

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF 6 DWELLINGS:

Land to the East of Mill Road, Bronington, Whitchurch, SY13 3HJ

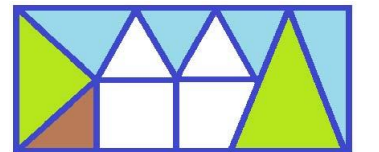


PLANNING / DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

on behalf of Messrs. B.H., E.A., & C.R. Williams

November 2018

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Summary

This application is for outline planning permission for the development of 6 dwellings on land to the east of Mill Lane, Bronington, Wrexham. The application seeks to establish the principle of residential development. Other detailed matters of access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are all reserved for subsequent approval. However, further information is provided on the likely layout and mix of house-types on the site.

The planning application is submitted in response to the lack of a 5-year deliverable supply of housing land in Wrexham County Borough. The Wrexham County Borough Housing Land Monitoring Statement (April 2017) confirms that, because there is no adopted Development Plan in force, the Council currently has a 'zero' housing land supply. The shortfall in land supply is therefore substantial.

Wrexham Council urgently needs to increase the supply of developable housing land in the County by granting planning permission for suitable sites in sustainable locations.

Technical Advice Note 1 (January 2015) advises at paragraph 6.2 that the housing land supply figure should be treated as a material consideration in determining planning applications for housing. Where the current study shows a land supply below the 5-year requirement, the need to increase supply should be given considerable weight when dealing with planning applications, provided that the development would otherwise comply with national planning policies.

The Council is currently preparing its new LDP2, which is soon to be submitted to the Welsh Government for Examination. The LDP will not be adopted until late 2019 (at the very earliest), and therefore it will be some time before its planning policies can be given weight in development management decisions.

The most recent adopted development plan for the area is the Wrexham UDP, which has now expired. The UDP designated Bronington as a 'rural village', where new development could take place within the development boundary. One site in the village was also allocated for housing development in the UDP.

Therefore, the most recent adopted development plan for the area identified Bronington as a location where new housing development could take place.

Apart from the land supply issue, other key considerations in determining planning applications for housing development are their compliance with the Development Plan and with relevant National Planning policies.

Paragraph 4.2.2 of Planning Policy Wales (July 2014) states that the planning system provides for a "*presumption in favour of sustainable development*" to ensure that social, economic and environmental issues are balanced and integrated by the decision-taker when taking decisions on planning applications.

The village of Bronington is a sustainable location for new housing development, having regard to national planning policy. A good range of local facilities and services are situated within the village, with additional facilities accessible in other settlements within a reasonable distance, either by car or by public transport.

The proposed development is socially sustainable, as it will provide predominantly smaller homes which

are more likely to be within the price range of younger and first-time-buyer households in the area. The development will thus help the village to maintain a mixed population, including younger persons.

The proposed development is economically sustainable, as it will increase the village population and thereby support villages services – notably the village shop and primary school.

The proposed development is environmentally sustainable. The scale of the proposed development is considered appropriate for the settlement, taking into account its role, function and location. The site is already well-screened and landscaped by existing hedgerows and trees, and physically would form a small-scale addition to the settlement, within the physical confines of the village. It would not represent a new direction of growth into prominent and open countryside.

Due to the situation of the site (having existing housing to the south and west), the development can be easily assimilated into the village without any adverse impact on its physical character or landscape setting, and there are no ecological or environmental constraints that preclude or limit the site's development.

The proposed development is therefore sustainable. Whilst relatively modest in scale, like other small-scale sites, it can help to meet the housing needs of the local community and support the wider economy.

The proposed development can also be shown to comply with other detailed policies in the UDP, including Policy GDP1, with regard to highway access and parking, separation distances and amenity space. At the detailed design stage, the development will be able to comply with sustainable development principles, to include measures for sustainable design and construction, water use, sustainable drainage and energy efficiency.

