

Heritage Statement

Mold Road, Wrexham

October 2019

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement is prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Russell Homes in connection with an outline planning application for residential development (The 'Proposed Development') at Mold Road, Wrexham (the 'Application Site').

1.2 The full description of the Proposed Development is:

"Outline Planning Application for up to 455 dwellings, with associated landscaping, public open space and on-site infrastructure. All matters reserved except for access".

1.3 The Application Site is located to the north west of Wrexham, and comprises large fields in use for grazing. There are no designated heritage assets within the site but a listed building, Lower Stansty Farmhouse (grade II) is located approximately 150m to the north.

1.4 Planning Policy Wales provides the Welsh Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, it sets out that:

"Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place."¹

1.5 To comply with these requirements, Section 2 of this Statement identifies the Application Site and describes its history and development. Section 3 identifies the relevant heritage assets proximate to the Application Site that may be affected by the Proposed Development and provides an assessment of significance of the identified heritage assets; proportionate to both the importance of the asset and the likely impacts. The assessment is undertaken on the basis of published information, and an on-site visual survey.

1.6 Section 4 provides an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development on the significance of the identified designated heritage assets in light of the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, national and local planning policy for the historic environment, and relevant CADW guidance.

¹ Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10). Chapter 6: The Historic Environment (2018)

2. The Application Site

Context

- 2.1 The Application Site is located to the north west of Wrexham. It is divided into two parcels of land by Stansty Chain Road. The southern part is bounded by Mold Road to the west and the A483 to the east, whilst the northern part is defined by field boundaries.
- 2.2 Beyond the A483, to the east is the urban edge of Wrexham and to the north of the site is the Rhosrobin industrial estate, which is visible in glimpsed views from the northern part of the site. To the north and west is a narrow belt of further fields, beyond which is a housing estate, comprising the edge of Gwersyllt.
- 2.3 The Site is agricultural grazing land. Field boundaries are comprised of fences and mature hedgerows, with some mature trees. Stansty Chain Road is enclosed by high mature hedgerows.

History and Development

- 2.4 The tithe map at Figure 2.1 dates to the mid-19th century. At that time the Application Site and surrounding area was divided into agricultural fields. Stansty Chain Road and Mold Road are legible. Lower Stansty Farmhouse is visible to the north of the Application Site, and was in the ownership of 'Yorke Esq Simon', as were a number of the fields to its east, within the Application Site.

