



Wrexham Town 10

This is one of a series of Local Planning Guidance Notes based on Wrexham LANDMAP (adopted November 2004), setting out recommendations for each Landscape Character area

Wrexham is a large thriving historic market town set on a lowland plateau, forming a regional and local centre with strong cultural traditions

Landscape context

Buildings and other development are the dominant features of the landscape, with the underlying physical landscape covered over or altered to a significant extent. The other extensive area where this occurs is Wrexham Industrial Estate

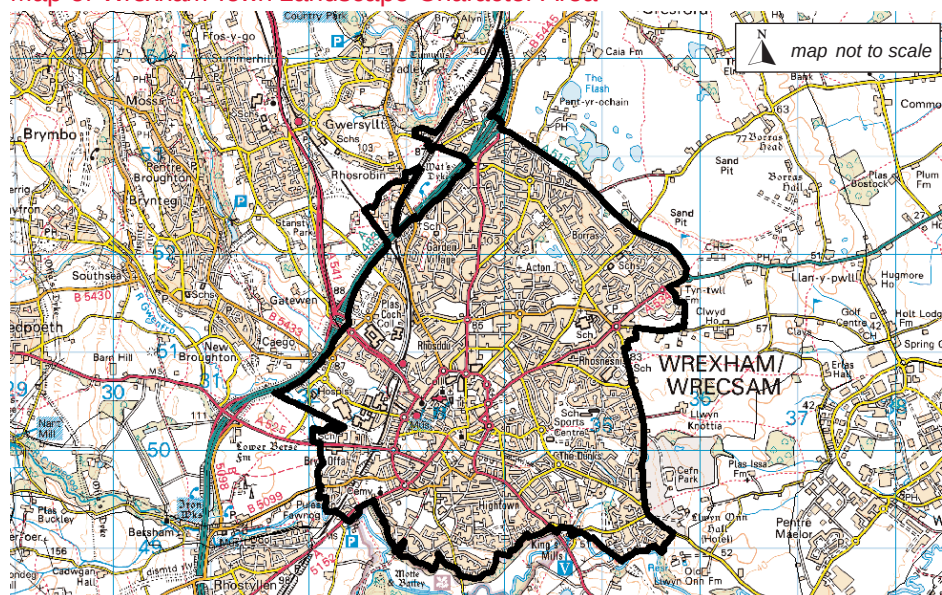


Wrexham Town summary

- Historic market town, regional centre and transport nexus
- Border town with Welsh and English influences
- Largest town in North Wales, with many of the functions of a city
- Located on a lowland plateau surrounded by farmland, historic estates and sand quarries
- St Giles church tower is a landmark seen from hills and lowlands
- Linked to ex-mining communities as well as agricultural lowlands
- Extensive post-war residential estates



Map of Wrexham Town Landscape Character Area



Character Area boundaries should be considered transitional rather than precise
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Key characteristics

Visual character:

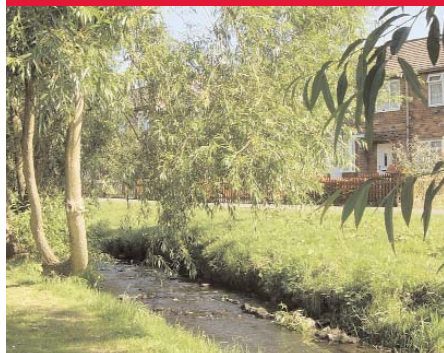
- Gently undulating terrain
- Views to Ruabon and Esclusham Mountain, purple, green or brown according to season
- St Giles church and Police headquarters are focal points
- Central historic and retail core, surrounded by areas of non-residential uses and remaining areas of older housing
- Extensive outer areas of post-war and recent housing, including planned garden village estates, public housing and cul-de-sac modern estates
- Acton Park is a remnant area of historic parkland with old parkland trees of high value

Geological character:

- Located on the Wrexham Delta Terrace, a gently undulating lowland plateau of glacial sand and gravels sloping eastwards
- The small River Gwenfro flows through Wrexham, joining with the River Clwyddog whose valley forms the southern boundary of the town. Parts of the Gwenfro are culverted
- The town has expanded over well-drained sandy loam soils, formerly good quality farmland

Ecological character:

- Built areas of Wrexham town are of low ecological interest, but mature trees, gardens, open spaces, former industrial sites, ponds and rivers provide valuable habitats, with potential for improvement



- Disused railway lines, Acton Park and the River Gwenfro provide the largest natural habitats within Wrexham town
- Bats, song thrushes, linnet and great crested newts are Biodiversity Action Plan species present within the town

