

Heritage Impact Assessment

**Listed Building Consent Application for conversion of the
vacant first and second floors to provide 3 no residential
apartments**

GWYDYR HOUSE

Pen Y Lan Street

OVERTON

LL13 0EE



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Format

This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) accompanies a Listed Building Consent Application for alterations at Gwydyr House, Overton.

Description of Proposed development.

- Conversion of the vacant first and second floors of Gwydyr House to provide 3 no residential apartments.
- External alterations include the re-opening of bricked up openings of external windows in the rear gable elevation and internal alterations affecting the spine beams at first floor ceiling level.

The proposal seeks to minimise new works and respect any neighbouring or local heritage assets.

Legislation obliges the submission of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)¹ to accompany identified categories of planning applications and other consents.

This report follows the format recommended in CADW's best practice guide "Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales" May 2017.

This HIA includes the terminology as set out in the Glossary of Terms, Annex D Technical Advice Notes 24 1 and takes into consideration the need for 'proportionality'², as it is important that the 'heritage impact assessment should take into account sufficient information to enable both the significance of the asset and the impact of change to be understood. It should be proportionate both to the significance of the historic asset and to the degree of change proposed'.³

1.2 The Author

Anne Lloyd Morris is a member of both the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

With a background in Local Authority Conservation services and private consultancy she holds a breadth of experience in the analysis, repair and conservation of historic buildings, and a thorough knowledge of the guidance and legislation governing changes to listed buildings.

The author is well informed to provide a thorough and robust assessment of the building's significance and the impact of the proposals upon this significance.

¹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/tan24-historic-environment.pdf>

² Para.1.15 of TAN 24 and Section 3 <https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/20170531Heritage%20Impact%20Assessment%20in%20Wales%2026917%20EN.pdf> pf Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing significance in Heritage Assets.

³ Section 3 Cadw 'Statement of Heritage Significance 2017

1.3 Methods of Investigation

1.5 A visual inspection of the property was undertaken in November 2020 as part of the development of this listed building consent application. The inspections involved the building's exterior and interior as well as the identification of historic features and fabric of significance.

The inspection concentrated on the area of the building to be affected and included investigation of the fabric and construction at first and second floor levels.

In addition, a comprehensive background research into the building was conducted through consultation with the following websites sources:

- www.cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/records
Cadw listing description - copied below in 2.1
- www.archwilio.org.uk - Listing Record only - no other records such as historic photos
- www.cpat.org.uk - Listing Record only - no other records such as historic photos
- www.coflein.gov.uk -
NPRN 403526 Old Surgery, 2nd Outbuilding to Gwydyr House
NPRN 35854 Gwydyr House/ Gwernhaylod Arms. Dwelling
No digital image available for either record.
- Ordnance Survey Historic mapping - copied below in 2.1
- Wrexham County Borough Council Conservation and Planning services - Planning Application History

2.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

2.1 The Building

Gwydyr House (former RS & P Garden Machinery Specialists), 7 Pen-y-Llan Street.

Excerpt from the CADW Listing

Entry Name: Gwydyr House (former RS & P Garden Machinery Specialists)

Listing Date: 19 March 1993

Last Amended: 15 March 1994

Grade: II

Source: Cadw

Source ID: 1744

Building Class: Domestic

Location: Prominently sited on the SE side of Overton at the crossroads of the A 539, A 528 and B 5069; on the corner between Pen-y-lan Street and Church Road.

County: Wrexham

Community: Overton (Owrtyn)

Community: Overton

Built-Up Area: Overton

Traditional County: Flintshire

History

Late C17/early C18; possibly built in 1707 - see date on cottage attached to left. Largely refenestrated in C19 and given a free-Classical porch, probably c1885 when it became a private house; shop-fronts added later. The building has had a varied history. It is first recorded as the Gwernhaylod Arms PH and then became The Bowling Green Inn as the Bowling Green field was in the same ownership; it served as Overton's main posting inn. In 1885 it was renamed Gwydyr House on becoming the private residence of L W H Tringham who lived here until he inherited Nerquis Hall. More recently it has been recorded as the Co-operative Stores and was last in use as a garden machinery shop.

Exterior

Substantial, H-plan, 2-storey and attic, red-brick building with tiled roof and brick chimney offset to right; sandstone plinth and dressed stone gable copings and kneelers. The original brickwork is of irregular bonding and is given relief by bands, of three courses each, over ground and 1st floors; moulded brick cornice retained to centre. Dominant gables project either side of recessed central bay, infilled to ground floor by porch. 2-window gable to left, 1-window to right, both with camber-headed, voussoired, windows; the central window is square-headed. All flush-set windows with various horned sash glazing; 6-pane to attic left, 9-pane to right, 12-pane to centre and outer 1st floor windows only have glazing bars to upper sashes including tripartite window to right. Blocked window to inner side of right hand gable but no corresponding opening to left. Late C19/early C20 shopfronts with dentilled cornices applied to ground floor squared bays, fully small-pane glazed to right. Added and slightly advanced central porch enriched in a free-Classical manner that is stylistically in-keeping with the late C17/early C18 origins of the building. Ionic brick pilasters at either end and fluted Ionic stone columns flanking the doorway, all on high bases, carry a stone entablature and cornice which is pulvinated over