Figure 2.1: Tithe Map mid-19th century



Figure 2.2: 1909 Ordnance Survey Map

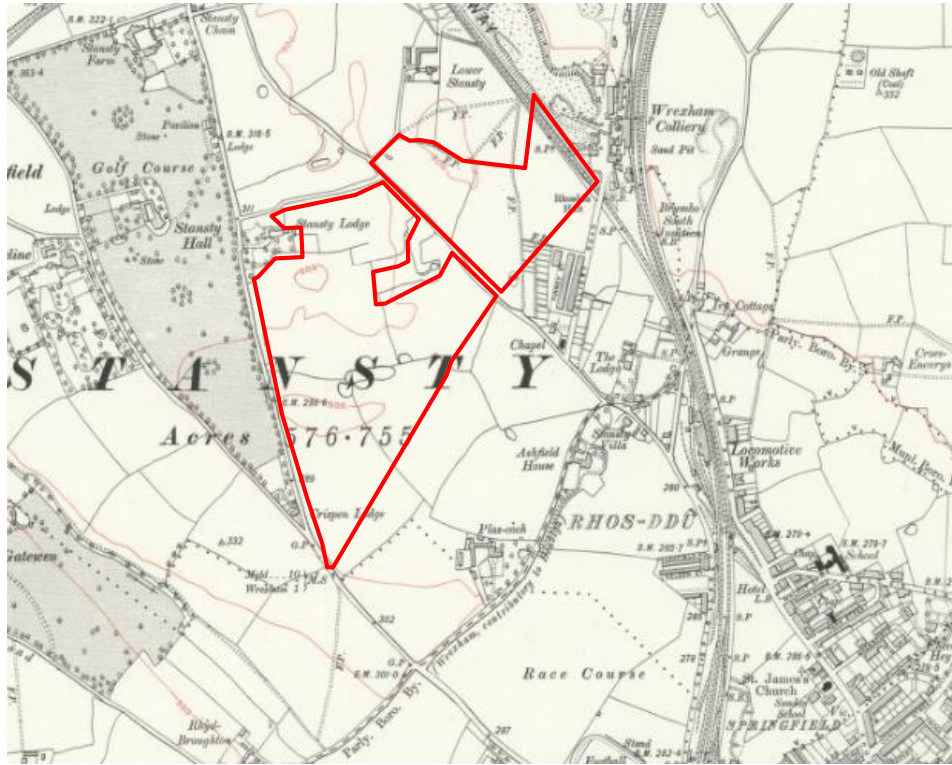
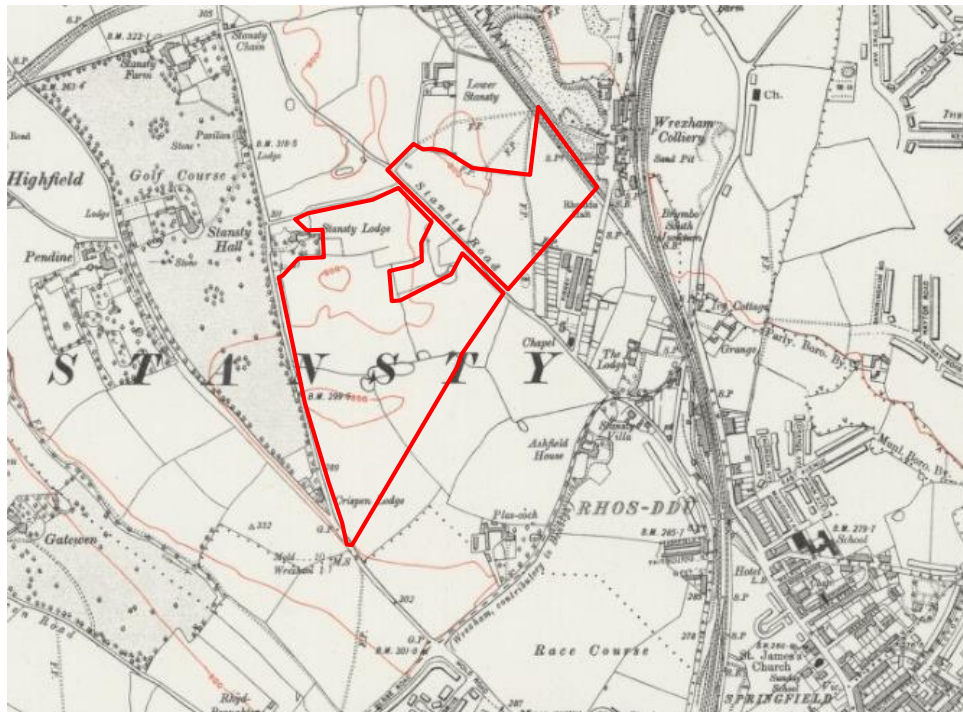


Figure 2.3: 1938 Ordnance Survey Map



- 2.5 The Application Site remained in agricultural use during the 20th century and the 1909 and 1938 maps shows the site and surrounding area largely in this use. By 1908 the Great Central railway line had been constructed to the east side of the Application Site and the maps show the gradual growth of Wrexham during the 20th century with urban

development expanding to the south east side. To the north east of the Application Site was the Wrexham Colliery, and to the west, Stansty Hall and its landscaped park. Stansty Hall was largely demolished during the 1920s, the former landscaped grounds were later altered and divided into fields for agricultural use.

