

LAND PLANNING LIMITED

Planning Statement

GAMFORD LANE, ROSSETT, WREXHAM LL12 0BA

15.07.16

Site Address:

Land associated with The Bungalow, Darland Lodge
Gamford Lane,
Rossett,
Wrexham
LL12 0BA

This planning statement has been written in support of an application for residential development on land associated with The Bungalow, Darland Lodge and should be read in conjunction with all other documentation submitted for this application.

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Introduction

This report has been prepared by Land Planning Limited on behalf of the owners. It accompanies an outline planning application for the construction of residential dwellings on land currently associated with a property called The bungalow, Darland Lodge.

This statement assesses the proposed development against the relevant national and local development planning policy. It should be read in conjunction with the design and access statement and other reports submitted in association with this application.

There is currently a shortfall in housing provision within the Wrexham County Borough Council authority area and as such, this application aims to deliver a portion of much needed housing, specifically provision for families, as can be seen by the illustrative site plan.

This application seeks outline approval, with all matters reserved, for residential development of forty seven, maximum two storey dwellings, including affordable housing provision.

This proposal aims to outline the development in principle in terms of planning policy, with specific details reserved for future consideration.

Site Description

This section gives a brief overview of the site. A more detailed description is contained within the Design and Access Statement.

The site, comprising approximately 5.78 acres, is situated off Gamford Lane, on the edge of the settlement boundary of Rossett, a location where amenities serve the needs of the local community. The immediate area around the site is predominantly rural and residential. The application site is a relatively flat site, currently comprising grazing land. There are existing boundaries to the site, comprising established hedging and trees. There is an existing

gateway forming vehicular access from the Gamford Lane to the site, however, new, improved access arrangements are proposed.

To the north, north east, west and south west of the site there are residential properties. To the east is a woodland area with agricultural land to the south.

Surrounding Area

Rossett is a well-established village. The application site is within walking distance of community facilities and bus stops. The village is also within a few minutes travelling distance of the centre of Wrexham and is well connected to the established road infrastructure. Wrexham is a sustainable location containing a host of services and facilities including regular bus services, train station, shops, schools, a university and hospital, as well as various recreational facilities.

Application Design and Delivery

The design, as illustrated on the proposed site plan, aims to create a development of housing to accommodate forty seven family homes. Recreation space has been carefully considered in order to provide a pleasant environment for residents of the proposed development, including private amenity space and public open space.

The design of the proposed scheme would serve to enhance the general appearance of the area, whilst ensuring it remains 'in context' with the adjacent residences and the local environment. The scheme aims to adhere to the existing character of the village from the linear road layout, with outward looking dwellings to suitable vehicular and pedestrian links to the adjacent footpaths and roadways, thereby sympathetically and practically integrating with the village. The designs of the properties will be sympathetic to the local vernacular and take account of the Code for Sustainable Homes and the need to create a 'sense of place' where people want to live.

The development of these dwellings will be undertaken to a high standard of specification, incorporating environmental and energy efficient design features along with some of the latest modern facilities and technology.

Planning History

To our knowledge no applications have been submitted in relation to this site.

National Policy

With regard to this application, relevant national policy refers to the Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 2012, supplemented by Technical Advice notes (TANs).

The National Policy provides the commitment to sustainable development. Paragraph 1.2.2 states that “The planning system must provide for an adequate and continuous supply of land, available and suitable for development to meet society’s needs.” Paragraph 2.1.2 states Local Development Plans (LDP) are fundamental to planning for sustainable development and that Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Conversely, applications that are not in accordance with relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed unless material considerations justify the grant of planning permission.

Section 5 of TAN1 states the following for situations where supply is below 5 years:

“The results of the Joint Housing Land Availability Studies should be treated as a material consideration in determining planning applications for housing. Where the current study shows a land supply below the 5 year requirement, the need to increase supply should be given considerable weight when dealing with planning applications, provided that the development would otherwise comply with national planning policies. In addition, local planning authorities must take steps to increase the supply of housing land.

In this instance, given the fact that the local authority does not have a 5 year supply of housing land and the application site is adjacent to the settlement boundary of Rossett,

within a sustainable location, it is therefore considered to be suitable for residential development, subject to criteria within local policy GDP1.

This proposed development is on the edge of the village, adjacent to the settlement boundary and will help to enhance positive growth of the area, in turn providing economic benefits to the local community. The application site will provide a safe and accessible environment, with sufficient private recreational space along with public open space, helping to promote healthy communities.

