



**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING FARM BUILDINGS,
UNDERGROUNDING OF A 415 VOLTS (LV)
OVERHEAD LINE AND THE CONSTRUCTION
OF 27 DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED
INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING ROADS,
SERVICES AND AMENITIES ON LAND AT
WOODLANDS FARM, NORTH OF DODDS
LANE, GWERSYLLT, WREXHAM**

**WOODLANDS FARM HOUSING SCHEME –
PHASE 1**

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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FOREWORD

On 1 June 2009, the Welsh Government introduced a requirement for planning applications to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (DAS), whilst the current legislative requirement is set out in the consolidated Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (as amended).

This is a legislative requirement and applies to all planning applications (outline and full) except for:

- Engineering and mining operations;
- Householder applications;
- Waste development;
- Material changes in use of the land or buildings;
- Non Major Developments; and
- Section 73 applications.

Design and Access Statements are intended to be a tool to explain the design rationale for a development proposal. Statements typically include a written description and justification of the development proposal and may contain photographs, maps and drawings.

This document provides a description of the design and access issues considered during the design evolution of the proposed development of 27 dwellings on land at Woodlands Farm. The aims of this statement are to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposal including the accessibility, environmental sustainability, character, community safety and movement within the development, and how these issues have been addressed.

In preparing this DAS, consideration has been given to the following documents:

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016);
- Technical Advice Note 12: Design (TAN12) (2014);
- Design Commission for Wales (2014) Design and Access Statements in Wales;
- Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011; and
- Welsh Assembly Government leaflet: Design and Access Statements¹.

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/desandaccess/?lang=en>

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of the Application

1.1.2 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application made by Wales and West Housing Association (WWH) for the proposed demolition of existing farm buildings, undergrounding of a 415 volt (LV) overhead line and construction of 27 dwellings with associated infrastructure including roads, services and amenities on land at Woodlands Farm, North of Dodds Lane, Gwersyllt, Wrexham.