Figure 2.4: 2018 Aerial Image



- 2.6 The key change within the area since 1938 has been the construction of the A438 to the east side of the Application Site. To the north east the Rhosddu Industrial Estate has been constructed on the site of the former Wrexham Colliery. The Plas Coch retail park has been constructed to the immediate east of the Application Site beyond the A438. Stansty Lodge, to the east side of the site has been expanded with modern buildings. These changes have created a semi-urban context to the Application Site.

3. Heritage Assets and their Significance

Introduction

- 3.1 Planning Policy Wales² (PPW) defines the historic environment as:

“The historic environment of Wales is made up of individual historic features, archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic parks, gardens, townscapes and landscapes, collectively known as historic assets”.

- 3.2 Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment³ (TAN 24) describes a heritage asset as:

“An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated”

Heritage Significance

- 3.3 The significance of a historic asset is defined in ‘Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (2001) as:

“The sum of the cultural heritage values often set out in a Statement of Significance.”

Heritage Setting

- 3.4 The setting of heritage assets is defined by TAN 24 as follows:

“The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. Setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset.”

Historic Assets relevant to the Application Site

Listed Buildings

- 3.5 The Application Site does not contain any listed buildings. There is one listed building within the surrounding area that has the potential to be affected by the development, as a result of development within their setting. This is:

² Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10). Chapter 6: The Historic Environment (2018)

³ Technical Advice Note 24 (The Historic Environment), 2017

Listed Building	Grade	Date of designation
Lower Stansty Farmhouse	II	01/12/1995

Significance of Lower Stansty Farmhouse

Architectural and Historic Interest

- 3.6 Lower Stansty Farmhouse is of special architectural and historic interest as a vernacular farm building with 16th century origins; an original house was recorded at the site in 1581 but the building was later remodelled during the late 17th century and restored and remodelled again in 1925-6. The list description confirms that the house is “*a notable vernacular survival in the area, retaining much of its early character and with additional interest attributed to the early C20th restoration*”.
- 3.7 The building is constructed from painted brick with stone quoins and a plain red tiled roof with pronounced overhang. The floor plan may date from the first phase of development and includes a cross wing and main range with an additional wing continuing beyond the cross wing. The cross wing and parts of the main range have a moulded stone plinth. The coped gables have moulded kneelers.
- 3.8 The main elevation faces north and has early fenestration with arched openings and a coped dormer gable, and small paned two light sliding sashes. The doorway has a canopy hood. To the rear of the main range is a left doorway with nine pane sash window and casements above. The east gable of the main range has a blocked two light mullion window.
- 3.9 The building is thought to remain in use as a farmhouse.

Contribution of Setting to Significance

Description of Surroundings

- 3.10 Lower Stansty Farmhouse is located on the northern side of Stansty Road, amongst a series of agricultural fields. It is accessed via a narrow track from Stansty Chain Road.
- 3.11 The farmhouse is located on the southern edge of a defined farmstead, which comprises a small cluster of agricultural buildings. A large stone ‘L’ shaped two storey barn is located immediately north of the farmhouse. On the western side of the barn a series of later, metal clad, agricultural buildings of varied form complete the farmstead.
- 3.12 The farmhouse is enclosed by an area of agricultural grazing land which is divided into fields by mature hedgerows. More widely this area is contained by roads and areas of urban development. Approximately 100m to the north is a railway line and beyond this is the Rhosddu Industrial Estate which contains large commercial and industrial buildings. Approximately 300m to the south east is the A483 which is on a raised embankment and beyond is the urban edge of Wrexham. To the north east is the edge of an area of housing comprising the edge of Gwersyllt. To the south is Stansty Chain Road, a wider area of agricultural landscape (including the southern part of the Application Site) and beyond is Mold Road and the A483.