Historical character:

- Wrexham has medieval origins, with prehistoric and industrial archaeology also present
- Wat's Dyke is a medieval military feature of outstanding importance which runs north-south, with some sections still visible
- Focus for roads and railways, with several disused industrial railway lines still present
- Wrexham Cemetery, on Watt's Dyke, is a Victorian cemetery on the Cadw Register of Parks and Gardens

Cultural character:

- Cultural hub of county borough with strong educational, sporting, and commercial functions and a rich and varied architectural heritage
- Gresford industrial estate is the location of the Gresford pit disaster of 1934, one of the most serious industrial accidents in British history; nearby the pit-head wheel forms a memorial
- Notable people from Wrexham include Elihu Yale, providing a connection to the US

Overall management strategy:

Conservation and Enhancement and Sustainable Development

Management guidance (Refer also to Sub-Character Area Guidelines)

Aims	Guidelines
Protect and enhance local distinctiveness, views, open space network and quality of townscape	● See Grosvenor Road, Salisbury Road, Fairy Road, Town Centre and Hightown Conservation Area assessments ● Protect and restore historic parkland of Acton Park and link with wider green network ● Protect, restore and enhance the valley of the River Gwenfro and link with other areas of green space within the town ● Implement Green Network Strategy due March 2007 for Wrexham town
Protect and restore natural landforms and processes	● Maintain integrity of glacial and fluvial landforms ● Take opportunities to restore natural river channels and processes ● Protect floodplains from development
Conserve and enhance biodiversity	● Develop and enhance accessible natural greenspace in Wrexham ● Preserve existing natural habitats, including brownfield sites with natural regeneration ● Refer to garden Habitat Action Plan in Wrexham Biodiversity Action Plan ● Protect mature and veteran trees, and replant for the future ● Retain and develop natural habitats along rivers
Preserve evidence and increase understanding of Wrexham's development and archaeological heritage	● Archaeological intervention in advance of development in core areas, including line of River Gwenfro ● Preserve early street plan, and Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed buildings ● Development which would adversely affect the site or setting of Wat's Dyke would not be permitted - contact Cadw ● Maintain original form of Wrexham Cemetery, with no further inhumations within Dyke ● Preserve the line of disused railways, and carry out further studies of wider industrial landscape context
Retain cultural significance and diversity of Wrexham	● Carry out proactive conservation of historic townscape and consider Open Heritage days ● Encourage local history/community initiatives ● Conserve significant transport features ● Preserve surviving features associated with Gresford Colliery



Landscape sensitivity:

