

ERECTION OF 21 NO
THREE AND FOUR
BEDROOMED DWELLINGS
COMPRISING OF 17
DETACHED AND 4 SEMI-
DETACHED PROPERTIES

FORMER AIR
PRODUCTS SITE,
LLANGOLLEN ROAD,
ACREFAIR
LL14 3HW

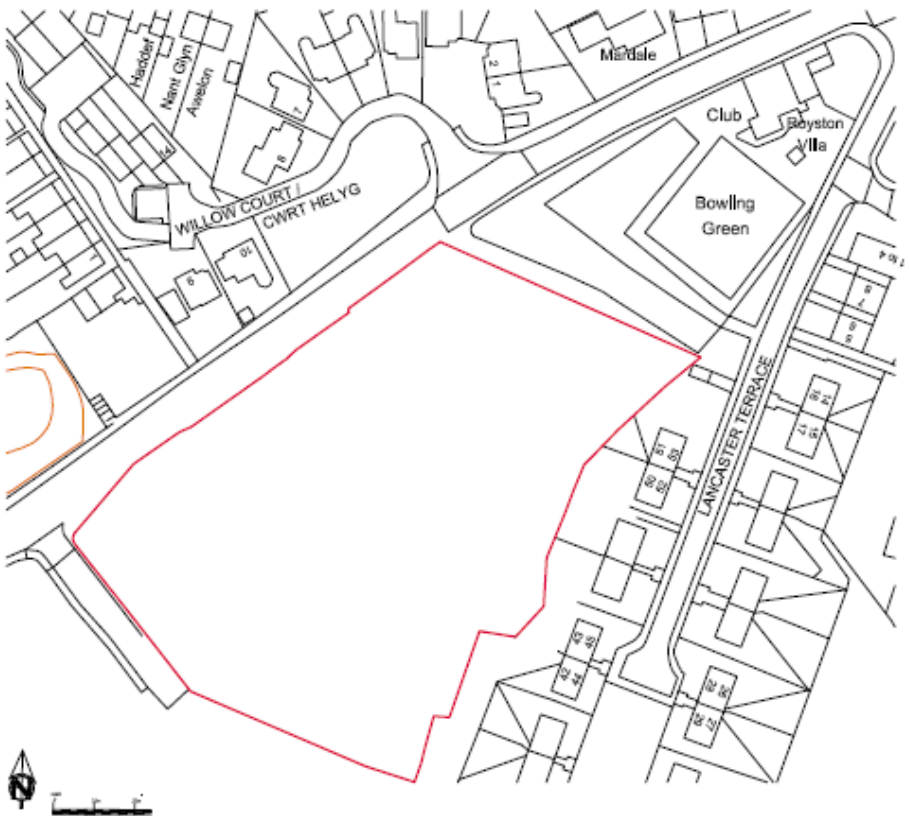


Figure 1 above: Location plan.
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DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT

MAY 2021

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**GOWER
HOMES**

Client:
Gower Homes

Architects:
EDGE Architects NW Ltd

Planning Authority:
Wrexham County Borough Council

Grid Reference
Easting 328143, Northing 343250

The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to assist those assessing the proposals providing a simple and direct supplementary statement explaining the reasons behind the design decisions. This statement will explain the design and appearance, and other details as submitted within the planning application.

A pre-application consultation was made with the authority prior to finalising the design.

1.0 Introduction: -

1.01 The statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the proposed residential development on a currently disused site off Llangollen Road, Acrefair. The site was previously part of the former Air products factory and this portion of the site was mainly used as a car parking area and offices. The site is currently vacant and covered in hardstandings

1.02 The application lies within the defined settlement limit where residential development is acceptable and that development will not be at a detriment of the character of the area. Indeed, the development of the site will make a positive contribution to the locality.

2.0 The Site –

2.01 The site occupies a parcel of land measuring 10500m² / 1.05 ha, formerly steelworks, and front on to Llangollen Road, within the settlement limits of Acrefair/Cefn Mawr.

2.02 The vacant site is situated within the identified urban area of Acrefair, classed an urban village in the Wrexham UDP. The land received outline permission in 2012 for a mixed use scheme for residential (located on land to the south of the site) and commercial uses comprising of recreation and leisure on the application site. To the south of the site outline permission had been granted in 2018 (P/2016/0506) for 232 dwellings. This outline permission had formed part of the former Air Products site.