each upright as well as to centre over a stylised acanthus keystone; volute brackets above at either end. Round-arched entrance with freestone voussoirs flanked by similarly arched leaded lights with brick voussoirs; fanlight and modern door. Lean-to at left with coloured glass window. Cement rendered left hand side concealing moulded brick cornice as on front; cut down chimney stack and 2-light window. Formerly 3-window right hand side has blocked, camber-headed, openings except for one twin-transom window to ground floor; similar brickwork detail. At rear the gable end of the corner (eastern) cross wing projects further but the 1 and 2-window arrangement is repeated. Facing the rear the left hand gable has timber hoist over large blocked opening to 1st floor and a doorway in tripartite frame below. To centre are a pair of fine cross-frame, leaded and square-headed, windows; tiny attic window cut into cornice; hipped lean-to below with horned sash. Right hand gable has camber-headed, horned sash to attic over two multipane square-headed 1st floor sashes; inserted doorway below.

Disused at the time of inspection.

[Interior](#)

Interior said to retain original detail including oak stairs and roof trusses.

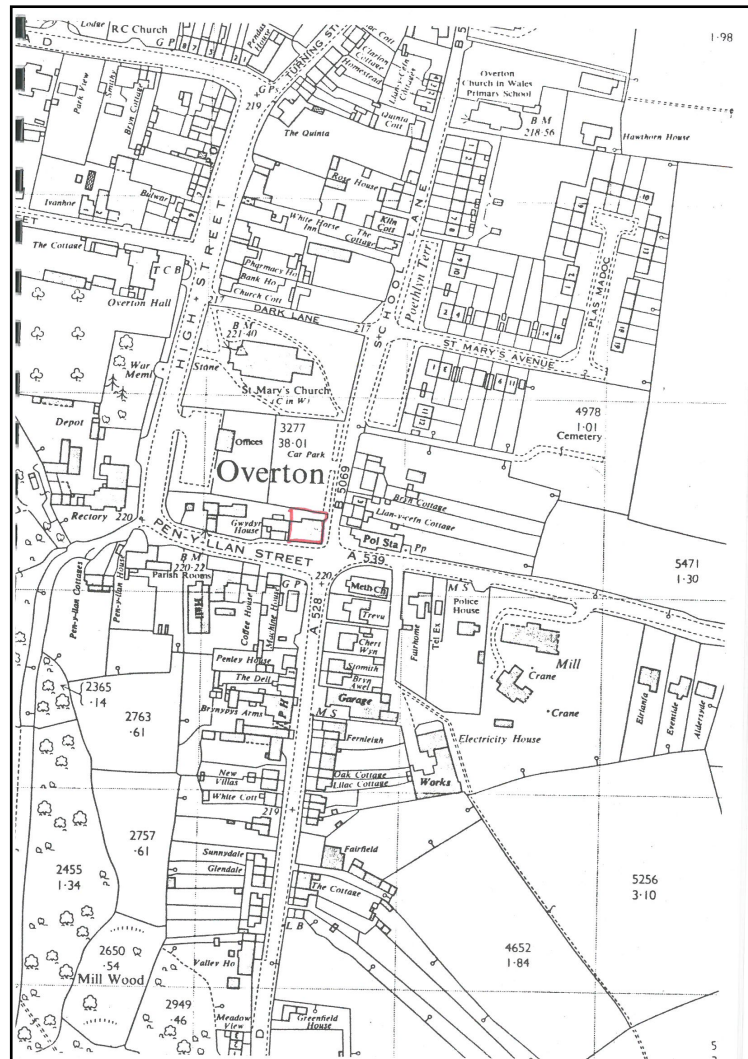
[Reasons for Listing](#)

Listed for its special interest as a large late C17/early C18 town building retaining some original glazing and brick detail.

2.2 Site Location

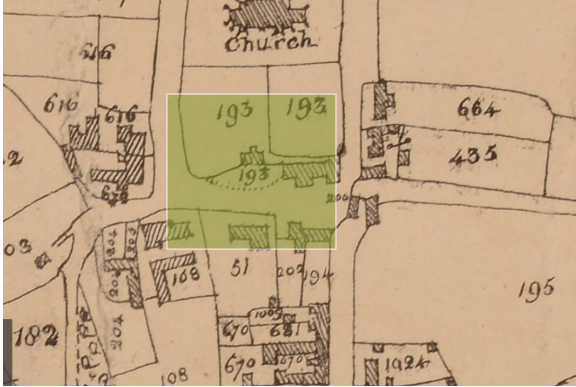
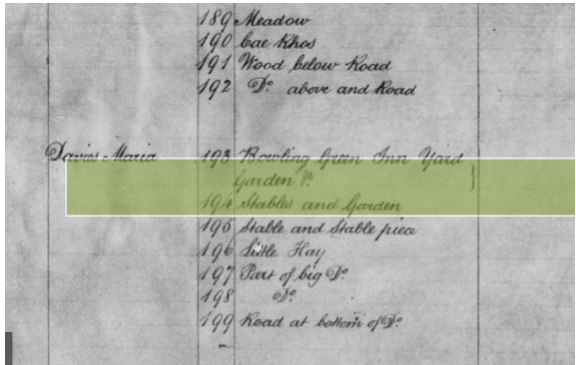
The Local Planning Authority is Wrexham County Borough Council. The site lies within the development boundary of the village of Overton as defined by the current, adopted Unitary Development Plan.