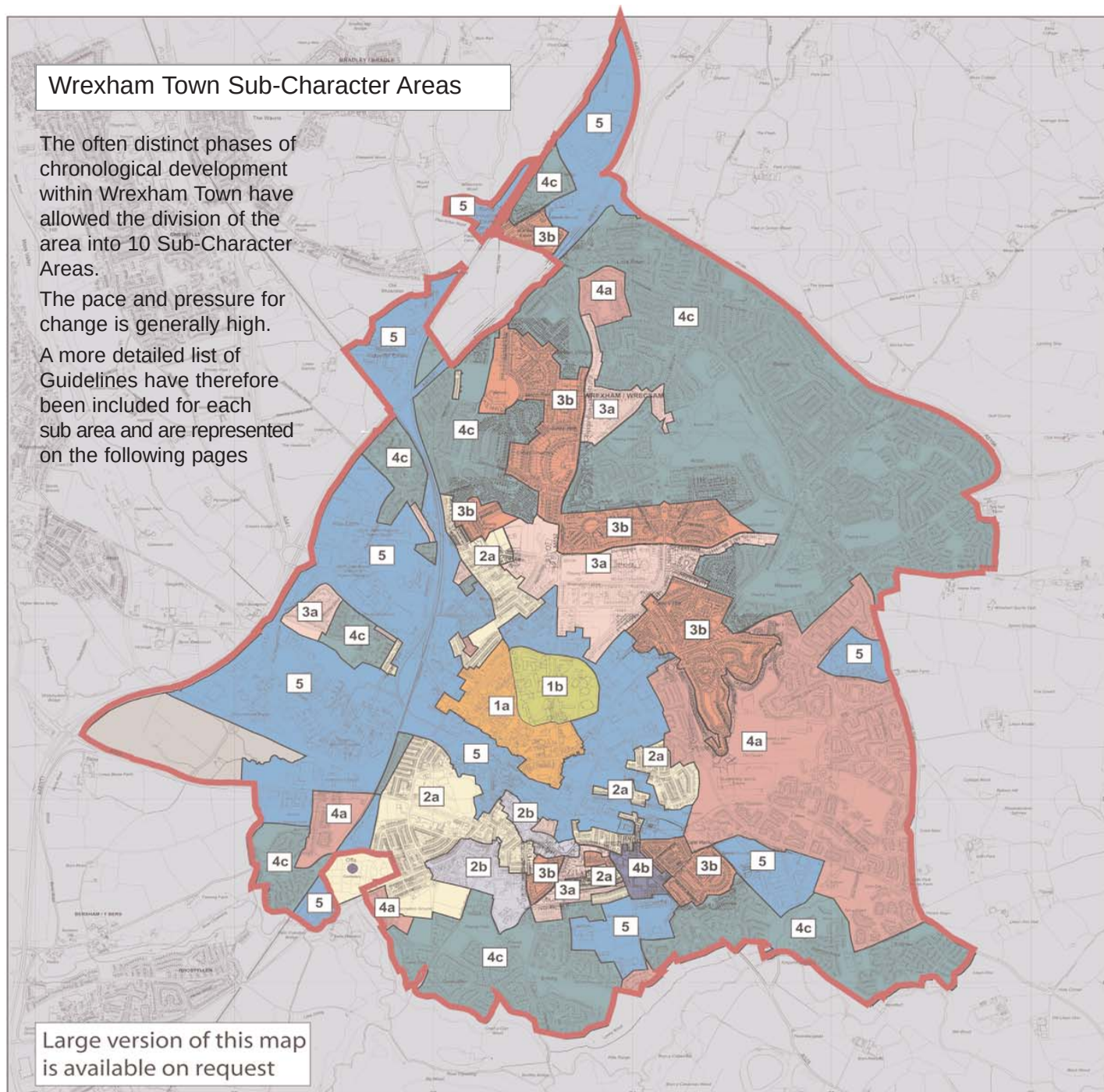
Wrexham town is vulnerable to new development which takes insufficient account of existing character, scale, physical characteristics, open space network, archaeology or other factors. It is very sensitive to the cumulative impact of small changes which can erode local distinctiveness.

Wrexham Town Sub-Character Areas

The often distinct phases of chronological development within Wrexham Town have allowed the division of the area into 10 Sub-Character Areas.

The pace and pressure for change is generally high.

A more detailed list of Guidelines have therefore been included for each sub area and are represented on the following pages



Large version of this map is available on request

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Key to areas

- | | |
|--|--|
| Settlement Limit | 3b Interwar Planned Suburbs |
| 1a Historic Core | 4a Early Post WW2 Estates |
| 1b Civic Centre | 4b Hightown Flats |
| 2a Traditional Terraced | 4c Recent Estates |
| 2b Pre WW1 Suburban | 5 Mixed Non-Residential |
| 3a Interwar Suburban | Wrexham Cemetery - CADW Register of Historic Parks and Gardens |
| Area undeveloped at time of Urban Landscape Character Assessment | |

1a Historic Core

Strategy for change:

Conservation

Restoration

Encouragement of diversity

- Refer to existing Conservation Area Guidance and forthcoming Enhancement Proposals



1b Civic centre

Strategy for change:

Enhancement

Encouragement of diversity

- Retain and strengthen public spaces with pedestrian and cycle links radiating out to surrounding and outlying areas of Wrexham
- Promote use of high quality design and high quality materials
- Encourage innovative building design in scale with existing in an appropriate landscape setting
- Break up extensive areas of car parking with trees and shrubs
- Follow existing Conservation Area Guidance where relevant



2a Traditional Terrace

Strategy for change:

Enhancement

Encouragement of conformity

- Retain and enhance all areas of communal open space
- Conserve building form, density and detailing
- Resist loss of existing buildings
- Follow Local Planning Guidance Note No 11 for Terraced Housing in Wrexham for building conservation and restoration
- New housing to respect existing density, building form, building line, materials and boundary features of adjacent buildings

- Retain original stone or brick boundary walls and varied copings, discourage replacements by fencing or alternative materials

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Improve pavements and general conditions for pedestrians and cyclists
- Encourage removal /rationalisation of telegraph poles and unnecessary signage and 'clutter'
- Improve on-street parking where feasible, discourage parking in front gardens



2b Pre World War 1 Suburban

Strategy for change:

Conservation

Restoration

- Refer to existing Conservation Area Assessment, and forthcoming Enhancement Guidelines



3a Interwar Suburban

Strategy for change:

