



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

LAND OFF HERITAGE WAY, BRYMBO, WREXHAM

**Taylor
Wimpey**

BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE ASSESSMENT

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1 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Introduction

Building for a Healthy Life is the latest industry standard (formally Building for Life 12) for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods that local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use to create, vibrant, attractive, sustainable and healthy places to live.

The document comprises 12 questions, under three chapters, designed as a way of structuring discussions about the proposed development. Each question is scored by a simple 'traffic light' system (red, amber, green).

It is recommended that new developments aim to;

- Secure as many 'greens' as possible,  **green = go ahead**
- Minimise the number of 'ambers' and;  **amber = try & turn to green**
- Avoid 'reds'.  **red = stop & rethink**

Executive Summary

The development proposes the construction of 70no. high quality residential dwellings, positioned to the outskirts of Wrexham, within Brymbo village.

This statement supports the Reserved Matters planning application submission, and the proposals submitted, and helps explain how the design has responded to the BHL criteria. It is demonstrated through this statement that the proposals achieve 12 out of the 12 green scores.

Building for a Healthy Life

A Design Toolkit for neighbourhoods, streets, homes and public spaces



2 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

The Proposals

The development proposes the construction of 70no. high quality residential dwellings, comprising a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties, along with associated open space, sustainable drainage system, landscaping and highway infrastructure.

A variety of dwelling typology is provided, offering a range of properties which will support, a sustainable, well-balanced residential community.



3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q1 Create places that are well integrated into the site and their wider natural and built surroundings. Avoid creating isolated and disconnected places that are not easy places to move through and around.

- Look beyond the red line that marks the extent of your site. Ordnance Survey maps along with satellite mapping software such as Google Earth are useful tools to help you understand the wider context and how you can best stitch a new development into a place.
- Identify the places, facilities and services you need to connect to.
- Draw points of connection into and through your site creating a strong and direct street, path and open space network.
- Create well-connected street and path networks, providing opportunities for these to be extended beyond the site boundary in the future.
- Research and respond to how water flows and nature moves across your site and the wider surroundings.

Answer:

Wrexham County Borough Council's Unitary Development Plan allocates the site (as well as land to the east and south) as green wedge. In addition, the site is also allocated as Land Reclamation (Policy EC16) which sets out the site will be reclaimed and restored for beneficial use. The land to the north has already come forward for residential use and this site therefore forms a logical extension to the urban settlement of Brymbo. The emerging Local Development Plan includes the site within the revised settlement boundary and removes the green wedge designation.

Existing footpath routes to the north can be accessed via the existing open space, and existing housing estate to the north west.

The development integrates into its surroundings and connects well with existing infrastructure.

(green)

The Site

BRYMBO SPORTS
& SOCIAL COMPLEX

HERITAGE WAY

NATURAL CONNECTIONS

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q2 Short trips of up to three miles can be easily made on foot or bicycle if the right infrastructure is in place, helping to improve public health and air quality whilst also reducing local congestion and carbon emissions.

- Cycle and walk the neighbourhood to understand where off-site interventions will be most useful. Local residents and councillors can help you understand where investment in improvements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure might have most impact.
- Invite people to cycle within the site and beyond to destinations within at least a three mile radius; with routes through green spaces, quiet streets alongside prioritised and protected routes on busy streets, junctions and roads.
- If there is an existing protected cycle network, connect to it. Alternatively, begin a new one by building or funding routes to key destinations.
- Ensure access for all and help make walking feel like an instinctive choice for everyone undertaking short journeys (such as the school run or older generations accessing local facilities and services).
- Streets and paths that connect people to places and public transport services in the most direct way, making car-free travel more attractive, safe and convenient.
- Make sure that all streets and routes pass in front of people's homes rather than to the back of them – creating a well overlooked public realm.
- Exploit existing (or planned) public transport hubs, such as train stations and bus interchanges, to build at higher densities and channel a higher percentage of journeys to public transport.

Answer:

The proposed site access and highway network will provide connection to existing infrastructure, offering convenient and safe movement routes for pedestrians and cyclist like, along with access to local facilities. The site is within walking distance to the bus stop located to the southern side of College Hill, linking the development with Wrexham and the wider area through regular bus services.