Gwydyr House is situated very prominently facing south at the junction of the A528 Wrexham to Ellesmere Road and the A539 Ruabon to Whitchurch Road.



The local street names are Pen y Llan Street, Station Road (A539) and, Salop Road(A528), with Church Road forming the crossing to the North alongside Gwydyr House.

Ordnance Survey Maps showing Historic Development

Map	Map description
	Welsh Tithe maps - NLW
	
	Flintshire XXII Surveyed: 1872 to 1873, Published: 1879.



Shropshire VI,NW Revised
1898, Published: 1902.



Denbighshire XXXVI.SW
Revised 1909, Published:
1914.



Shropshire VI,NW Revised
1924, Published: 1930.



SJ34 SE
NW Revised Pre 1930 –
1954 Published: 1954.



SJ34 SE
NW Revised Pre 1930 –
1965 Published: 1966.

Maps courtesy of NLS.

2.3 Site Description

Gwydyr House lies within the central area of the designated Overton Conservation Area⁴. The Conservation Area was first designated in 1971 with its boundary amended in February 1999. The easterly edge of the Conservation area lies 30 metres from Gwydyr House:

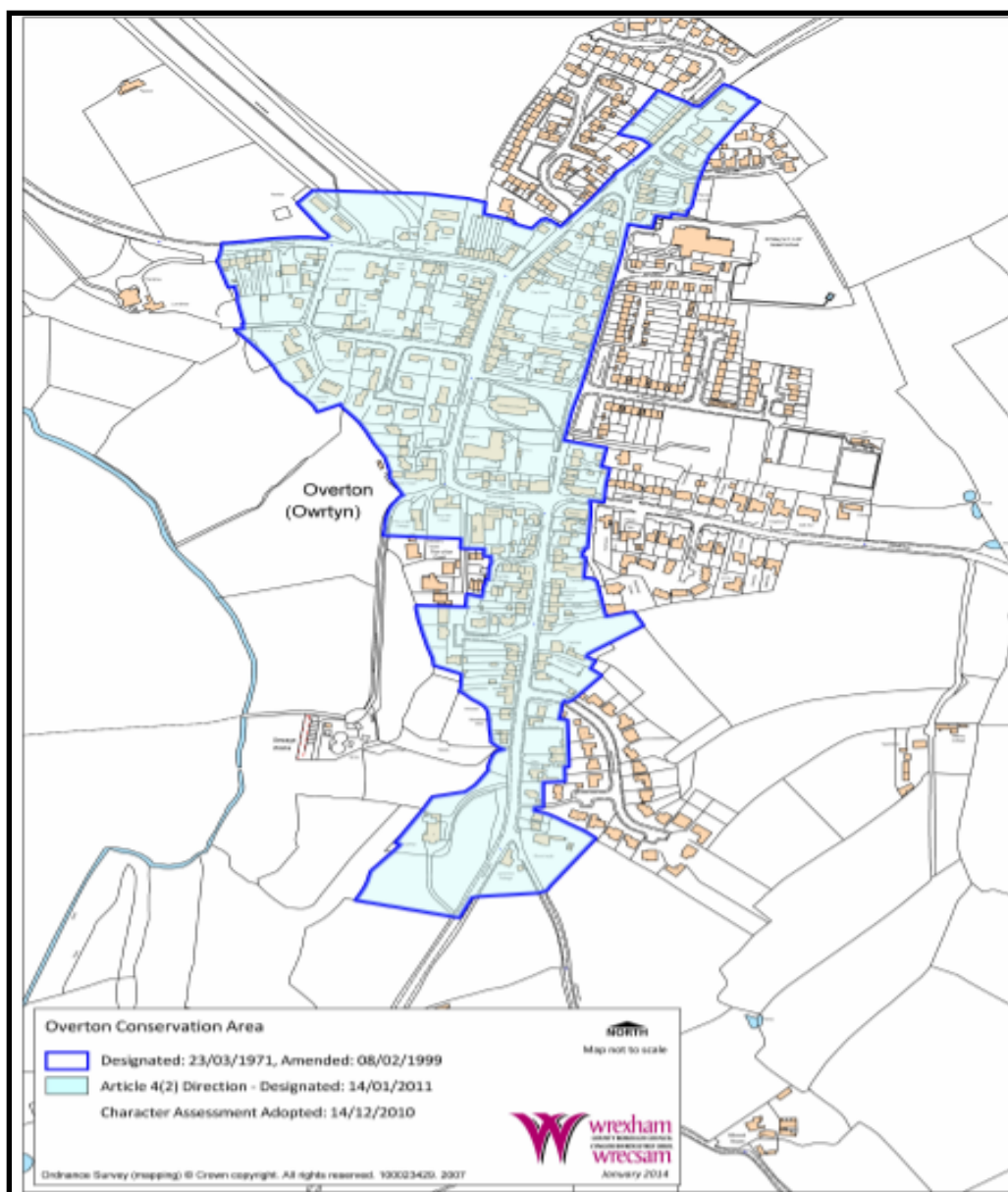


Figure 3. Overton Conservation Area © Wrexham County Borough Council

⁴ <https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/service/conservation-areas>

There are eight Listed Buildings dotted along Pen y Llan Street with Gwydyr House commanding a prominent site at the cross roads. The nearest designated heritage assets⁵ include the Grade II listed second outbuilding to Gwydyr House, situated immediately to the west of Gwydyr House and also, the Grade II listed Former Lloyd's Bank premises and the Station Road Jubilee pump.

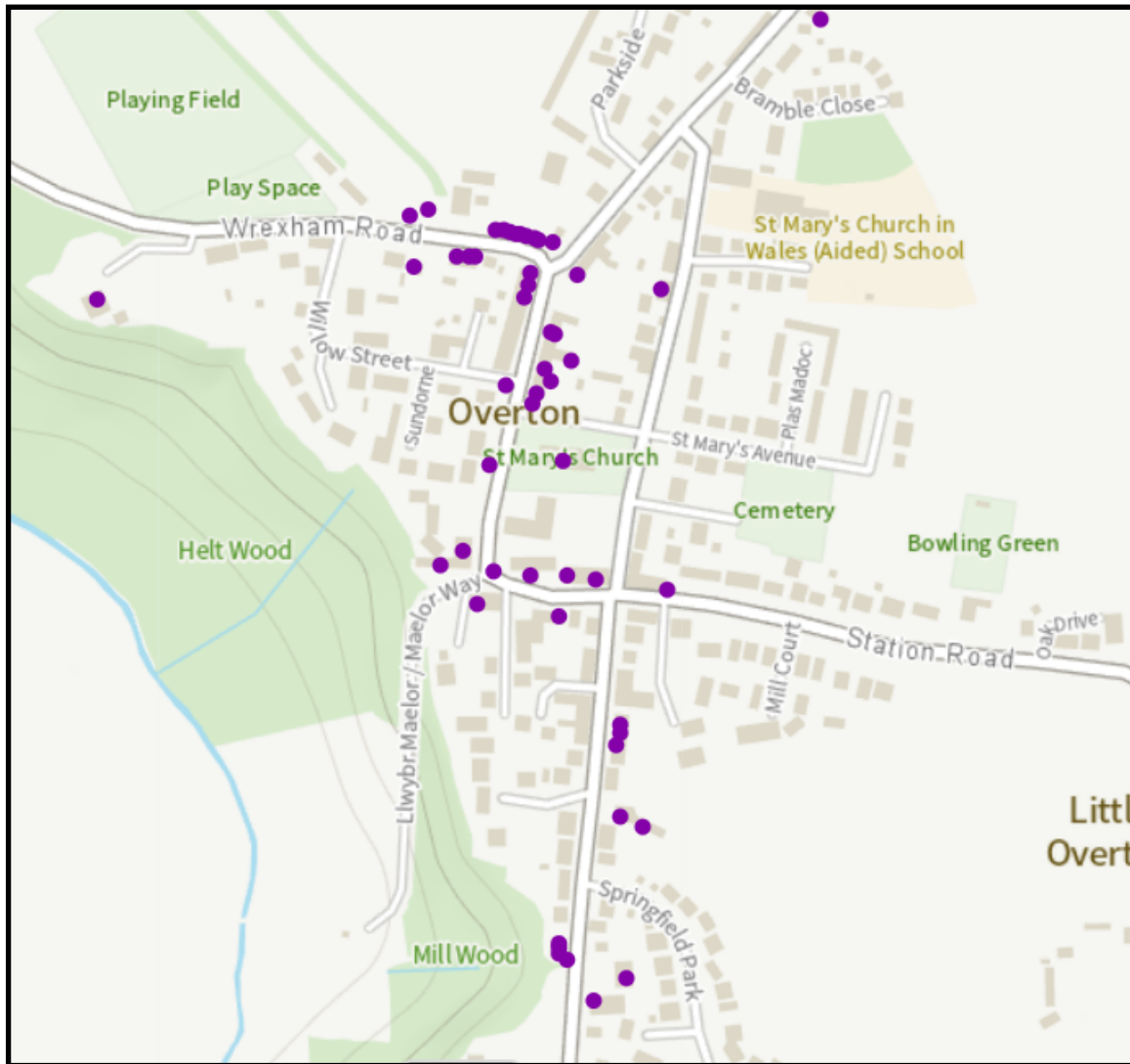


Figure 4. Listed Buildings in Overton⁶

⁵ <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/wales/overton-wrexham#.YGts7OhKhPY> & <https://historic-wales-rcahmw.hub.arcgis.com/app/560b673d549341e1aad78c12e2145592>

