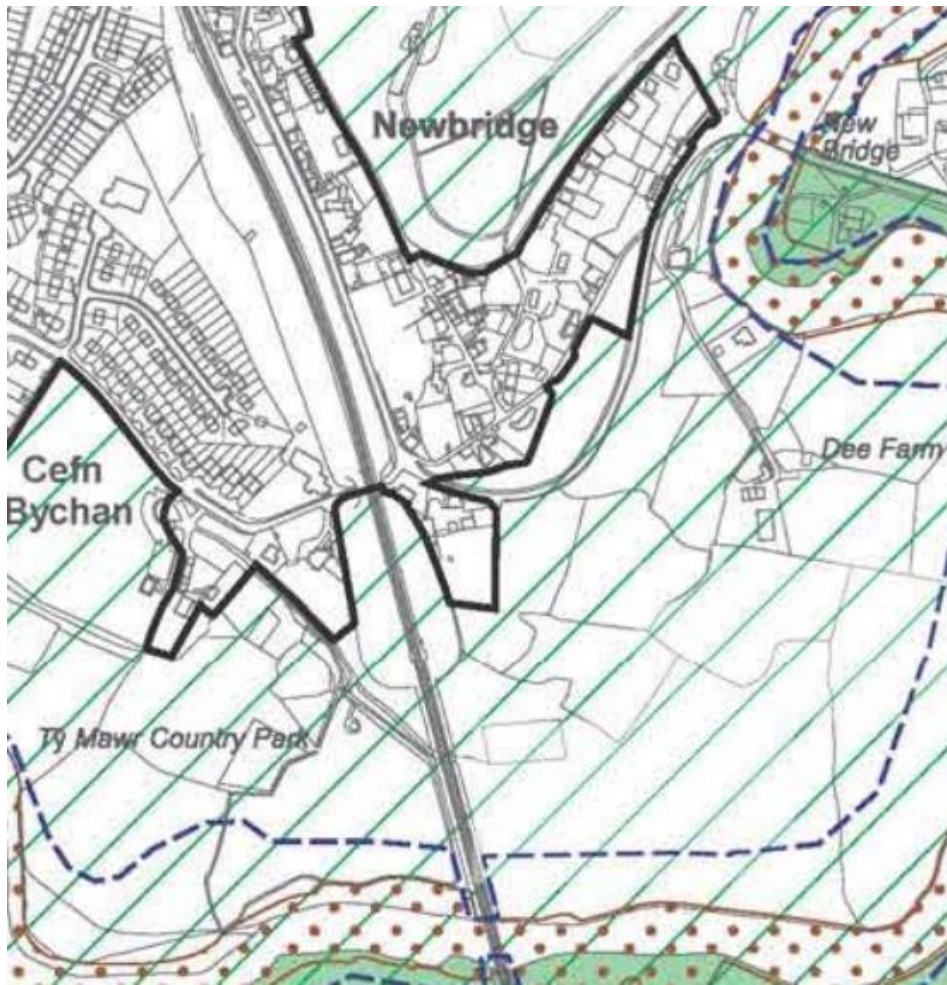


Figure 2. Chapel Farm located within the Development Boundary (Wrexham UDP Map 4).

- 2.5 Network Rail installed a temporary track to adjoin an existing track at Chapel Farm. This track was installed in January 2021 and has been used to access the viaduct and undertake crucial repairs and maintenance.
- 2.6 Chapel Farm is accessed via Newbridge Road, until the temporary track was installed by Network Rail, the main access directed into the farm yard. However, the installed temporary track, does not alter the existing access off Newbridge Road in any way, but provides a much safer access track onto Newbridge Road and Chapel Farm for larger agricultural machinery, feed wagons and equestrian lorries.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposal seeks to retain a temporary track as permanent at Chapel Farm, to improve safety at the farm and create a safer access onto Newbridge Road.
- 3.2 Network Rail installed a new temporary track on land at Chapel Farm to undertake repair work on the viaduct. A large proportion of the track down to Network Rail's compound is already an existing track, and therefore a new proposed temporary stretch was installed, which this seeks permanent permission.
- 3.3 The site plan (drawing no:130825-03) indicates the location of the existing track on the site, and the location of the new temporary track which joins this.
- 3.4 The temporary access track has been in place now since January 2021 and has provided no adverse impacts to the nearby Listed Buildings or Special Landscape Area. Within Special Landscape Areas or AONB's, farms have agricultural tracks for the daily operational needs of the land, therefore being close to an area like this, a modest track has minimal to no impact on this designation.
- 3.5 The track in fact improves the safety for larger vehicles onto and off Newbridge Road. The turning area for vehicles such as feed lorries, horse lorries, and agricultural machinery is far safer now with this current temporary access track. Prior to this track being in place all large vehicles and machinery had to turn within the farm yard, which was very tight and unsafe for modern day vehicles.
- 3.6 Agricultural machinery, horse lorries and large feed wagons have all substantially grown in size over the last 50 years, therefore during past agricultural practices, the farmyard was able to cope with the size of vehicles, however, now is not fit for current modern-day access.
- 3.7 The current temporary track has made it safer and easier for agricultural machinery to access each individual field to top, fertilise, chain harrow, and spray the fields.
- 3.8 The eventing arena at Chapel Farm is hired out, and for members of the public towing horse boxes, or driving 3.5 ton to 7.5-ton lorries (which is the most common), it is much safer for these to access the track from the road, to continue down onto the existing track which leads to