With regard to the good design principles, these proposed dwellings will be well connected to local facilities, will provide ample recreational space in the form of private gardens and public open space and will be designed to complement existing, adjacent properties, whilst utilising modern construction materials and methods in order to create sustainable homes, to meet one of the key objectives in providing high quality market housing and reflecting the accommodation requirements of specific groups, including families.

Providing housing in rural areas and villages aims to enhance their sustainability. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, whereby development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

Hence, by being accessible and sustainable, new dwellings on the edge of the village, offers benefits to the local community, not least by maintaining the local environment. Being located within a few minutes walking distance of the bus stops, offering services to the nearby key service centres of Wrexham and Chester, the proposal also provides improved opportunities for access by public transport, walking and cycling, thereby offering the opportunity to reduce carbon emissions as households will be able to take advantage of utilising transport other than the car to reach key services and facilities.

Opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been established and is believed that safe and suitable access to the proposed development site can be achieved.

This proposal is for an outline application with all matters reserved, but nonetheless the outline design of the site layout, road infrastructure and pedestrian links have been assessed in order to create a development with good, local public transport links, ease of movement for pedestrian and cycle modes of transport and the overall efficient movement of both pedestrians and vehicles.

It is felt that the provision of forty seven dwellings across the site represents an efficient use of the land and accords with the principles of sustainable development whilst retaining the overall character of the area.

The location, number and type of housing proposed within this application are believed to reflect the existing character of the area and in accordance with statements as set out in the national planning policy documentation.

The design of the proposed houses for future consideration will be carefully considered in order that they harmonise with other properties in the area, taking account of the needs required to provide for high quality accommodation for all members of the community.

Local Policy

In accordance with the Wrexham Unitary Development plan, being outside the settlement boundary and within an area designated as Green Barrier and Special Landscape Area, the development would be contrary to the local policy. However, in light of the lack of available housing land throughout the Wrexham authority area and the positioning of the site being adjacent to the settlement boundary, it is believed in this instance, development here would create a natural extension to the village, providing much needed homes for all members of the community, including 25% affordable housing provision.

Under the Draft Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2028, Rossett is considered as a Tier 3 Local service centre (Settlements which have relatively good accessibility by non-car modes).

The settlements in the third tier are noted as having a more limited range of services, employment opportunities, and access to sustainable modes of transport, but nonetheless act as key local service centres to the other (tier 4 and 5) settlements.

It is noted that whilst the urban villages in tier 3 are generally in closer proximity to those settlements in tiers 1 and 2, and able to access the wider services offered, the settlements in the rural areas tend to be the largest in their immediate locality and hence it is suggested that it may be appropriate that development be directed towards these settlements in order that they serve as local service centres to those more sparsely populated rural areas. This is beneficial in sustainability terms, as it may reduce the need to travel further afield to access services. Hence Rossett is acknowledged as being a suitable location for further development.

General local policy, under policy GDP1 states that development should be compatible with the character and form of the built up area and should not prejudice either the existing amenity enjoyed by adjacent residents or potential opportunities for redevelopment.

Furthermore, this policy states that attractive tree-lined, and/or low density residential areas must not be spoilt by insensitive developments which increase densities; constitute over-development; result in the loss of private or public open space; or detract from the general character of the area.

The application site is not within a low density area, as noted within Policy H2. Moreover, the character of the surrounding area is one of relatively high density housing, positioned in a linear built form.

As can be seen from the proposed site plan and location plan, the proposed development would be sympathetic to the existing built form in terms of density and layout and would therefore not constitute over-development of the site or detract from the overall character of the area.

Policy GDP1 states that all new development should:-

- a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.
- b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces.
- c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.
- d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.
- e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.
- f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.
- g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.
- h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.
- i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.
- j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.
- k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

With regard to policy GDP1, the proposed development will be designed to respect its surroundings and contribute positively to the character of the area, having particular regard to the prevailing layout, landscape, density, scale and height, massing, appearance and materials.

The scale, layout, siting and design of the proposed dwellings will have a minimal impact on existing residential properties in order to complement the existing built environment, including overlooking distances, the available amenity space, access and parking provision. This is an accessible location, being within walking distance of village amenities and public transport links. In addition, due to the shortage of available housing land, development is necessary to deliver the housing growth required within this area.