Experience of the Asset

- 3.13 In the immediate vicinity of the farmstead the listed building is experienced within the context of a varied range of agricultural buildings. The historic 'L' shaped stone barn makes a positive contribution to the significance of the house, emphasising the former use and function of the group, while the later agricultural buildings are of lower quality but maintain the appreciation of function.
- 3.14 The building is experienced in the context of the agricultural land which immediately encloses it. This land comprises an aspect of setting which contributes to the appreciation of the former function of the building as an agricultural farm house. There are views into the surrounding area from within the farm complex and the building is legible in views looking north from within the northern part of the Application Site. Much of the Application Site is, however, screened from view due to existing mature hedgerows to the boundaries which largely screen views.
- 3.15 Despite the agricultural character of the land immediately surrounding the listed building, this is a relatively contained area and much of the wider landscape has been developed. The industrial estate to the north east is raised, and despite mature hedgerows has a degree of prominence on the skyline immediately north east of the farm complex and is visible from it. The industrial estate buildings appear out of scale when contrasted with the domestic scale of the farm house. Similarly, The A483 is raised to the east of the building and has both an acoustic and a visual presence which further reinforces the urban aspects of its setting. Together the experience of these features diminish the rural character of the setting of the listed building; it is no longer experienced in rural isolation.
- 3.16 The heritage asset is experienced with background traffic noise from the A483 and A541. This further underlines the semi-urban context of the farmhouse. As the farmhouse was listed in 1995 it is likely that this urban context existed at the time of listing.
- 3.17 The building is largely screened from Stansty Chain Road despite the proximity of the road and access lane. This is largely a result of the mature hedges which enclose the road and the undulating topography, which obscures the farm building from the southern end of the road. It is visible in some glimpsed views from the northern end of Stansty Chain Road however in these views the building is seen alongside its surrounding agricultural buildings and in the context of the industrial estate to the north east.
- 3.18 The A483 does not have a footway along the boundary of the Application Site and due to mature trees to the boundary views to the listed building are largely screened; however it is possible that views exist during the winter.

Contribution of Application Site to Significance

- 3.19 The Application Site comprises an area of agricultural land which is to the south and south east of the listed building; it is partly used for grazing and is defined by field boundaries, and some trees. The northern boundary of the Application Site is approximately 150m from the listed farmhouse.

- 3.20 The majority of the Application Site (to the south of Stansty Chain Road) is not visible from the listed building due to topography and the density of field boundaries and the boundaries to Stansty Chain Road, however, the northern part of the Application Site is visible from the listed building.
- 3.21 As described in Chapter 2 of this report, a common ownership historically existed between the listed structure and land within the Application Site. A historic resonance therefore exists.
- 3.22 Overall, the Application Site makes a low contribution to the significance of the listed building through emphasising the appreciation of the former use of the building as a farmhouse and its former relationship with the surrounding land.

Summary of Significance and Setting

- 3.23 The significance of Lower Stansty Farmhouse is ascribed to its architectural and historic interest as a vernacular building with 16th century origins; but later remodelled during the late 17th century and again restored and remodelled in 1925-6. The list description confirms that the house is *“a notable vernacular survival in the area, retaining much of its early character and with additional interest attributed to the early C20th restoration”*.
- 3.24 The building is positioned within a defined farmstead, and the historic barn within this complex contributes to significance as a former farmhouse. The agricultural land which immediately surrounds the building contributes to a degree to the appreciation of the former function of the building as an agricultural farm building. This area is however relatively confined, and more widely, the setting of the building is mixed and includes areas of modern development including an industrial estate to the north east, and raised dual carriageway to the east; these features emphasise the changed context and urbanisation of the wider setting of the listed building.
- 3.25 A former functional association to the northern part of the application site exists due to a shared historic ownership. Overall however for the reasons set out above, the significance of the building is largely attributed to its architectural and historic interest and the contribution made by the Application Site to the significance of the building is low.

4. Impact Assessment

Introduction

- 4.1 Under s66(1) of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Wrexham County Borough Council, in determining the submitted outline planning application has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest they may possess.
- 4.2 PPW sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government, including for the Historic Environment. Paragraph 6.1.5 sets out that:

“The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government’s objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations...Cadw’s published Conservation Principles highlights the need to base decisions on an understanding of the impact a proposal may have on the significance of an historic asset”.