this menage and provide a degree of separation from the farm yard. In turn improving the safety of the yard.

- 3.9 To meet with modern day standards the menage arena is made up of sand and fibre material. If there is a period of dry weather, current regulations require the arena to be irrigated, therefore meaning a tractor towing a large piece of agricultural machinery needs to gain access down to that arena. It has been much safer and easier with the current temporary track for this machinery to safely get to the site.
- 3.10 As well as irrigation in dry periods this arena needs to be well-maintained, especially with competing and clinics attending to use the menage. As stated above, the menage is made up of sand and fibre which has to be replenished over a certain time period. This task was recently carried out whilst making use of the temporary track. 100 tons of material was brought in on 5 20-ton articulated lorries. This task could not have been carried out if this track was not in place. The size and number of these lorries would not have a safe, or sufficient turning circle within Chapel Farm without creating damage to buildings within the yard.
- 3.11 The track proposed to be retained will provide a functional benefit to Chapel Farm and provides safer daily operational activities.

Access

- 3.12 The proposed retention of this temporary section of track is improving the accessibility when entering and exiting Newbridge Road.
- 3.13 This application is not seeking to change or alter the existing access onto Newbridge Road, but will inherently improve turning areas onto and off Newbridge Road, through having a wide enough track for large vehicles to manoeuvre on and off.
- 3.14 With the frequent use of larger vehicles and machinery attending this farm, a track is required to accommodate for these types of vehicles, which is not unusual in a farm setting.

Heritage

- 3.15 Chapel Farm is located close to the following Listed Buildings:
- Cefn Bychan Baptist Chapel- Grade II Listed

- Railway Viaduct over River Dee- Grade II* Listed
- Cefn (Newbridge) Viaduct- Grade II* Listed

- 3.16 The whole point of Network Rail implementing this temporary track was to gain access to the Grade II * Listed Viaduct to carry out crucial repair and maintenance work to the heritage asset.
- 3.17 The track has been installed for nearly 8 months, and appears visually the same as an agricultural track, of which this joins the existing track at Chapel Farm.
- 3.18 The existing track is closest to the heritage asset and has been in place for more than 30 years. Therefore, this proposal to retain the temporary element as permanent is further away from this Listed Building and will have less impact on the setting. It will just form one continuous trackway. The track allows for a functional use at Chapel Farm, where the daily practices can remain ongoing without impact on any important views of the Grade II* Listed Viaduct.
- 3.19 The track, fencing which borders this track and the gates used are all in-keeping with the agricultural nature of the farm, therefore having minimal impact on any heritage assets nearby.
- 3.20 For this temporary section of track to remain permanent, will also mean that Network Rail will have continuous access to the Grade II* Viaduct. In turn meaning, any crucial repair or maintenance works needed to the Listed Building can be done so. There is a statutory duty to protect and preserve this Listed structure, and having easy access is beneficial.
- 3.21 The retention of this track proposes no adverse impacts relating to heritage, setting or detracting from important views and provides functional, operational needs for Chapel Farm.

Network Rail

- 3.22 The Grade II* Listed Viaduct is an important asset which Network Rail own.
- 3.23 Network Rail will need to continuously maintain this structure and have confirmed they will be returning at a later date. The vehicles which arrive daily are not general cars or light

commercial vehicles, and instead those of articulated lorries and heavy loads to deliver vital materials to the site.