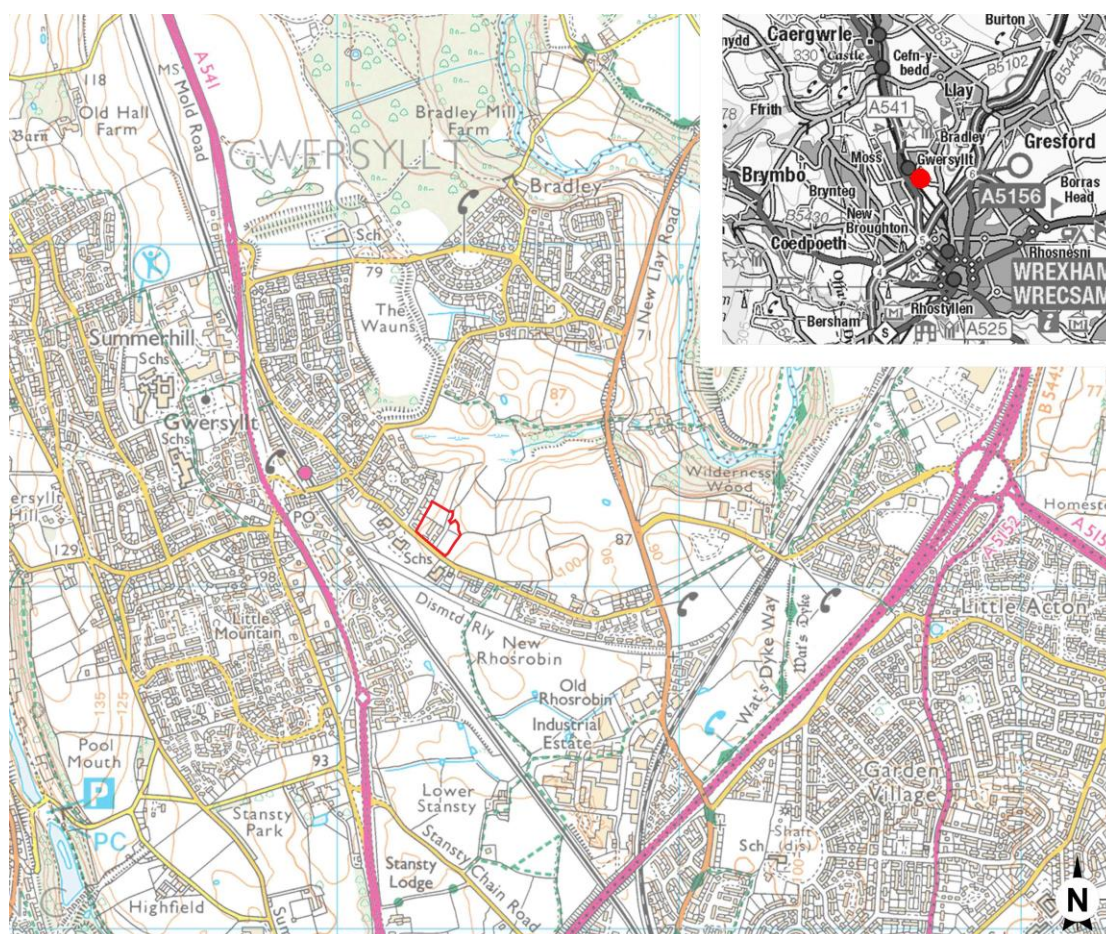
1.2 The Site & Its Context

1.2.1 The application site covers an area of approximately 1 hectare and is located to the north of Dodds Lane, on the eastern periphery of Gwersyllt, within 500m of the village centre and approximately 2km to the north west of Wrexham Town Centre.

1.2.2 The site is currently in use for agricultural purposes and consists of a number of fields with trees located along its boundaries. Woodlands farm is located to the site's southern boundary and is accessed from Dodds Lane. It is proposed that the farm and associated buildings would be demolished as part of the scheme. The site is surrounded by agricultural land to the north and east with the adjoining land to the north forming part of the Applicant's longer term plans for a further housing development of a similar size to that currently being proposed. There are existing properties on the eastern edge of Gwersyllt which back onto the western boundary of the application site, beyond a row of trees. These properties are accessed off Pen-Y-Llyn. Dodds Lane is situated along the site's southern boundary, beyond which is the playing field associated with Gwersyllt PC School.

1.2.3 The site location is illustrated in Figures 1.

Figure 1: Site Location



1.3 Proposed Development

1.3.1 Section 2.0 of the Planning Statement (PS) provides additional information on the proposed development. The proposed layout is shown on Figure 2 below.

1.3.2 The Applicant is seeking planning permission for Phase 1 of a multi-phase housing development, on land at Woodlands Farm, north of Dodds Lane, Gwersyllt, Wrexham. The current application would deliver:

- the demolition of all existing buildings within the red line which consists of farm buildings associated with Woodlands Farm;
- the undergrounding of a 415 volt (LV) overhead line;
- the construction of 27 houses, 12 of which are to be social rented;

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- creation of new public open space, including a children's play area;
 - trees / landscaping;
 - on site roads and other infrastructure;
 - provision of new pedestrian links from the site to adjacent public footways;
 - open space, including a children's play area; and
 - an ecological mitigation area.

1.3.3 The house types would be as follows:

- 15 three bedroom private houses which would comprise 7 detached two story properties and 8 semi-detached two storey houses
- 6 three bedroom and 6 two bedroom social rented houses which would comprise 3 semi-detached two storey houses and 2 triple terrace two storey houses.

1.3.4 The proposal would incorporate areas of open space throughout the development, including a children's play area to the north west of the housing. There would also be a strip of land to the south east of the main housing development which would be safeguarded for nature conservation purposes.

Figure 2: Proposed Site Layout



2.0 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

2.1 Access Arrangements

- 2.1.1 With regards to access, Policy GDP1 'Development Objectives' of Wrexham County Borough Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) explains that all new development should ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.
- 2.1.2 The site is in a sustainable location, and has excellent access, within easy walking and cycling distance of a number of key service requirements, including, but not limited to; Gwersyllt Community Primary School (150m); Ysgol Bryn Alyne Secondary School (1km); Gwersyllt railway station (400m); Gwersyllt Parish Church (700m); and shopping facilities (200m). Employment providers are well provided for including, amongst others, Mold Road Industrial Estate (300m) and Rhosddu Industrial Estate (850m).
- 2.1.3 A transport assessment has been undertaken in support of the scheme and submitted as Appendix A to the Planning Statement. The assessment concludes that the proposal would not result in any highway or pedestrian safety concerns with the proposed new junction onto Dodds lane providing adequate visibility for vehicles accessing the new estate and for users of Dodds Lane passing the new junction.

2.2 Movement

- 2.2.1 A new pedestrian footpath would be provided to the front of the development alongside Dodds Lane. Vehicular and pedestrian movements within the site to the individual properties will be provided by internal adoptable access roads leading off Dodds Lane via a single access point on the site's southern boundary. Pedestrian access to the principal entrances of the proposed dwellings will be provided in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document M 'Access to and use of Buildings'.
- 2.2.2 It is considered that the proposal provides both safe and convenient access for both vehicles and pedestrians, to and from development sites, both on

site and in the nearby locality. The proposal therefore accords with the requirements of Policy GDP1 of the UDP.