- 4.3 Specific objectives for the historic environment are set out at paragraph 6.1.6, which aims to ‘safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved’.

- 4.4 Paragraph 6.1.7 states that:

“It is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way”.

- 4.5 In regards to listed buildings, paragraph 6.1.10 sets out that:

“There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.

- 4.6 The relevant heritage legal and policy context for consideration of the proposed development is set out in full in Appendix 3. This includes the TAN 24, the Local Development Plan and relevant CADW best practice guidance.

Proposed Development

- 4.7 An outline application is submitted with all matters reserved except for access. The layout of the development is therefore to be considered at reserved matters stage, and the submitted masterplan is illustrative only. Full details of the proposed development

are set out in the Design and Access Statement prepared by White Young Green and the Planning Statement prepared by J10 Planning.

- 4.8 The Proposed Development envisages the development of the site for up to 455 residential properties. A mix of housing types will be provided, from one to five bedrooms. The dwellings will be predominantly 2.5 storeys with some 3 storey apartment buildings. The proposed layout provides a sensitive response to the landscape, working with existing topography and features.
- 4.9 Access is taken from Stansty Chain Road and from Mold Road. The illustrative masterplan shows how a strong gateway from Mold Road will lead into a tree lined avenue and a series of nodal points will link the street network which has a clear hierarchy, supporting pedestrian priority.
- 4.10 Key landscape features and habitats will be created to support an attractive landscape setting. Large areas of open space are provided as well as central green pockets. Mature trees and hedgerows will be retained through the development (with a minor loss of hedgerows to facilitate access into and through the site). New planting is also proposed within the site and to the boundaries.

Impact Assessment

Lower Stansty Farmhouse (Grade II)

- 4.11 The Proposed Development will change the character of the Application Site from undeveloped agricultural landscape to that of built development and associated infrastructure. The proposed residential development will be visible from the southern part of the farmstead and from the land immediately to the south of the Lower Stansty Farmhouse. This will change the experience of the farm buildings from having a green and agricultural aspect to the south to one of built form.
- 4.12 As discussed above, due to changes in the wider setting of the building, including the development of industrial estate to the north and major roads the appreciation of the rural context of its setting has been diminished.
- 4.13 The Application Site is separated from the listed building by approximately 150m, and therefore a buffer is retained between the listed buildings and the new development. This area will ensure that there is separation in views and that a degree of green character is retained that will continue to emphasise the historic character and function of the listed building.
- 4.14 As set out in Chapter 3 of this report the northern part of the Application Site has a former functional and historic connection with the Lower Stansty Farmhouse. A visual connection exists and the Application Site forms part of the agricultural land which surrounds the building. Whilst this aspect of the site will be changed the retention of the green buffer of open space will ensure that the legibility of the former function of the farmhouse and the rural character of its setting will be retained.
- 4.15 The proposed masterplan includes an enhanced green buffer at the north west boundary which will ensure a generous set back of the new development and partially screen the site from view from the listed building. The proposed indicative masterplan

also retains generous areas of open space and proposed landscaping with mature trees and hedgerows and this will assist in retaining some of the rural qualities of the Application Site.

- 4.16 As described above the significance of the listed building is ascribed largely to its architectural interest and CADW specifically identify its interest as *“a notable vernacular survival in the area, retaining much of its early character and with additional interest attributed to the early C20th restoration”*. These characteristics will not be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 4.17 The Proposed Development will change the character of part of the setting of the listed farmhouse; however the ability to appreciate the functional architectural character of the building, the context of the farmstead in which it is located, and the historic and functional connections between these buildings is sustained.
- 4.18 Having considered the low contribution the Application Site makes to significance, and bearing in mind the existing urbanised context, retention of a green buffer and proposed landscaping it is concluded overall that the Proposed Development will preserve the significance of the grade II listed Lower Stansty Farmhouse.