⁶ Historic Wales mapping <https://historic-wales-rcahmw.hub.arcgis.com/app/560b673d549341e1aad78c12e2145592>

Other designated assets within the locality include the Grade II listed *St Mary's Church Historic Park and Garden*⁷ and '*The Maelor*' *Historic Landscape*⁸. Details for the Historic Park includes⁹:

The Registered Historic Landscape covers a large part of the locality further south and towards the easterly boundaries of Wrexham Council:

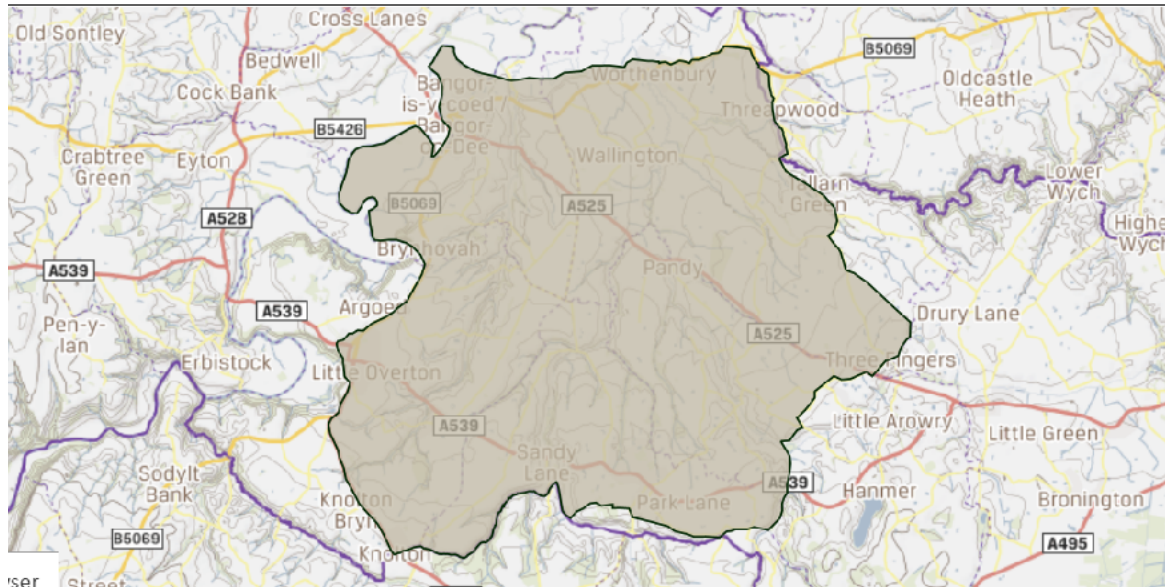


Figure 5: Registered Historic Landscape as identified in *lle.gov.wales*.

The area is described as the English Maelor Historic Landscape, an essentially '*lowland rural area which includes the villages of Bangor on Dee, Overton, Worthenbury, Penly and Bronington, It occupies the part of Wales formerly known as 'Flint Detached', to the east of the river Dee and in many respects forms an extension of the Cheshire and Shropshire plains, to the north, south and east.*'¹⁰ The importance of the new market town of Overton is noted with a royal charter to administer the area.

The Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust Historic Landscape categorisation description for Overton highlights:

The town lies on flat ground close to an old river scarp above the Dee, and generally lies between 50-60 metres above Ordnance Datum. The older core of the settlement has grid-like pattern of streets of medieval original which developed around the medieval marketplace occupying the broader part of High Street, to the north of the church. Little structural evidence of medieval date has survived above ground apart from St Mary's Church, extensively rebuilt in the 18th and 19th centuries. An earlier building horizon of the 16th and 17th centuries is represented by a small half-timbered cottage near the

⁷ Very ancient yews, described as one of the seven wonders of Wales.

⁸ <https://www.cpat.org.uk/projects/longer/histland/histland.htm> and <https://www.cpat.org.uk/projects/longer/histland/maelor/maelor.htm>

⁹ <https://coflein.gov.uk/media/17/161/cpg098.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/44184989/english-maelor-historic-landscape-photographs-clwyd-powys->

churchyard, by the front elevation of Quinta Cottage, and by traces of timber-framing visible in the rear elevations of a terrace of houses rebuilt in brick in the 18th century in the High Street. **Many of the older buildings in the settlement are of 18th- and early 19th-century date**, many of which are painted, including larger detached houses such as **Gwydyr House (variously a public house, private residence and shop)** (authors bold), Pen-y-llan House (a former malthouse and shop), and terraced houses and cottages, including a number of buildings of a picturesque character, such as The Quinta, with its oriel window, ornate bargeboards and arched windows. In addition to the more substantial middle-class houses, by the end of the 19th century the settlement also included estate workers' cottages, church school, shops, almshouses, cocoa rooms, estate office for the Bryn-y-Pys estate, Methodist chapel, malthouse, rectory, and cemetery chapel. Its importance as a local centre into the early 20th century is further reflected by the former council offices of and the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Welsh Martyrs both built in the 1950s.