Figure 2 above: Google image of site in context

2.03 The application site is bounded to the north and east by a linear wooden copse which allows light penetration into the site. The trees within this area is an established backdrop and a natural, softer, border with the properties on Maes Derwydd and gives a soft enclosure to the site. The southern boundary adjoins the remainder of the site which formed the outline application which will be imminently applied for. The northern boundary has a stone wall and borders with Llangollen Road.



Figure 3 above: site in its former use as car park to Air Products

2.05 Developing the land would not require any removal of significant tree cover to facilitate the dwellings and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment was undertaken to establish tree protection zones initially before finalising the site layout plan.

3.0 THE DESIGN STATEMENT

3.01 Design Brief –



Figure 4 left: site plan

Various schemes have been drafted and pursued through the consultation process with consultants to bring a suitable and highly sustainable mode of development, retaining mature landscaping and providing an active frontage. The layout and number of dwellings were then re-addressed to meet Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) requirements for surface water drainage. The layout presented within this application has been agreed in principle with Wrexham County Borough Council.

The development will create twenty-one three and four bedroomed dwellings comprising of 17 detached and 4 semi-detached properties.

The proposals have been shaped by a number of key Structuring Principles under the following headings:

- Structuring Principles
- Amount, Layout and Scale
- Landscape
- Access and movement

3.02 Structural Principles

The Structural Design Principles are to:

- Create a choice of high quality, distinctive homes set in an attractive landscape.
- Create an easily understood, robust street pattern and public realm in accordance with Manual for Streets
- Create a strong sense of approach and arrival using framed views and a sequence of surfaces
- Improve the residential amenity of existing housing to the south-east of the site by enhancing the boundaries.

3.03 Amount, Layout & Scale

The site equates to approx. 10,500m² or 1 hectares and represents 21 houses per hectare which makes excellent land usage.

3.04 The site plan establishes key principles in regard to amount, layout and scale including:

- 21 new houses including a mix of property types and sizes to provide diversity and a choice of housing.
- The estate road will be accessed from Llangollen Road, an established residential area and will therefore be a natural progression of this estate.
- Building lines are varied to create enclosure, punctuation and interest.
- In considering the siting and relationships between the new and existing properties it has been possible to achieve spacing and amenity distances.
- Plots 1-4 and 21 along Llangollen Road have active frontages for surveillance and participation before the road pattern changes to a private road to form a small cul-de-sac.
- All houses are proposed as two-storey across the site.



Figure 5 above: generic landscaping

3.05 The design of the dwellings and their features are designed to chime well with the surrounding housing, and the vernacular of Acrefair. Overall the proposals would be in character with the residential scale and form of the existing urban streetscape. Rear gardens will be landscaped and new boundaries shall be provided in accordance with further approval from the Local Authority. The drive and hard standings would be appropriately surfaced in a bound surface treatment.

3.06 Landscape

The existing tree lined boundaries are key elements in defining the character and sense of place. The site layout plan establishes key principles in regard to landscaping including:

- Creating native edges to each boundary with residential or existing properties
- Creating active frontages on entry to the development with front gardens that will be landscaped giving a softer approach
- Retaining and strengthening the existing hedgerows to create a robust landscape framework.

3.07 Access and Movement

The vehicular parking will be from an open site frontage and the immediate boundaries will be consistent with any advice given by the Highways Department to ensure visibility within the site. The main entrance to the site would provide a visibility splay of 2.4m at 43m to the south west and north east. The access will be suitably set away from the access of the approved residential site to the south. This will allow vehicles to enter freely into the site and a good, clear visibility to reverse out again, synonymous with the adjoining dwellings.

A formal consultation with Wrexham Highways Department is underway although their views were obtained as part of the pre-application advice service.

Parking will be provided which meets the standards set out within LGPN 16 and the site would be capable of providing sufficient parking spaces.

3.08 The site plan establishes key principles in regard to access and movement:

- Creating a principal access point from Llangollen Road
- Estate road and cul-de-sac are designed in accordance with Manual for Streets, with shared street surfaces giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists and also providing opportunities for play.
- Garages and parking driveways are generally set behind the principal building lines to ensure streetscapes accommodate the car, rather than being dominated by it. There will be a minimum of two parking spaces to the dwelling frontage to allow pathways and soft landscape to the site frontage.

3.09 The scheme is in a highly sustainable location, therefore is highly accessible via non-car modes of transport, with a high standard of local services and facilities set within easy walking and cycling distances of the site. Regular bus services are available from Llangollen Road opposite the Eagle Hotel, allowing easy access to key local settlements and the range of shops, services, facilities, and employment that they offer.