Conservation
Restoration
Enhancement

- Conserve and enhance existing highway verges and street trees
- Require sensitive improvements and alterations to dwellings, which retain and recreate existing architectural detailing
- Conserve low density of development and resist over-development of plots or insensitive backland development
- Conserve existing stone or brick boundary walls
- Conserve hedges

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Enhance existing highway verges and street trees



4a Early Post World War 2 Estates

Strategy for change:

Enhancement and/or redevelopment
Encouragement of diversity

- Ensure that landscape/townscape issues are given early consideration in any proposals for enhancement or redevelopment
- Retain old lamp posts, ensure new ones are at similar scale
- Encourage rationalisation/removal of telegraph poles as opportunities arise
- Retain stone walls, ensuring repointing is done with a mortar mix weaker than the stone. Use hedging rather than fences on top of stone retaining walls
- Retain hedges (e.g. beech, privet), but if replaced use timber palisade rather than chainlink fencing. Where open plan front gardens are enclosed use hedging (preferable), or stained timber palisade fencing to match existing

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Determine existing and required functions of areas of public open space and develop landscape accordingly
- Clarify public/private boundaries, with planting, walls and fences
- Where opportunities arise provide

high quality detailing needed to give greater richness to streetscape, greater individuality to localities, and to upgrade image of area

- Improve condition of narrow pavements
- Create additional car parking areas where needed on edge of grassed open space, with surrounding planting
- Use opportunities available in extensive areas of public open space to plant larger trees, provide footpaths and cycleways
- Enhance all areas of open space to give areas more interest and identity streetscape, greater individuality to localities, and to upgrade image of area



3b Interwar planned suburbans

Strategy for change:

Conservation
Restoration
Enhancement
Encouragement of conformity

- Encourage retention and replacement of hedges



- Encourage retention of original 'Arts and Crafts' design features to buildings and original landscape lamp posts, mature trees in grass verges

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Look at alternative solutions to parking problems
- Reinstate lost verges
- Encourage cost-effective estate-wide maintenance which protects and enhances important features
- Improve conditions for pedestrians
- Encourage traffic calming using materials appropriate to location
- Improve conditions for pedestrians

4b Hightown Flats

Strategy for change:

Enhancement and/or redevelopment
Encouragement of diversity

- Promote alterations which help break up scale of buildings, help integration into surroundings and improve image
- Replace losses in public open space as often as required

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Enrich landscape with high quality street furniture where appropriate
- Use colour to break up scale of buildings
- Encourage planting on balconies
- Intensify planting in public open space
- Resurface pedestrian paths with high quality materials

4c Recent Estates

Strategy for change:

Enhancement

Encouragement of diversity

- Introduce large trees where possible which will contribute more to future amenity than 'garden' size trees.
- Encourage use of alternative hedging species to reduce future problems with fast-growing Leyland and Lawson cypresses
- Provide landscape buffer for new developments on the edge of the countryside and incorporate former countryside features into new development. Provide links into surrounding countryside as well as links into existing urban areas
- In new developments, consider road layouts which depart from the standard guidelines to encourage innovative housing schemes which are not designed around the car
- Encourage planting of street trees and boundary hedges in new developments

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Look for opportunities to increase pedestrian and cycle linkage between cul-de-sacs to reduce the dominance and impact of the car
- Introduce large trees where possible



5 Mixed Non-Residential

Strategy for change:

Enhancement

Redevelopment (some)

Encouragement of diversity

- Retain the best of the existing landscape in new developments, including areas of ecological interest (even if not designated), hedgerows, stone walls, watercourses and any other features of historic or other value
- Keep the use of security fencing to a minimum, particularly palisade fencing, if fencing is necessary use dark green colour or black, with posts of the same colour.
- Maintain and create links into surrounding housing and the town centre, using opportunities for separate footways/cycleways and also new bus stops/shelters which are attractive, safe and comfortable to use
- Retain and protect existing mature trees and Integrate large retail developments into townscape by use of recessive

colours for walls and roofs, and large scale tree planting. 'Green roofs' may be an option for the future. Break up rooflines to reduce apparent scale (e.g. old 'sawtooth' factory roofs with northfacing lights are energy efficient and fit in with scale of domestic roofs)

- Avoid large scale cut and fill operations which destroy the original landform and create unnatural cuttings and embankments. Consider split level developments as an alternative
- Maintain a landscape buffer zone next to watercourses and water bodies
- Introduce new planting where appropriate

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Break up extensive car parking areas with tree and shrub planting and contrasting surfacing
- Plant replacement trees



For further information contact:

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All our information is available in accessible formats