DELIVERY OF THE PROPOSED HOUSING IS GUARANTEED. PRE-CONTRACT DISCUSSIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN THE LANDOWNERS AND A LOCAL DEVELOPER (PRIMESAVE PROPERTIES LTD.). IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT PRIMESAVE WILL PURCHASE THE SITE, SHOULD PERMISSION BE GRANTED. THE HOUSES WILL THEREFORE BE DELIVERED QUICKLY, ASSISTING WITH THE 5-YEAR SUPPLY.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPER HAS BUILT ELSEWHERE IN THE SURROUNDING AREA. THE TWO-BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES HAVE PROVED EXTREMELY POPULAR, BEING OFFERED FOR SALE AT AROUND £120,000. OTHER SITES IN NEARBY PENLEY, AND AT ST. MARTINS NORTH OF OSWESTRY, WERE LARGELY RESERVED EVEN BEFORE THE HOUSES WERE BUILT. THERE IS CLEARLY STRONG DEMAND IN THE AREA FOR THIS TYPE OF PROPERTY.

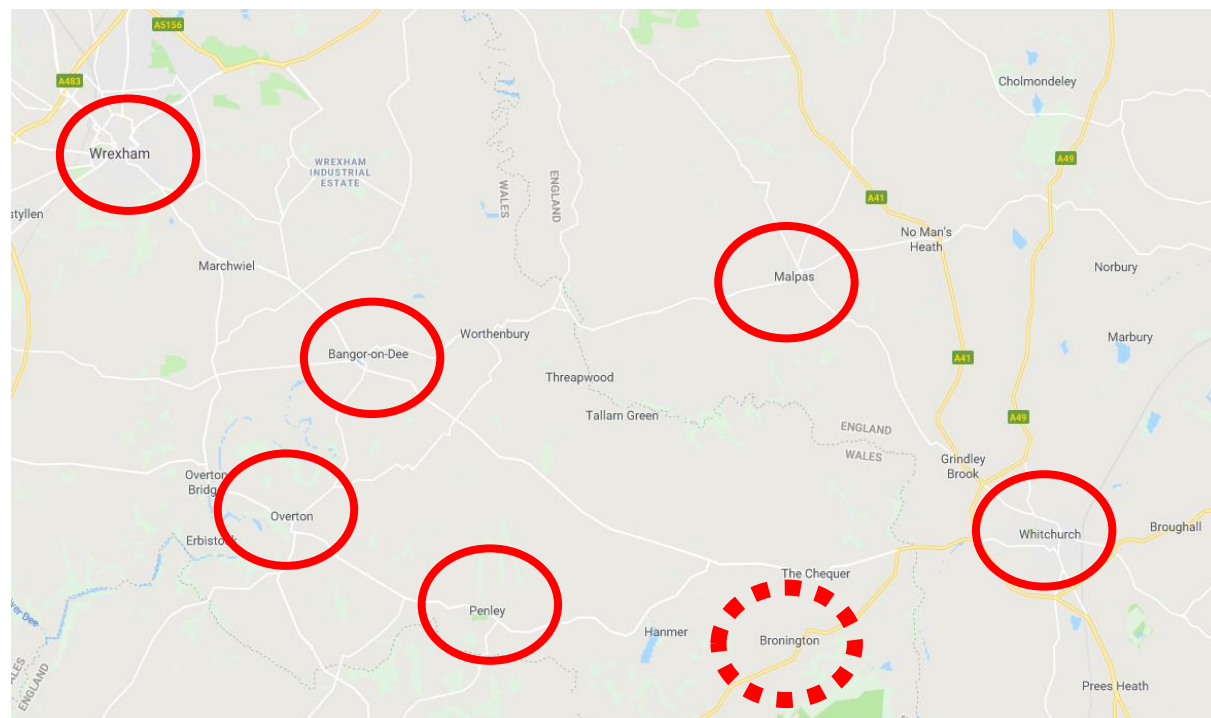
In weighing up the impacts/benefits and the sustainability of the proposed development in accordance with the development plan and relevant national planning policy - and in the context of needing to boost the housing land supply - outline planning permission should be granted for the proposed development.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Design & Access Statement is submitted in support of an outline planning application for the development of six dwellings on land to the east of Mill Lane, Bronington. David Parker Planning Associates have prepared the application, on behalf of the Landowners.
- 1.2 The application is for outline planning permission and seeks to establish the principle of development. Detailed matters of scale, appearance and landscaping are reserved for subsequent approval. In support of the application, a site layout has been prepared which shows how the site can be developed to provide 6 dwellings, including 2 detached and 4 semi-detached 2 & 3-bedroom dwellings, with two points of access off Mill Lane.
- 1.3 This Statement describes the application site and its location and the outline proposals for residential development. It serves to demonstrate that the site is both suitable and capable of being developed for housing. The site is considered and assessed against the policy context set by the Development Plan and National Planning Policy in Planning Policy Wales (PPW).
- 1.4 Finally, the Statement addresses the sustainability of the site as a location for residential development, and its compliance with the more detailed Development Plan policies and guidance controlling new housing development in the area.