The nearest train station is Ruabon within 1 mile and a walk of some 20 minutes.

4.00 Social –

4.01 No public consultations have been undertaken by the Applicant- a pre-planning application consultation

5.00 Economic Principles –

5.01 Economic benefits are not applicable in this instance.

6.00 Policy Context –

6.01 There are a number of Development Plan policies relevant to this proposal, namely

National Policy: Planning Policy Wales 11

Technical Advice

Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning Technical Advice

Note 12: Design Technical Advice

Note 18: Transport Development Plan policies: Wrexham Unitary Development Plan Strategic Policies Policy PS1

Strategic Policy

Policy PS2 Strategic Policy

Policy PS3 Strategic Policy

Policy PS4 Strategic Policy Specific Policies

Policy GDP1 Development Objectives

Policy EC6 Biodiversity Conservation

Policy H2 Housing on unannotated sites

Policy T8 Parking

Policy CLF5 Open Space Requirements from new Residential Developments.

Local Planning Guidance Notes:

Local Planning Guidance Note 10: Public Open Space in New Housing Development.

Local Planning Guidance Note: 16 Parking
Local Planning Guidance Note: 21 Space around Dwellings
Local Planning Guidance Note 27: Developer Contributions to Schools
Local Planning Guidance Note: 32 Biodiversity and development
Local Planning Guidance Note: 30 Design Deposit

Local Development Plan Strategic Policies

Policy SP1 Location of Development Topic, Criteria and Area based policies
Policy DM1 Development Management Considerations
Policy EM3 Alternative Use of Employment Land and Premises
Policy SP2 Location of Development

7.0 Waste / Water Management –

7.01 The property will rely on the County Council's existing waste / recycling collection. Household waste will be stored separately within the dwelling.

7.02 The application is accompanied by a drainage strategy report by Coopers, referenced 7652/ SK03 Rev B.

Gower Homes have undertaken a number of drainage surveys to determine how the site currently drains using a combination of CCTV camera surveys, dye tracing and trench excavations. The survey has identified positive connections from the car park area discharging into a highway drain that runs along the nearside footway in Llangollen Road. This has been traced further downstream and is understood to discharge to the Tref-Y-Nant brook ordinary watercourse. Presumably there will have been historic foul connections from the former office building which will have discharged into the combined sewer in Llangollen Road. However, we are not aware of any live connections from the site. There is a small area on the site identified as low / medium risk of surface water flooding. However, this is not taking any flows from off-site and is simply a low spot within the site.

Foul Drainage- all foul flows into the public combined sewer in Llangollen Road subject to Welsh Water approval. All sewers will be designed and constructed in accordance with Sewers for Adoption 7th Edition and Welsh Ministers Standards and will be subject to a S104 Agreement.

Surface Water Drainage- ground investigation trial pits have determined the site is generally made ground over clay and therefore soakaways will not be feasible to dispose of surface water flows from the development. Furthermore, recent infiltration tests have confirmed the underlying strata is impermeable and not suitable for infiltration to dispose of surface water flows from the proposed development. A direct connection to Tref-Y Nant brook is not considered viable due to the distance from the site, so a connection into the highway drain located in the Llangollen Road eastern footpath along the site frontage is being proposed. Gower Homes have had initial discussions with Wrexham Highways demonstrating the advantages of the proposed SAB compliant drainage strategy. As drainage surveys have confirmed live connections from the site and the existing car park run off discharges directly onto the public highway the proposed attenuated SUDS scheme at greenfield run-off rates will provide a significant improvement on existing flow rates.

We are proposing to use a range of SUDS components within the development to reduce the amount of water being passed forward into the highway drain. These will provide benefits to the amenity, biodiversity and assist with improving the water quality. The surface water drainage scheme will comprise of water butts on each property for garden re-use, permeable paving and a SUDS dry basin. This will be subject to SABS Adoption and will be in full compliance with Welsh Ministers Standards. We have received comments back from a SABS Pre-App which will be considered further when developing the drainage scheme during detailed design.

To summarise: both foul and surface water drainage gravity connections are achievable from the proposed development and will mimic the existing / former use situation. Surface water flows will be restricted to greenfield run-off rates providing betterment on the existing situation. A range of SUDS components will be incorporated to create a sustainable drainage network. The surface water drainage network will be designed for a 100-year storm event + 40% climate change allowance. The small area of surface water flooding within the site is not considered significant and will be designed out during development regrading of site levels and a surface water drainage solution in accordance with SAB requirements and Welsh Ministers Standards.