Maelor Saesneg: Overton (HLCA 1118)

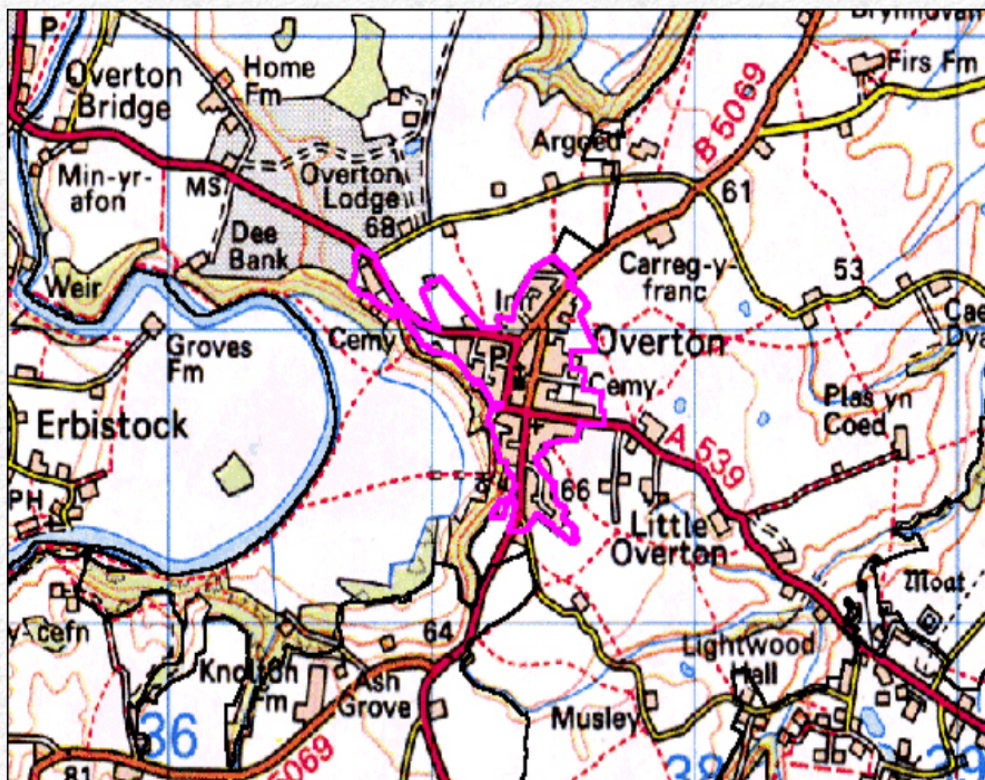


Figure 4 –Overton character area, extract from CPAT ¹¹

¹¹ <https://www.cpat.org.uk/projects/longer/histland/maelor/1118map.htm>

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

SOURCES

www.cadw.gov.wales/historicenvironment/records

Cadw listing description - copied above in 2.1

www.archwilio.org.uk

Listing Record only - no other records such as historic photos etc

www.cpat.org.uk

Listing Record only - no other records such as historic photos etc

www.coflein.gov.uk

NPRN 403526 Old Surgery, 2nd Outbuilding to Gwydyr House

NPRN 35854 Gwydyr House/ Gwernhaylod Arms. Dwelling

No digital image available for either record.

Ordnance Survey Historic mapping - copied above in 2.3

Wrexham County Borough Council Conservation and Planning services - Planning Application History

3.1 Evidential Value - The extent to which the physical fabric of the building tells how and when it was made.

Gwydyr House was built in the late 17th or early 18th century and the fenestration was altered in the 19th centuries.

Aspects of its architectural design such as the H plan, the projecting gables, steepness of the roof, the tall floor to ceiling heights, the wall to window ratio and the quality of the brickwork are typically characteristic of a late 17th - early 18th century building.

3.2 Historical value - How the building illustrates a particular past way of life or association with a specific person or event.

Archival research has not produced any results.

3.3 Aesthetic value - The design construction, craftsmanship and setting of the building.

The building is very prominently situated at the junction of two important local roads leading to the old market towns of Wrexham, Ruabon, Ellesmere and Whitchurch. The size and dominance of Gwydyr House reflects this prominence.

3.4 Communal value - Does the building have particular significance to people for its commemorative, symbolic, or spiritual value, for the part it played in local cultural or public life.

Archival research has not produced any results.

3.5 Summary of significance

The property is no doubt deserving of its Listed Grade II status, however, the overall findings of the HIA identifies a heritage asset of lower individual significance, but making a very important contribution to the street scene and the Overton Conservation Area as a whole.