2 Site Location, Description & Surroundings

- 2.1 Bronington is situated close to the A495 Ellesmere to Whitchurch road, just over 3 miles to the west of Whitchurch.



- 2.2 The application site itself is located on the north-western edge of the village, within 500 metres of the village shop and primary school, in the centre of the village. The site is immediately adjoining the existing built up area of the village, with existing estate-scale residential development to the west and south, and other development to the north.

Application Site Location



Aerial photograph – Application Site & surroundings



2.3 The site fronts on to Mill Lane, and comprises long narrow enclosed paddock, measuring 1570 square metres (0.38 acres) in area. There is a tall mature hedgerow along the entire site frontage to Mill Lane. The site also has a wide grassed verge. Most of the site lies within the village 30 mph limit.

The site (viewed from the south)



The site (viewed from the north)



2.4 Bronington contains a mixture of estate-scale development and linear development along the main road frontages, with a mixture of properties both in type and age, as seen in the following photographs.

The Maesllwyn Close development opposite the site



Other properties to the South



2.5 To the east of the site, the landscape changes to open agricultural fields. However, the application site is not part of this more open 'rural' landscape, being heavily screened on all sides by established hedgerows and trees.

Well-screened eastern boundary to adjoining field



2.6 When approaching the site from the north, it is clear that the site is already within the built-up area of the village, as shown by the photograph below.

Approaches to the site from the North



2.7 The site itself is very heavily overgrown, having been of no practical use for agriculture.

The Site (Internal Views)

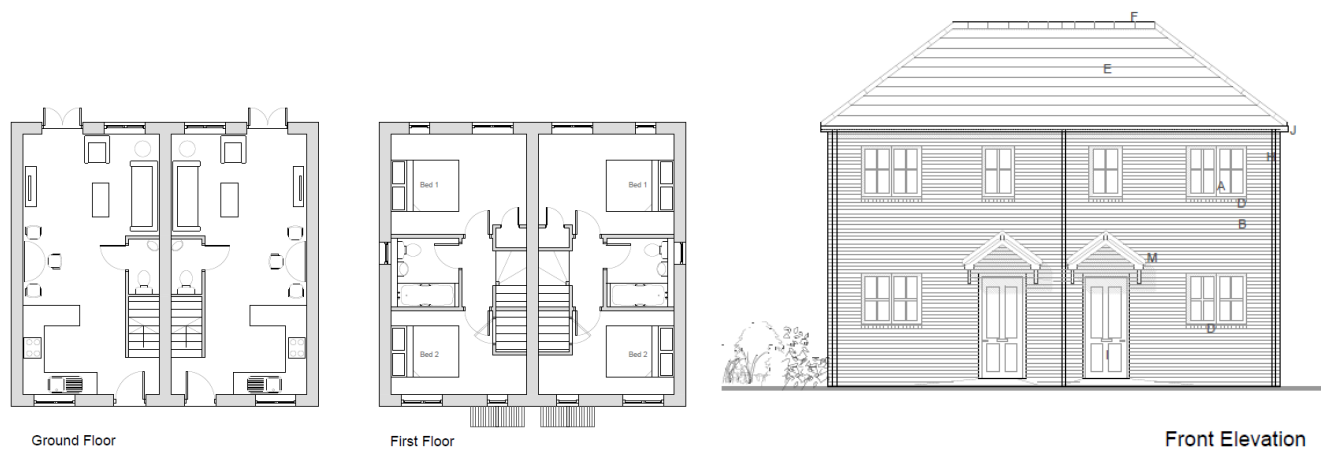


3. The Development Proposals

Accessibility

- 3.1 The application is in outline, with all detailed matters reserved. However, an indicative site layout has been submitted in support of the outline application. This shows how the site could be developed for 6 predominantly smaller detached and semi-detached 2 & 3-bedroom family dwellings, as shown opposite.
- 3.2 The properties will be well spaced within the site, with two separate shared accesses onto Mill Lane. The type and position of the properties varies, so as to introduce variety in the street scene. No garages are proposed.
- 3.3 The detached and semi-detached houses are envisaged to be designed in a simple and traditional manner. The floor and elevational plans of the likely house types are shown below.