- 3.24 Every time Network Rail require access to this Viaduct to conduct works it creates huge disruption for the landowner for months. If there is an existing track from Newbridge Road which leads all the way down to the viaduct, Network Rail will always have a route without disrupting the landowner.
- 3.25 Therefore, there are multiple benefits from retaining this track at Chapel Farm.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations state otherwise.
- 4.2 The starting point for decision-making as sets out in law is the adopted Development Plan for the local area. At present this comprises of:
- Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996-2011
- 4.3 The Local Development Plan (LDP) 2013-2028 is currently under examination and will replace the current adopted UDP. The LDP will be a long-term strategy, therefore policies have been given some consideration.
- 4.4 Wrexham's UDP was adopted in 2005, and although now considered outdated, remains the adopted policy until the Local Development Plan becomes formally adopted.
- 4.5 Planning Policy Wales (2021) constitutes guidance for local planning authorities as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011

Policy EC9- Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

- 4.6 Development within the curtilage of buildings or structures listed must respect the setting and character of the listed buildings or structures.

Policy GDP1- Development Objectives

- 4.7 The policy states overall new development objectives, these includes ensuring that there is safer pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites.

Policy EC5-pecial Landscape

- 4.8 Development for agriculture, small-scale farm-based and other rural enterprises, essential for operation development is acceptable.

DRAFT Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2028

Policy SP2- Location of Development

- 4.9 New development is directed to the defined settlement limits as identified on the Proposals Map.

Settlement Hierarchy

- 4.10 Acrefair/ Cefn Mawr is considered a 'Tier 2: Service Centre'

Policy SP9- Economic Growth Employment

- 4.11 Maintaining and enhancing the County Borough's tourism, culture and leisure offer taking into account the unique character, local distinctness and heritage of the area.

Policy DM- Development Management Considerations

- 4.12 The policy outlines considerations for new developments. This includes not having any unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties; take account of personal and community safety and security in its design and layout; be safely and conveniently accessible for all potential users; and not give rise to parking or highway safety problems on site or in the locality.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

- 4.13 Welsh National Planning Policy was recently updated in February 2021.
- 4.14 The Welsh Government defines economic development as the development of land and buildings for activities that generate sustainable long-term prosperity, jobs, and incomes.

- 4.15 Wherever possible, planning authorities should encourage and support developments which generate economic prosperity.

5.0 ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The proposal seeks to retain an existing temporary track which joins an existing track at Chapel Farm. Network Rail installed this track in January 2021.
- 5.2 This existing temporary trackway is placed within the development boundary of Cefn Mawr, and therefore not located in the countryside, but rather in a boundary which allows development.
- 5.3 There are no adverse impacts on any designated areas adjacent to the site, or Listed Buildings. The track has been installed for nearly 8 months, the track is bound by post and rail fencing, of which is sensitive to the farm location and wider countryside views. Post and rail fencing is in-keeping and provides no adverse impacts on the designated areas or assets.
- 5.4 An existing track is located on the site, of which this temporary track joins. This existing track is closer to the Listed Building than the proposal, therefore creating minimal impacts on the setting of this heritage asset.
- 5.5 The track simply appears to be a track of agricultural nature, including gateways which comprise of agricultural gates, blending into the surrounding landscape and immediate farm setting. Tracks are often proposed on farms to provide and enable safer daily operational activities.
- 5.6 Network Rail will have to return to the site at points in the future to continuously maintain the viaduct, therefore having an existing trackway which leads the route down the viaduct will provide benefits for Network Rail whilst not providing huge disruption to the landowner.
- 5.7 The proposal complies with national and local policy planning policy and is considered development which is not inappropriate. The development is considered reasonably necessary for Chapel Farm.

- 5.8 It would make no sense for an existing temporary track to be torn back up, considering the benefits it has clearly provided over the past months, and continued benefits it would serve to the farm, Network Rail and the safety of the highway.
- 5.9 The track would provide a permanent and safe route down the arena for horse lorries, to the viaduct for permanent access for Network Rail, and enable safe tracks for large agricultural machinery and feed deliveries.
- 5.10 It would be irresponsible for Wrexham County Borough Council to not allow this temporary track to become permanent when it leads/joins to an existing track and clearly improves highway safety onto and off Newbridge Road, as well as the health and safety of people at Chapel Farm Livery.
- 5.11 Therefore, it is respectfully requested that full planning permission is to be granted without delay.