4.0 DESCRIPTION, ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROPOSALS

4.1 The Proposal

Why the changes are desirable or necessary in the interests of preserving the Listed Building.

Historically the building has been used as a domestic dwelling, a coaching Inn a warehouse and In more recent times, the property included ground floor uses such as a coffee shop, delicatessen and gift shop, however, the upper floors remained disused and semi-derelict.

The current proposal is for the conversion of the disused first and second floors to provide 3 no separate residential apartments (shown pink, green and yellow) accessed from the existing central stairway which leads up from the ground floor at the rear of the property.

The assessment is based on the proposal plans and drawings supplied by the client, which include the following:





Existing rear elevation photograph taken November 2020

The programme of works and proposed new windows were previously discussed with the Council's Conservation Officer prior to her leaving the authority, as was the focus in retaining as many of the original features as possible.

These works and proposals were seen as generally acceptable in principle. The aims and objectives of the works are to reflect the history and features associated with the property, with the fenestration and brick detail significantly linked to the listing description, as a Georgian property, centrally positioned in this once thriving market town.

The proposals are seen as necessary to progress further in sustaining the future new use of the first and second floor of the property as three self-contained apartments¹².

Internal Alterations

As the floor to ceiling height in the GREEN section is exceptionally high, a mezzanine can be created to provide two bedrooms at the second floor level for apartment No. 3, without affecting the character and still retain the historic spine beams and roof truss features.

The detailed design of the proposed mezzanine floor and how it will incorporate the existing spine beams and roof trusses will need to be documented in a cross-section drawing together with an engineering report in regard to the impact upon the structure.

¹² A separate planning application will apply for change of use.

A method statement incorporating the proposed approach and detailing for the re-positioning of the existing spine beams to create the headroom needed for the mezzanine floor would ensure the preservation of the original timber ceiling and roof structure.

There are a few features of architectural or historic interest on the upper floors, these consist of the spindled staircase, fireplaces and some doors/architraves which can be kept in-situ.

The apartments will require the movement and/or creation of internal partitions which will be insignificant to the overall heritage asset.

External Alterations

The proposal involves only minor external alterations which affect the left hand gable on the rear elevation.

These include:

The insertion of one small window at second floor level to match the right hand gable.

The insertion of two larger windows at first floor level, in place of the bricked up loading bay opening. The proposed new windows would follow the same style and features as the other windows on the rear elevation as per windows 12 and 13 of LBC Ref **P/2015/0500** identified above.

Recent LBC Applications for alterations

Working in consultation with the Wrexham Council Conservation Officer, the property has gradually secured listed building consents for repairs, reinstatements and other work to enable protection and safety measures to take place over the past 6 years.

One of the recent schemes of improvements included listed building consent reference **P/2014/0872** for consent to repair and reinstate four windows to the front elevation (granted 30/01/2015).

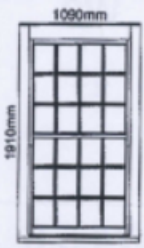
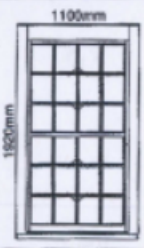
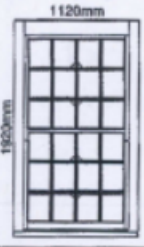
The Georgian Group and SPAB noted the importance of those windows at Gwydyr House, representing 'the eyes' of the building.

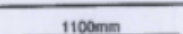
In completing those works, another phase of improvements included works to the external fabric of the building and alterations and repairs to windows, under listed building consent code **P/2015/0500**.

The rear, external changes were identified in the following photograph which accompanied the LBC:



The schedule of windows approved includes the following for the rear elevation:

	Sliding Sash 1st /FLOOR REAR ABOVE STAIRWELL -- INC - OUTSIDE MOULDED COVER BEADS 40 X 22 Sliding box sash to match existing , weather stripped fixed sashes Timber type: FSC Sapele (Hradwood) RMJ - Slimline D/G units 14mm low E Softcoat 4mm/6mm Krypton filled cav /4mm clear float- factory glazed	W10,11 x2
	Sliding Sash 1st /FLOOR REAR -- INC - OUTSIDE MOULDED COVER BEADS 40 X 22 Sliding box sash to match existing , weather stripped sashes on cords and new weights , 4 x brass wheeled sash pulleys , 2 x locking brass fitch fastners , 2 x sash lifts , inc 1 x coat primer allowed Timber type: FSC Sapele (Hradwood) RMJ - Slimline D/G units 14mm low E Softcoat 4mm/6mm Krypton filled cav /4mm clear float- factory glazed	W12 x1
	Sliding Sash 1st /FLOOR REAR -- INC - OUTSIDE MOULDED COVER BEADS 40 X 22 Sliding box sash to match existing , weather stripped sashes on cords and new weights , 4 x brass wheeled sash pulleys , 2 x locking brass fitch fastners , 2 x sash lifts , inc 1 x coat primer allowed Timber type: FSC Sapele (Hradwood) RMJ - Slimline D/G units 14mm low E Softcoat 4mm/6mm Krypton filled cav /4mm clear float- factory glazed	W13 x1

Job OVERTON Ref MJ	Window REAR ELEVATION - 2nd FLOOR 80 x 30 sq section window frame designed to take & re-use existing metal casement Timber type: FSC Sapele (Hradwood)	W14 x1
	Window	W16

Listed building consent was obtained for four conservation type rooflights to the rear elevation (code **P/2018/0381** and **P/2018/0629**).