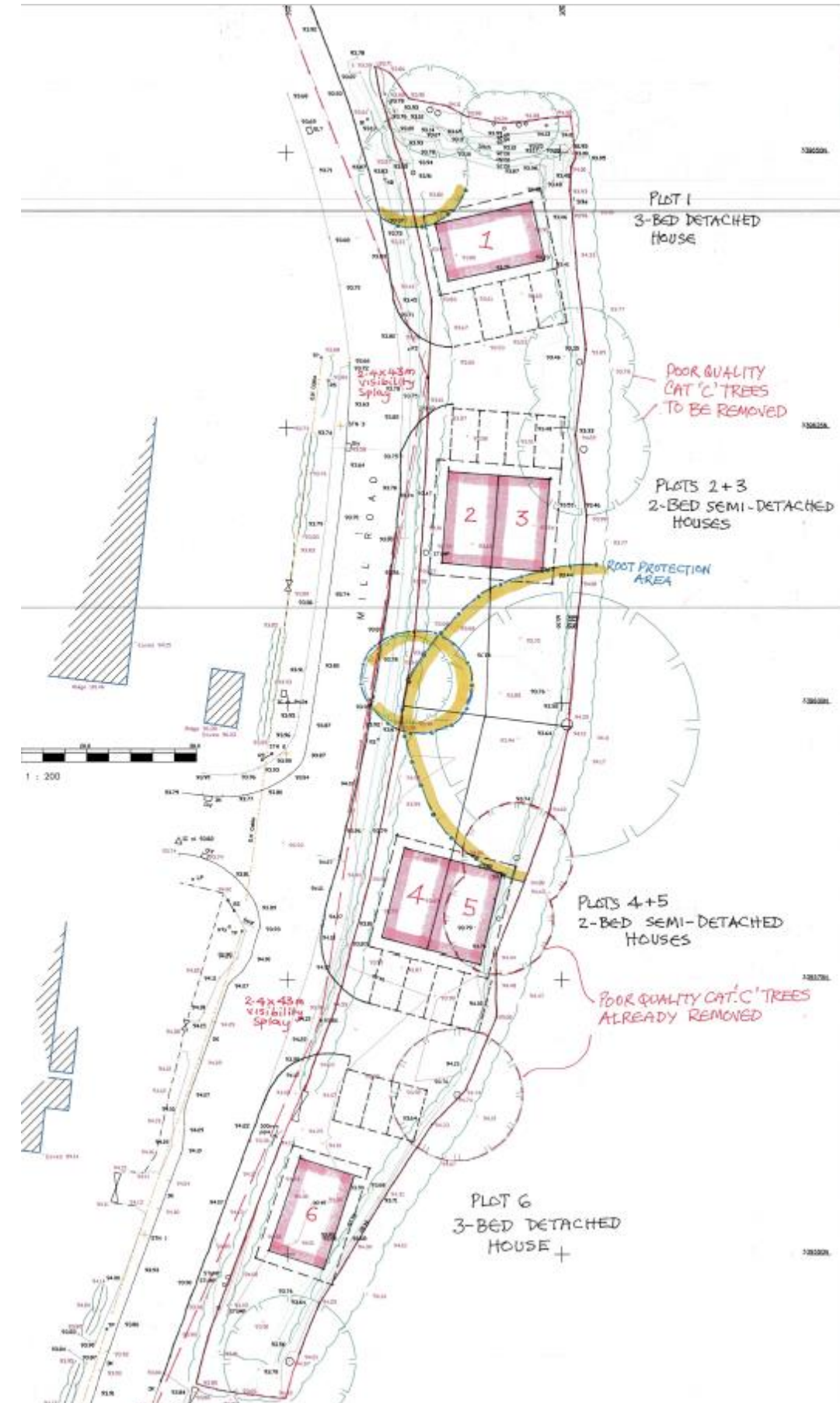
Likely House Types : 2-bedroom semi-detached



Likely House Types : 3-bedroom detached



Proposed Sketch Layout Plan



Environmental Sustainability

- 3.4 The proposed layout and positioning of the dwellings will allow for the possible future installation by homeowners of energy saving measures such as solar roof panels. Water saving measures including water butts and low flush toilets will be included as part of the development.
- 3.5 The proposed dwellings will be built in accordance with national planning policy requirements and TAN 12 – Design. The Code for Sustainable Homes will be used to assess the environmental impact of the proposed dwellings.
- 3.6 The submitted ecological report (see later) explains how the development will take account of and/or enhance the local natural habitats.
- 3.7 The proposed development is of a small scale and considered to be appropriate for Bronington, taking into account its role, function and the facilities available within the settlement.
- 3.8 Sustainable transport is available from the village via the hourly bus services to both Wrexham and Whitchurch.