A public footpath lies to the north of the site, offering connection to Brymbo village, and can be accessed via the existing housing estate to the north.

Properties are sited to create active frontages, as such, footpaths are positioned so that people walk in front homes, encouraging passive surveillance.

The development is sustainably located close to public transport facilities and local footpath routes.

(green)



WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

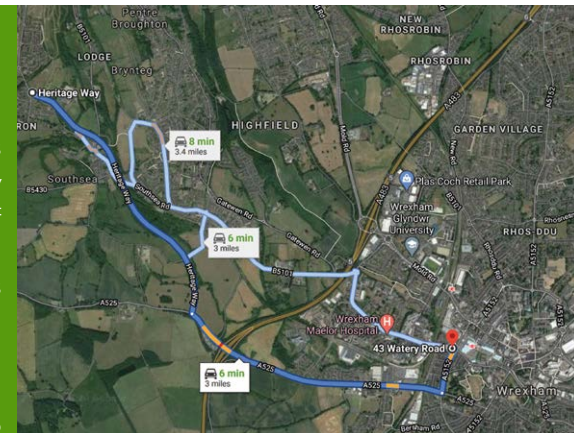
Q3 Places that offer social, leisure and recreational opportunities a short walk or cycle from their homes.

- Developments that provide community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, health facilities, co-working spaces, parks, play spaces, cafés and other meeting places that respond to local community needs.
- Locate any new facilities in the best location for those walking, cycling and using public transport.
- Consider whether improving existing facilities will add more value to the local community than adding new ones.
- Assess or identify what sport and leisure provision there is for people of all ages, paying particular attention to the needs of children, teenagers and older people.
- Create places where people can meet each other such as public spaces, leisure facilities, community buildings, cafes and restaurants to provide opportunities for social interaction – helping to improve public health by encouraging physical activity and helping to tackle those affected by loneliness and isolation.
- 'Play on the way' can make car-free trips more fun for children making them want to walk or cycle to school.
- Sustainable drainage schemes that contribute towards an attractive and accessible network of streets and public spaces.

Answer:

The site is positioned to the outskirts of Wrexham, within the village of brymbo. It is served by local facilities within a 1.2 mile catchment, and located approximately 2.5 miles to larger retail stores (to the outskirts of Wrexham), which include supermarkets, petrol station and takeaways. Wrexham town centre is located 3 miles to the south east, offering a variety of facilities and amenities.

Brymbo Sports & Social Complex is located directly to the east of the site. The site benefits from ease of access to local schools, namely Ysgol Tanyfron Infant school, Brynteg County Primary School and Black Lane County Primary School, all of which are located within a 1.2 mile walking catchment area, reducing car dependant journeys.



Google Earth 2020

The development is sustainably located close to local shops and community facilities, supporting sustainable movement.

(green)

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q4 A range of homes that meet local community needs.

- A mix of housing types and tenures that suit the needs of the local community. This may include first time buyer homes, family homes, homes for those downsizing and supported living.
- Maximising the opportunities offered by supported accommodation, placing these homes at the heart of new developments above active ground floor uses such as shops, community facilities and pre-schools.
- Offering people access to at least some private outdoor space. This is particularly important for people's mental health and wellbeing especially when social distancing and travel restrictions are in place.

The development will provide a range of house type typology which will create a well-balanced community, whilst assisting with local housing need.

(green)

Answer:

The scheme provides a range of property typology and sizes to meet local need, creating a well-balanced residential community, which will encourage neighbour integration.

The proposed accommodation schedule comprises a mix of detached and semi-detached style properties, intended to provide starter two / three bedroom, and larger family three / four bedroom dwellings, which will be offered to the open market, in accordance with the Outline Planning Permission.

Each dwelling is provided with adequate private amenity space to the front and rear of the property.

ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE			
OPEN MARKET HOUSE TYPES	House Type	Description	No.
	ND40	4 Bed Detached	10
	PA42	4 Bed Detached	11
	PD30	4 Bed Detached	5
	PA42	4 Bed Semi-Det	4
	NB31	3 Bed Townhouse	1
	PT36	2 Bed Detached	1
	PT36	3 Bed Semi-Det	7
	PA34	3 Bed Semi-Det	3
	TOTAL		70

HOMES FOR EVERYONE

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q5 Understand and respond.