This outline application is reserving design details for future consideration; however the designs will take account of the local environment and reflect the character of housing design appropriate to the location.

Although a small selection of trees and sections of hedgerows are proposed to be removed, where possible, existing boundary treatments will be retained and enhanced by a sympathetic planting and a landscape scheme (to be submitted at a later date). The majority of existing, healthy trees and hedgerows will be retained to ensure that the natural environment, features of the landscape and associated wildlife habitats are disturbed as little as possible and thereby mitigate the impact of the new development, in accordance with policies GDP1 (h) and EC4.

As indicated in the proposed site layout plan, with sufficient space between neighbouring residences, this proposal should not have a significantly detrimental effect on the amenities of adjacent properties.

Improvements to the access by way of new access points are proposed which will enhance the entrance to the site. One main access to the north of the site, with three smaller accessways are proposed to service just six dwellings along the western boundary. All access points will be designed to comply with visibility distances required to provide safe access to and from the site.

In line with policy T8, sufficient parking provision will be provided on site for the new development and in principle, suitable vehicular access to the site is achievable directly from Gamford Lane.

As this proposal is for the erection of only forty seven residences, the additional traffic created should easily be accommodated safely on Gamford Lane, which has a speed limit of 30pmh at the northern section and traffic calming speed bump.

Growth is vital to provide economic stability and sustainability to villages and residential developments can help to provide this by way of provision of funding for infrastructure, maintenance of existing facilities and by bringing more residents to the village enhances the potential of future support and growth of local businesses. Good access to the village amenities and surrounding villages and towns will be available and sustainable transport modes will be encouraged. Density of the proposed housing has been illustrated as being within the guidance to ensure suitable sized gardens are provided for residents as well as ensuring the general character of the local area is retained. Through further detailed design, reserved for future appraisal, the character of the village will be enhanced, by the provision of landscaping, design and views of the surrounding countryside.

Although the site is within an area designated as Green Barrier and Special Landscape, it is enclosed on three sides by established natural tree and hedge boundaries as well as Gamford Lane to the west and residential development to three sides and is therefore not an 'open site' offering key views. The role of the green barrier is to retain openness and restrict the merging of settlements. However, in this instance, with agricultural land to the south of the site and to the east, beyond the area of woodland, the development of this site would not create over development or urban sprawl, but would create a natural extension to the village, of suitable, sustainable scale. The Green Barrier would therefore be maintained between settlements and the openness of the Green Barrier would be retained. The nearest settlement would be Trevalyn to the south east which is approximately half a mile away from the southern tip of the site.

Affordable Housing

Within Wrexham Unitary Development plan, Policy H7 relates to affordable housing. This policy states that where there is a lack of local affordable housing, the Council will negotiate

with developers to provide an element of affordable housing in new proposals of 25 or more homes. Due to the number of new homes being proposed, affordable housing provision has been included as part of this application, with 12 affordable units offered (25%).

Conclusion

Every effort has been made to design an outline scheme that accords with planning policies at all levels to ensure that the proposed development provides quality homes in a sustainable location.

The aim is to create a sympathetic development whilst providing much needed housing. By retaining and enhancing existing boundary treatments where possible, providing suitable hard and soft landscaping designs and making use of local, traditional materials, the new development should blend in with the local environment and should not unduly affect the existing landscape.

National guidance suggests that relevant policies for the supply of housing should demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. In accordance with the latest Joint Housing Land Availability Study, the current housing land supply in the Wrexham County Borough area is stated as 3.5 years against the 5 year housing land supply requirement. In addition the Wrexham UDP expired in 2011 and although it retains development status, the 2012 JHLAS period is now outside the UDP period.

From the 2015 Housing land Monitor, it states the following:

'In the absence of an up-to-date Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and adopted Local Development Plan (LDP), in accordance with latest Welsh Government Guidance on Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (JHLAS), TAN1, January 20015, there is no requirement for a Local Authority to produce a JHLAS and the authority is considered to have a zero land supply.'

As such and from details given within the JHLAS, “the Council acknowledges that the land supply is below the necessary 5 years and is aware of the requirement in such cases to take appropriate steps to increase the land supply as set out in TAN1.

The lack of a 5 year housing supply constitutes exceptional circumstances and as such, development within this edge of settlement location in a tier 3, local service centre, should therefore be deemed appropriate.