3.0 CHARACTER

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The Welsh Government's Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: 'Design' was published in July 2014 and provides the objectives of a development with regard to character. These are:

- *"sustaining or enhancing local character;*
- *promoting legible development;*
- *promoting a successful relationship between public and private space;*
- *promoting quality, choice and variety; and*
- *promoting innovative design."*

3.1.2 The proposed development is considered to meet the above objectives through the incorporation of the recommended design solutions described below.

3.2 Character and Context

3.2.1 The land represents part of a significant green wedge/barrier which provides an important visual transition from built-up to rural character, and the combination of open landscape and urban influences characterise the site. The site would form an easterly extension to the village of Gwersyllt with existing properties on Pen-Y-Llyn backing onto the site's western boundary. These properties consist of traditional two storey, semi-detached dwellings. There is a substantial playing field associated with Gwersyllt Community Primary School on the opposite side of Dodds Lane to the south which would maintain the objectives of the green wedge/barrier in this location along with the large areas of agricultural land to the east and north of the site.

3.3 Layout

- 3.3.1 The layout of the site has been arranged to maximise the potential of the site with most rear gardens facing the site boundaries, to provide for adequate off-road parking and amenity space and to allow for the future development of the subsequent phases of the scheme on adjoining land to the north. The layout offers large open areas at the frontage of the properties to give an open and inviting feel to the development.

3.4 Scale

- 3.4.1 The scale of the development, consisting of two story properties, is consistent with existing development within the area and is therefore in accordance with the character of the area. The addition of 27 properties on this 1 hectare site on the edge of Gwersyllt represents a modest extension to the village whilst providing much needed affordable and private residential properties in the area.

3.5 Design & Appearance

- 3.5.1 The proposed dwellings take a simple traditional form using design references and a palette of external materials taken from the existing buildings within Gwersyllt.
- 3.5.2 A total of 6 different house types are proposed. Individual house designs incorporate a range of detailing including bay windows, porches, projecting gables and string course brickwork and plinths. The proposed materials include a mix of render and brickwork. As a result of this approach, it is considered that the development will have sufficient variety to avoid potential concerns over monotony which can blight housing developments. This also provides, in combination with the layout, for small areas of the site to have their own character. However, the individual designs have each been detailed as part of a range of house types designed to work alongside one another and, therefore, the development as a whole will also have an attractive, consistent, design theme. A sample of elevations of the house types proposed are shown in Figure 3 on the following page.

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- 3.5.3 Existing trees to the eastern and western site boundaries would be retained where possible and a number of new trees would be planted throughout the development site on amenity areas towards the centre and frontage of the site. This will contribute towards providing a transition between the urban area of Gwersyllt and the remaining areas of green barrier to the north, south and east.

Figure 3: Elevations



4.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 4.1.1 The proposal is not considered to have any significant adverse effect on community safety. The design objectives as far as promoting community safety are to ensure attractive linkages with public spaces which benefit from natural surveillance. The primary reason for this requirement is to ensure adequate visibility is maintained at the point of access. However, the dual role that this requirement performs is that the front external spaces of the development are open to public view thereby providing natural surveillance during daylight hours.
- 4.1.2 Effective artificial lighting will be provided to the front and rear of plots to deter anti-social behaviour at night. This lighting has been carefully designed so to protect the amenity of residents.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 Approach to Environmental Sustainability

- 5.1.1 Sustainability has been an integral element of the project from the start of the design process. WWH are committed to ensuring that the development will not adversely affect the environment whilst ensuring the wise use of materials and resources.
- 5.1.2 WWH aim to assist the thermal efficiency of the properties by specifying sustainable materials for any upgrading of elements, focussing on 'fabric first' which will ensure the walls, roofs and floors are insulated to their maximum prior to the installation of other sustainable methods.
- 5.1.3 Construction and packaging waste will be minimised by using materials which are delivered without packaging (timbers), re-using materials found in-situ and delivering materials in concentrated quantities so they can be made on-site.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 An appraisal of the design and access considerations of the proposed development has been undertaken in accordance with Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (as amended) and best practice guidance.
- 6.1.2 The proposal would have no significant adverse impact on the community, environment, public safety or the transport network. Construction Methods will also minimise impact during works being undertaken.