- Allow time for good design, walk the site and the surroundings with the local planning authority. Discuss, understand and agree opportunities and constraints building a shared vision that makes use of the topography and other existing assets on and beyond the site.
- Explore conceptual ideas before settling on an agreed way forward and producing a site layout. For instance, if there are existing site features explore how these might be best integrated into a place.
- Identify any visual connections into, out, through and beyond the site.
- Work with the contours of the land.
- Understand how water flows across and pools on the site. Explore how water can be used to enhance biodiversity, create character and improve people's sense of wellbeing.
- Draw all these considerations together to get the street, block and open space structure right from the start (a framework or concept plan).
- Consider opportunities for natural lighting, cooling and ventilation. Take care not to compromise important urban design principles such as perimeter block structure.
- Identify opportunities to integrate and reuse existing features of value, these might be natural or manmade, on or beyond the site.
- Be careful that hedges are not simply retained and prevent a sensible and practical new development layout. It may be more effective to create and plant new hedgerows and tree

belts into development proposals than work around existing hedges. A well thought out approach may even increase habitat and biodiversity.

- Be sensitive to existing development but avoid creating buffer spaces between existing and new back gardens.
- Using the landform and ground conditions (soil) in a considered way. For instance, low-nutrient subsoils are ideal to put to one side if you wish to establish wildflower meadows rather than importing new topsoil.

The development incorporates and enhances existing site features.

(green)

Answer:

The proposed landscape strategy has been designed to complement and enhance existing site features, through the use of native planting. Low category existing tree / shrub planting will be removed, and replaced through appropriate mitigation.

The existing site topography to the south creates a natural development set back, which in turn allows for structured tree planting adjacent to Heritage Way. This forms a soft urban edge which offers connection with the existing tree belt along the western boundary.

The proposed finished floor levels have been designed to follow, where possible, the natural site contours, which will help the development integrate into the wider landscape setting.

Surface water naturally falls to the lowest part of the site, which is positioned to the south eastern corner, as such, a dry basin is located in this corner, forming part of the sustainable drainage system for surface water runoff. Permeable paving will also assist surface water runoff.

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q6 Create places that are memorable.

- Create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character.
- Review the wider area for sources of inspiration. If distinctive local characteristics exist, delve deeper than architectural style and details. Where the local context is poor or generic, do not use this as a justification for more of the same. Inspiration may be found in local history and culture.
- Understand where positive local character comes from: streets, blocks and plots (urban grain), green and blue infrastructure, land uses, building form, massing and materials often underpin the essence of the distinctive character of settlements rather than architectural style and details.
- Using a local materials palette (where appropriate) can be a particularly effective way to connect a development to a place. This is often more achievable and credible than mimicking traditional architectural detailing which can be dependent on lost crafts.
- Brownfield sites can offer sources of inspiration for new development. Greenfield and edge of settlement locations often require more creativity and inspiration to avoid creating places that lack a sense of local or otherwise distinctive character.
- Character can also be created through the social life of public spaces. Create the physical conditions for activity to happen and bring places to life.

Answer:

Direct and legible routes for both vehicles and pedestrians connect with the access point and nodal points created at road junctions.

Focal buildings, that are dual aspect in nature create reference points within the development, and aid navigation and ease of movement within the site.

In addition, building materials and landscape structure will work collaboratively to form character areas which create distinctiveness and memorable character across the site.

Direct routes, building character and landscape will all work together to form memorable triggers and distinctiveness.

(green)

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q7 Create a network of streets and spaces that are well enclosed by buildings and/or structural landscaping, taking care to ensure that front doors and the principal facades of buildings face streets and public spaces.