Community Safety

- 3.9 The proposal can deliver a satisfactory layout in terms of urban design and residential amenity. The layout of the proposed scheme affords good natural surveillance within the site and also onto Mill Lane.
- 3.10 Full consideration will be given to the design and appearance of the development at the detailed planning stage, as part of any reserved matters submission, and the Applicant remains open to discussions over the design aspects of the proposal.

Character

- 3.11 The scale, design, and materials of existing properties in this part of the village are generally mixed and reflect the period of their construction. There are no particularly strong design references to guide and influence the proposed development. The properties proposed would be consistent with this area of the village.
- 3.12 The orientation and screening of the proposal is such that there will be limited inter-visibility between existing and proposed properties. The properties have been positioned so that they do not overlook those opposite at Maesllwyn Close.
- 3.13 Separation distances of between 21 metres and 27 metres can be achieved between the facing elevations of the existing properties, and the side elevations of those proposed.
- 3.14 Excellent screening of the site is provided by the native hedgerow along the roadside boundary, which will soften the appearance of the development.
- 3.15 Views through the site will be maintained by the parking areas and the large expanse of rear gardens around the central oak, giving the site a less urban appearance.

Movement to, from and within the development

- 3.16 There are hourly bus services from Bronington to Wrexham and also to Whitchurch (service number 146). The bus stops for these services are located opposite or within a short walk of the application site.
- 3.17 The village itself has a Primary School and Village Shop, each within walking distance of the site, as detailed in Section 6 of this report.
- 3.18 Parking requirements are very well catered for within the site. All dwellings have the required number of parking spaces, but there are no garages. The layout of the site allows for the safe access, turning and egress of large delivery and servicing vehicles.
- 3.19 The pedestrian footpath that currently ends on the southern boundary of the site can be extended along the site frontage, up to the second (northerly) proposed access, allowing for a safe connection to the rest of the village for pedestrians, wheelchair users, prams and pushchairs.

Highway Access

- 3.20 The vehicular accesses and proposed new footway will be constructed in accordance with the highway authority's specification.
- 3.21 The site has frontage onto Mill Road, a Class 3 road which is subject to a local speed restriction of 30mph almost up to the northern limit of the application site.
- 3.22 The application proposes two accesses onto Mill Road with visibility commensurate with the recommendations set out in Manual for Streets (MfS).
- 3.23 The measure of forward visibility available to the drivers of vehicles turning right into each of the accesses also meets the recommendations of MfS.
- 3.24 The provision of turning facilities within the development will enable vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear.
- 3.25 Pedestrian safety will be improved by the provision of a kerbed footway constructed in accordance with the highway authority's specification.
- 3.26 Given the low volume of traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development it will not give rise to conditions detrimental to the free flow and safe movement of traffic.
- 3.27 Because of the wide grass verge, visibility splays for the proposed accesses are achievable for both directions, as illustrated by the sketch layout plan and the photographs below.

Visibility to the South



Visibility to the North



Code for Sustainable Homes

3.28 The dwellings proposed will be designed in accordance with national planning policy requirements and Technical Advice Note 12 (TAN 12) – Design. The environmental impact will be assessed using Code for Sustainable Homes which measures the sustainability of a home against nine design categories, rating the ‘whole home’ as a complete package. The design categories are:

1. Energy and CO2 Emissions
2. Pollution
3. Water
4. Health and Wellbeing
5. Materials
6. Management
7. Surface Water Run-off
8. Ecology
9. Waste

3.29 All dwellings will meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and 5 credits under issue Ene1 Dwelling Emission Rate. The proposal will meet Part L of the current Building Regulations and be assessed by SAP calculation. The detailed design issues will be dealt by way of the reserved matters at a later stage by a registered code assessor.