Statutory Duties and PPW Policy

- 4.19 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon the Local Planning Authority in determining applications for development affecting listed buildings to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of a listed building (s.66).
- 4.20 The core principal of PPW in relation to the historic environment is set out at Paragraph 6.1.7 which states that:
- “It is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way”.*
- 4.21 PPW requires that in determining application for planning permissions local authorities *‘safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved’*.
- 4.22 With respect to the core planning principle of the PPW in relation to the historic environment, the Proposed Development would conserve the significance of the identified assets. Accordingly, the Proposed Development meets the objectives of paragraphs 6.1.7 and 6.1.10 200 of PPW.
- 4.23 The requirement of s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 can be satisfied if Wrexham County Borough Council grants planning permission.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.24 The Proposed Development is in accordance with Policy EC9 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan which requires that the setting of listed buildings must be respected. The Proposed Development will conserve and protect the relevant listed building, in accordance with policy SP16 of the emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan where it coincides with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This Heritage Statement is prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Russell Homes in connection with an outline planning application for a residential development at Land off Mold Road, Wrexham.
- 5.2 The Proposed Development involves the construction of up to 455 residential dwellings. The Application Site is located to the north west side of Wrexham, and comprises large fields in use for grazing. There are no heritage assets within the site but it is proximate to one listed building, the Lower Stansty Farmhouse, which is to the north west of the Application Site.
- 5.3 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon the Local Planning Authority in determining applications for development affecting listed buildings and to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of a listed building (s.66).
- 5.4 This Heritage Statement has considered the heritage asset affected and the contribution that setting makes to its significance.
- 5.5 The Proposed Development will change the character of part of the setting of the listed farmhouse; however the ability to appreciate the functional architectural character of the building, the context of the farmstead in which it is located, and the historic and functional connections between these buildings is sustained.
- 5.6 Having considered the low contribution the Application Site makes to significance, and bearing in mind the existing urbanised context, retention of a green buffer and proposed landscaping it is concluded overall that the Proposed Development will preserve the significance of the grade II listed Lower Stansty Farmhouse.
- 5.7 With respect to the core planning principle of PPW in relation to the historic environment, the Proposed Development would conserve the significance of the identified assets. Accordingly, the Proposed Development meets the objectives of paragraphs 6.1.7 and 6.1.10 200 of PPW.
- 5.8 The requirement of s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 can therefore be satisfied if Wrexham County Borough Council grants planning permission.

Appendix 1: Legislation and Policy

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.” National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales, (Edition 10, December 2018)

The ninth edition of Planning Policy Wales was published in December 2018 as the Welsh Government’s planning policies covering all aspects of the planning process. Chapter 6 of this document outlines the Government’s guidance regarding the historic environment.

Paragraph 6.1.5 sets out that:

“The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government’s objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations...Cadw’s published Conservation Principles highlights the need to base decisions on an understanding of the impact a proposal may have on the significance of an historic asset”.

Specific objectives for the historic environment are set out at paragraph 6.1.6, including to ‘safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved’.

Paragraph 6.1.7 states that:

“It is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way”.

In regards to listed buildings, paragraph 6.1.10 sets out that:

“There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.

Local Planning Policy

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 - 2011 (February 2005)

With regards to Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, Policy EC9 states:

'Alterations or additions to, and development or redevelopment within the curtilage of, buildings or structures listed as of special architectural or historic interest must respect the setting and character of the listed buildings or structures.'

Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 - 2028 (Deposit Plan March 2018)

With regards to the Historic and Cultural Environment, Policy SP16 states:

'Development will only be supported where it conserves, protects and enhances the following cultural and heritage assets of the County Borough and, where appropriate, their settings:

- (i) Listed Buildings and in particular those on the Buildings at Risk Register;*
- (ii) Conservation Areas;*
- (iii) Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site;*
- (iv) Registered Historic Parks, Gardens and Landscapes; and*
- (v) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Remains'*

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