- A strong framework of connected and well overlooked streets and spaces.
- Look beyond the plan and illustrative street scenes; what will you actually see and experience walking along the street?
- Perimeter blocks with clearly defined public fronts and private backs.
- Active frontages. Front doors, balconies, terraces, front gardens and bay windows are a good way to enliven and add interest to the street and create a more human scale to larger buildings such as apartments and supported living accommodation.
- Carefully considered street corners.
- Three dimensional models (physical or computer generated) and simple, hand drawn street cross sections can be particularly useful tools to understand and test the spatial qualities of a place.

Answer:

The layout is formed from good urban design foundations, creating key desire and build lines which form well connected streets and direct routes across the site.

All properties are orientated to front internal streets and Heritage Way, creating active streetscapes which provide a degree of natural surveillance.

House types have been carefully designed to articulate street corners and provide active street frontages. All front doors are positioned to face the street.

Strong, well connected and active streets create attractive streetscapes and appropriate urban form.

(green)



HERITAGE WAY STREET SCENE

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q8 Use legible features to help people find their way around a place.

- Streets that connect with one another.
- Streets that are as straight and as direct as possible.
- Use street types, buildings, spaces, non-residential uses, landscape, water and other features to help people create a 'mental map' of a place.
- Streets with clearly different characters are more effective than 'character areas' in helping people grasp whether they are on a principal or secondary street.
- For larger sites, it will be necessary to use streets and spaces with different characters to help people to find their way around.

Strong, well connected and active streets offer natural surveillance, and aid navigation.

(green)

Answer:

The proposed road network creates direct routes across the site. Street form transitions users between segregated and shared spaces, enforced through changes in carriageway widths, and the transition from footpaths, either side of the primary spine street, to grass service verges either side of secondary streets.

Furthermore, focal buildings and nodal points form reference triggers across the development, which again aid navigation and way finding.



Extract of the site layout.

EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY ROUND

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q9 Streets are different to roads. Streets are places where the need to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles is balanced alongside the need for people to move along and cross streets with ease. Activity in the street is an essential part of a successful public realm.

- Low-speed streets and neighbourhoods with pedestrian and cycle priority.
- The right balance between movement and place functions.
- Rethinking the way we distribute street space.
- At times of more relaxed social distancing, demand for better quality cycle provision is expected to increase as public transport capacity reduces. Congestion caused by motor vehicles will make it unattractive for people to switch from public transport to cars creating a unique opportunity to change the way we move around our cities, towns and villages.
- Healthy streets improve people's physical and mental health. Encouraging walking, cycling, outdoor play and streets where it is safe for younger children to cycle (or scooter) to school can create opportunities for social interaction and street life bringing wider social benefits.
- Street trees.
- Avoid streets that are just designed as routes for motor vehicles to pass through and for cars to park within.
- Boulevards and streets with active edges rather than distributor roads and bypasses with no (or limited) frontage access.
- Streets that are easy to cross; providing priority for pedestrians and cyclists across junctions and accesses.
- Well overlooked streets with front doors facing streets and public spaces.
- Provide conditions for cycling appropriate to the speed and volume of motor traffic.
- Inclusive design: think about how people with visual, mobility or other limitations will be able to use the street confidently and safely.

Answer:

The road network has a direct and clear hierarchy of use, defined through changes in carriageway widths, which create permeable, logical and easily navigable routes across the development.

The main spine street provides segregated footpaths, compared to secondary routes which utilise shared surfaces, which naturally reduce vehicle speeds and encourage safe movement patterns for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

The road and street structure has been designed to create safe and convenient movement patterns for pedestrians and cyclists.

(green)



HEALTHY STREETS

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q10 Well-designed developments will make it more attractive for people to choose to walk or cycle for short trips helping to improve levels of physical activity, air quality, local congestion and the quality of the street scene. Well-designed streets will also provide sufficient and well-integrated car parking.

- Provide secure cycle storage close to people's front doors so that cycles are as convenient to choose as a car for short trips.
- Integration of car parking into the street environment.
- Anticipate realistic levels of car parking demand, guarding against displaced and anti-social parking; thinking about the availability and frequency of public transport.
- Avoid confusing car ownership with car usage.
- Creative solutions for attractive, convenient and safe cycle parking or higher density developments (such as apartment buildings).
- Generous landscaping to settle frontage car parking into the street.
- Shared and unallocated parking.