8.0 Community Safety

8.01 The proposal is not considered to have any significant adverse effect on community safety. The public realm is not materially affected.

8.02 This development is a private development and there will be no scope to change to the relationship between current public and private spaces.

9.0 THE ACCESS STATEMENT

9.01 Movement to and from the development

The site is sustainable as it lies within close proximity to public transport, and local amenities i.e shops, post office, primary school. This, in line with policy standards justifies the site as a sustainable location.

Traffic volumes associated with these dwellings will be relatively low and shall have no discernable effect on the wider road network.

9.02 Building Regulations –

Access to the principal doors will be provided via level thresholds to their external doors, which will be a minimum of 838mm wide to comply with Part M of the Building regulations and to allow push/wheelchairs to enter freely.

9.03 The proposal is designed to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations to provide nominal ramps, 1m internal door widths and general circulation around the dwelling to ensure ease of access for all. External areas immediately adjacent to the dwellings will require a surface treatment to enable a level and easy access for any wheeled access requirements.

10.0 Affordable Housing -

10.01 Affordable housing policies will not apply in this instance as we are applying for 21 dwellings.

11.0 Development Issues

11.01 Flooding – No known issues.

11.02 Mining - The application site lies within an area defined as High Risk. The Coal Authority records indicate that the site is likely to have been subject to historic unrecorded underground coal mining at shallow depth and historic unrecorded underground coal mining at shallow depth associated with a thick coal seam outcrop. The Authority's records also indicate the presence of a recorded mine entry (shaft) within, or within close proximity of the planning boundary. A Coal Mining Risk Assessment, has been included as part of this application.

11.03 Archaeology - No known issues

11.04 Ecology – the application is accompanied by an Ecology Briefing Note.

11.05 Utility services – No known issues

11.06 Arboriculture Issues- the application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement by Tree Solutions, referenced 21/AIA/WXM/279

12.0 Planning Policy Framework

12.01 The proposal is considered to be substantially compliant with the framework of national and local planning policies and guidance.

13.0 Conclusion.

13.01 The proposal is considered to be substantially compliant with the framework of national and local planning policies and guidance. In essence the development will:

- will meet relevant sustainable building standards;
- be located within both walking and cycling distance of local facilities & services within the town centre, Wrexham town within its mainline rail services, and located within short walking distance of the frequent bus services serving the region. Therefore the site will be highly sustainable and as such actively promote good transport management practice, by providing due consideration to non-car transport alternatives.

- provide excellent quality accommodation that will make a valuable contribution to meeting the need for housing in the area.
- accord with the requirements of Para's 9.2.12 & 13 of Planning Policy Wales as the submitted plans demonstrates that the site can be developed at an appropriate density through a suitable layout and that it will respect the amenities enjoyed by neighbouring residents.
- ensure that the areas' *character and amenity* are not damaged and there will not be a *serious loss of privacy or overshadowing* of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with the policy.

13.02 The conclusion to the written response by the Local Authority to our pre-application advice notes- *'In terms of the principle of the proposed development, UDP policy H2 supports the creation of residential units within settlement boundaries. Wrexham's UDP is silent on the protection of commercial land on unallocated sites.*

UDP policy H2 seeks to encourage the formation of residential units within settlement boundaries this is subject to meeting the objectives of policy GDP1. Amongst a range of considerations, this policy seeks to safeguard areas of nature conservation, the amenity of neighbours and future occupiers, design of the development and safe access and egress from the site. These considerations will be assessed below.

Deposit LDP Policy SP2 seeks to direct new development to the defined settlement limits.

It is acknowledged that the site had received permission for residential and commercial uses with the portion of land in question being located where the commercial uses had been proposed. However, this permission has lapsed and the proposal site is not allocated as employment land. Given the surrounding uses, combined with the fact that the brownfield land is vacant, it is not considered that the land is particularly well located for business, industrial and warehousing use. The proposed use is therefore not considered to conflict with policy EM3 of the deposit LDP.

13.03 We shall be pleased to provide any further information reasonably required by the LPA.

Signed: -.....Kathryn Gratton.....

Pp EDGE Architects NW Ltd RIBA Chartered Architects
On behalf of Gower Homes