Accompanying documents noted that the upper floors had been disused for some time and included four rooms.

4.2 Impact on Significance

The upper floors of the building have been unused and empty for several years. Over the last 6 years a significant amount of investment and sympathetic works were completed by the owner to safeguard and preserve this listed building.

Historically the building has been in residential and commercial use including as an Inn and has seen many changes. The most appropriate step now to continue to sympathetically preserve Gwydyr House is to convert the upper floors into apartments at the centre of the village.

Subject to further details potentially in the form of a method statement, the proposed alterations in connection with conversion of the upper floors of this Grade II listed building to provide three apartments are of modest impact, providing a much needed re- use for a heritage asset designated of lower significance, but of potential significant wider ranging benefits in this case.

It is noted that the listing schedule remains incomplete for detailed internal features, and the site visit noted a few internal features such as the spindled staircase, fireplaces and panelled doors/architraves etc which can be kept and re-used in the apartments.

The re- positioning of the spine beams to create the mezzanine in apartment no.3 is the biggest alteration of the proposal, but as long as this is recorded in a cross-sectional drawing, method statement and engineers report it becomes part of the building's evolving history of change of use.

4.3 Justification

Gwydyr House is an imposing Listed building in a very prominent position within the Overton Conservation Area, and links with a string of other Listed and historic buildings on Pen Y Llan Street and relates to other designated heritage assets within the immediate locality and further, at a wider landscape setting of regional importance.

The site reflects one of the key land mark properties in the Overton Conservation Area, and the proposal represents a significant inward investment and positive contribution and enhancement to the vitality and use particularly of the unused upper floors of this property.

5.0 ANNOTATED PHOTOGRAPHS



South and East facing roadside elevations



North facing rear elevation



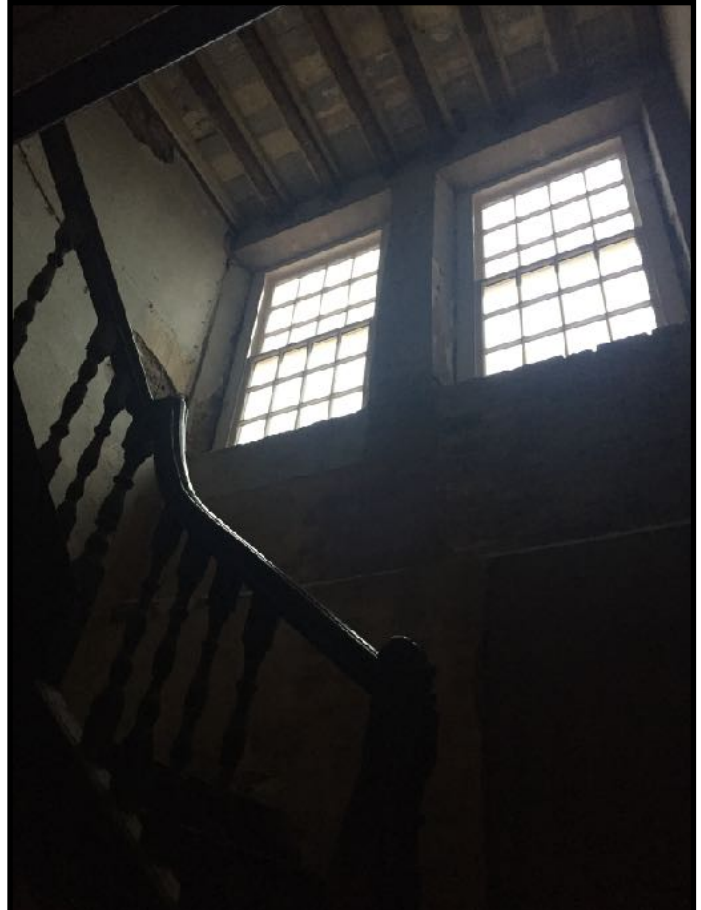
First Floor Apartment 3 (Green) facing south



First Floor Apartment No. 3 (Green) facing north towards blocked up opening in rear elevation. A pair of windows is proposed for this elevation as shown in the drawings.



Existing central staircase at rear of property to be shared by all 3 apartments.





First floor landing area and existing recess through which the doorway to Apartment 3 will be created.

6.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Subject to provision of cross-section details and method statement in regard to the proposed mezzanine floor and the re-positioning of the spine beams and roof trusses; the proposed alterations in connection with the conversion of this Grade II listed building to provide three apartments at first and second floor level is of modest impact, providing a much needed re-use for a heritage asset of lower significance, but of potential significant wider ranging benefits.