
Supporting Planning Statement – Landscape Addendum Outline Planning Application for Land South of Berse Road, Caego, Wrexham

Prepared for The Plas Power Estate

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Appendix A Extract from Wrexham LDP Strategic Green Wedge Review Stage 1

Appendix B Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2028 Candidate Site Register

1. Introduction

The Local Planning Authority have requested further details regarding landscaping, specifically consideration of the land designation, the extent to which the development could be mitigated in order to meet with the purposes of including the site within the green barrier and justification of a proposed residential development outside the existing settlement limit. This request has followed the submission of an outline planning application for land south of Berse Road, Caego, Wrexham. This report details the information the Planning Authority have requested and should be read in conjunction with previous submissions.

2. Landscaping

Policy EC1 states that within the Green Barrier development will only be granted which maintains the openness of the Green Barrier and does not conflict with the purpose of including land within it. Whilst the site is within the Green Barriers, the proposal can be seen as broadly compliant with policy EC1. The impact in terms of loss of openness will be minimal as the extent of the development is heavily influenced by the site's existing boundaries and the defined flood risk zone. It is these existing boundaries/characteristics that prevent further phases of development on the site, prohibiting the process of urban sprawl and limiting encroachment of development in the countryside. The scheme concentrates development to the north-eastern area as it is closest to the existing housing. This enable openness to be retained on the western area of the site which is bordered by the disused railway line (existing open space). Development will not lead to the coalescence of urban areas as a gap of 3.2km will remain between the site and the nearest settlement, Wrexham, which is not notably different from the current distances between the two communities. The proposed development assists in the safeguarding of the countryside by enabling development of a site which is free from physical, heritage and biodiversity constraints. The development of this site will help alleviate pressures to build on environmentally sensitive greenfield sites, which this is not.

When consulting the Wrexham LDP Strategic Green Wedge Review Stage 1 document (February 2016) the site is referred to as 'Area 8' Candidate Site BRO01OS (Appendix A). Within the Green Wedge Review document it is stated that development of the site would not undermine the green wedge function of preventing coalescence, nor would development severely undermine the green wedge managing the urban form of Broughton. The review further states, that if development of the site was to occur, it is stated that 'the site would not result in the coalescence of Broughton and Wrexham town and would not undermine the role of the designation in the management of the urban form'. The above comments made in relation to the site, within the most recent Green Wedge Review, further demonstrate that development on the site is acceptable in terms of landscape and Green Barrier policy.

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The site is not located within a Special Landscape Area and falls within Landscape Character Area 7B (West Wrexham Ridges and Valleys) which is characterised as having a mix of rural and urban landscapes.

In line with the Character Area Assessment, the development will retain the woodland areas adjacent to the site boundaries, incorporate an area of open green space for wildlife and people, maintain and enhance the hedgerow along the front of the site by filling in gaps with native species, and will round-off the built form of Caego.

The proposed area of public open spaces is notably larger than the policy requirement and will deliver a landscape which, through active management, will become a more valuable resource than the existing agricultural land.

Due to a series of mature hedgerows and trees in the wider locality, views of the site from the wider area are very limited. The site is characterised and influenced by the surrounding urban edge and is visually well contained within the wider landscape by mature vegetation structure which characterises the local context. The influence of the connecting built edge allows for a close relationship between the site and the wider urban area and provides an opportunity for development to naturally link into the existing urban framework thus minimising landscape impact. Accordingly, the development would not create landscape harm in accordance with policy PS10.

Planning Policy Wales TAN16 states that public open space should be provided in all new housing developments for all schemes of more than ten dwellings. To comply with planning policy, the proposed development incorporates an area of green space which runs adjacent to the housing development. Policy CLF5 stipulates that the public open space must be provided within the site at a minimum level of 0.4 hectares per 50 dwellings. The proposal complies with this requirement as 1.78 hectares of open space is being provided for a scheme of 34 houses.

3. Planning Policy

Justification for developing beyond the existing settlement limit is provided by paragraph 6.2 of TAN1 (JHLA Studies) which states that “where the current study shows a land supply below the 5 year requirement, the need to increase the supply should be given considerable weight in deciding planning applications”.

Since the application was submitted, the site has been allocated by Wrexham Borough Council as a candidate site for residential use Ref. BRO01OS. Wrexham Borough Council state that “The site complies with the Council’s Preferred Strategy”. See Appendix B.

4. Conclusion

To conclude the application takes great consideration of the land designation of the site. Great care has been taken to ensure loss of openness will be minimal, something which will be achieved due to the extent of the development being heavily influenced by the site’s existing boundaries. Consideration of the land designation is also demonstrated through proposed development helping safeguard the countryside. This safeguarding is achieved through enabling the development of a site

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that is free from physical, heritage and biodiversity constraints.

As part of the proposal, mitigation of the development in order to meet with the purposes of including the land within the green barrier has been demonstrated. The development will retain the woodland areas adjacent to the site boundaries, incorporate an area of open green space for wildlife and people, will maintain and enhance the hedgerow along the front of the site whilst rounding off the existing built form of Caego. The proposed area of public open space is also notably larger than the policy requirement, something which is achieved through the proposal concentrating the development to the north-eastern area as it is closest to the existing housing. This enable openness to be retained on the western area and therefore contributes towards meeting the purpose of including land within the green barrier.

Finally, in light of justification for residential development outside of the settlement limit, the influence of the connecting built edge allows for a close relationship between the site and the wider urban area. There is an opportunity therefore, for development to naturally link into the existing urban framework thus minimising landscape impact. Accordingly, the development would not create landscape harm in accordance with policy PS10.