Answer:

All properties are provided with a minimum of two in curtilage parking spaces, positioned either to the side or front of the dwelling. Where up front parking is proposed, spaces are broken up through the use of soft landscaping, reducing dominance of hard surfacing within the streetscape.

Selected properties are provided with a separate garage, which will serve as an additional parking space. Garages are set behind the established build line, reducing their dominance within the streetscape.

Cycle storage is facilitated within properties which are provided with either a detached or integral garage. Direct routes from the rear garden to the highway create convenient routes.



Car parking arrangements, garages and cycle storage has been considered in connection with landscape treatments to reduce the dominance of cars within the streetscape.

(green)

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q11 Creative surface water management such as rills, brooks and ponds enrich the public realm and help improve a sense of wellbeing and offer an interaction with nature. As the richest habitat for a range of flora and fauna, they are also a key play in achieving the net gain in biodiversity sought by the 2020 Environment Bill.

- Create a strong landscape strategy that has impact from 'day one'. Don't 'layer' landscape onto a scheme at the end of the process. Landscape changes can offer opportunities to reintroduce lost habitats and species.
- Create a network of different types of spaces.
- Weave opportunities for habitat creation throughout the development. Plan these as movement corridors to support biodiversity.
- Create food growing opportunities such as allotments and orchards on larger developments.
- Have a sustainable drainage 'treatment train' thinking about the 'four pillars'. Capture water as close as possible to where it falls. Be creative with rain gardens, ponds and swales and avoid steeply-sided or fenced holes in the ground.
- Well-designed multi-functional sustainable drainage will incorporate play and recreational opportunities.
- Well-overlooked public open spaces with strong levels of natural surveillance.
- Robust management and long term stewardship.

Answer:

The landscape strategy has been informed by existing site features. The existing embankment adjacent to Heritage Way presents an opportunity for a landscape buffer, which in forms a green corridor between open space to the east and the existing tree belt to the west.

A sustainable drainage system, comprising a dry attenuation basin is located to the south eastern corner. Whilst the position has been informed by existing topography, this location creates an attractive development edge. A wildflower meadow mix will support on site biodiversity.



The proposals seek to retain and enhance on site biodiversity.

(green)

3 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Q12 Garden cities, towns and suburbs used hedges to define public and private spaces, helping to create characterful and biodiverse places. The space between the back of the pavement and the face of buildings has a significant impact on the quality of a place. Clear demarcations between public and private spaces can encourage people to personalise the front of their homes whilst also offering opportunities to integrate level changes, utility boxes and waste storage.

- Clearly define private spaces through strong boundary treatments.
- Manage changes in level in a way that does not compromise the qualities of the street.
- Design the space between the back of the pavement and building façades carefully to integrate services, waste storage and utilities cabinets (meter boxes) so their impact is reduced.
- Avoid pieces of 'leftover' land that serve no useful public or private function. Homes with shallow street backs need careful thought as it is not uncommon to see these spaces poorly resolved with small pieces of grass turf or gravel.
- Outdoor amenity space for apartment buildings, such as a balcony for relaxing or the drying of clothes.

Answer:

The layout will clearly demarcate between public and private spaces through the use of carefully chosen boundary treatments. Low level native hedgerow planting will offer separation between public and private spaces, whilst offering a degree of wildlife biodiversity.

Building alignments are set back from the street, allowing adequate space for landscaping, and structure tree planting, providing a degree of maturity which will naturally aid integration into the wider setting.

Species will be carefully chosen to add year round visual amenity, and biodiversity value.

The development appropriately demarcates between public and private space, whilst encouraging social interaction.

(green)

4 BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE (BHL)

Summary

This statement clearly demonstrates that the proposed development achieves a full suite of green scores, delivering a high quality, attractive, functional and sustainable residential development.

The site presents a sustainable use of 'brownfield' land, delivering much needed family housing whilst seeking to contribute and enhance the local area.

This assessment clearly demonstrates that the proposals achieve 12/12 green scores.

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE, WELL BALANCED COMMUNITY WHICH SEEKS TO ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIFE STYLES FOR THE FORSEEABLE FUTUTRE!



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