Ecology

3.30 Greenscape Environmental Ltd. was commissioned to undertake an Ecological Appraisal of the site, and an inspection survey of the site was carried out in August 2018. Their report is included in the application documents.

3.31 The survey report has three principal aims:

- to provide an initial appraisal of the ecological value of the site in local context;
- to provide details supporting further surveys that may be required;
- to identify potential ecological constraints relating to the development and recommend measures to avoid, reduce or manage negative effects and to provide a net ecological gain.

Methodology

3.32 The appraisal of the site included a desk study of the area, reviews of other surveys previously conducted in the area by Greenscape Environmental and a phase 1 environmental appraisal.

3.33 The phase 1 ecological appraisal was undertaken at the site, OS grid reference SJ48442959 on 23rd August 2018 by B Jones.

Key Issues

3.34 No designated sites were found within the vicinity of the site and therefore no negative impact is

expected from the development.

- 3.35 Records of protected species within 2km include typical bat species, badger, otter, hare and great crested newt.
- 3.36 The site comprises a strip of overgrown scrubby land surrounded by hedgerows and trees. Three of the trees had potential roost features for bats. The hedgerows and scrub within the site have potential for nesting birds and great crested newts. There are two extant ponds within 250m, both of which scored poorly on the HSI.
- 3.37 No further surveys are considered necessary.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- 3.38 It is recommended that the biodiversity is enhanced post-construction with the inclusion of bat and bird boxes.
- 3.39 It is considered that the conservation status of birds and great crested newts may be affected by the removal of hedgerows and clearance of scrub. A method statement outlining reasonable avoidance measures for birds and newts will be followed.
- 3.40 The site will be enhanced for bats and birds by erecting and including artificial roost and nest boxes.
- 3.41 There are no other ecological constraints to the development as currently proposed.

Trees

- 3.42 A full tree report has been prepared by Old Oak Tree Care. The findings of the report are as follows:-
- *It is proposed to build 6 new dwellings, access, parking and garden space on a disused piece of land off Mill Road.*
 - *The site has three category B trees, four category C's as well as three category C groups. The Bs are of high amenity value.*
 - *The high-quality trees will remain. Four category C trees and a category C group will require removal. Hedges surround the site will need to be cut back with some restocking.*
 - *Amenity provided by trees to the locality will not be significantly altered.*
 - *Work and access within RPAs are to be mitigated by setting aside additional space as RPA and protecting this ground from digging or compaction.*
 - *All retained trees will be effectively protected during development using standard tree protection measures.*
 - *The proposal is arboriculturally sound.*
- 3.43 During late 2017 early 2018, the site was severely overgrown. Several of the poor category C Sycamore trees on the site were removed, along with an ivy-infected Oak. Similarly, it is proposed

to remove or cut back two further poor-quality Category C Sycamores on the eastern boundary (Sy4 & 5) to make way for the development.

- 3.44 The best trees and the majority of the frontage hedgerow will remain, crucially including the Category B large central Oak (Ok5) and the three smaller category B Oaks on the western, northern and southern boundaries.
- 3.45 The vast majority of the RPA of the central Oak will be protected by being incorporated into gardens. There is a small incursion into its RPA arising from the external paving around plots 3 and 5, but the impact will be minimal.

The two central Oaks



Northern small Oak



Southern Oak



Drainage and Flood Risk

Surface Water & Foul Drainage

- 3.46 It is anticipated that surface water drainage will be provided via soakaways, and foul will connect to the mains drainage system.

Flood Risk

- 3.47 The site is not at risk of flooding from Rivers or Sea, but an area of relatively low surface water flood risk exists along the road frontage to the site, but not extending into the site itself, as shown by the Flood Risk Maps at Appendix 1.

Deliverability

- 3.48 Preliminary work undertaken in preparing the planning application has established that there are no known constraints to preclude the development of the site.
- 3.49 There is considerable pent-up demand for new homes, particularly from new households that have been forming in the past 5-10 years, but who have up until now been 'locked out' of home ownership by the excessive prices during the housing boom up to 2007, and since then, by the lack of available mortgage finance and the dramatic slowdown in new house building.

- 3.50 Pre-contract discussions have been held between the Landowners and Primesave Properties Ltd. Should outline planning permission be granted, Primesave would immediately prepare and submit a reserved matters planning application. The development would commence as soon as possible afterwards, ensuring the delivery of homes to assist with the 5-year supply.

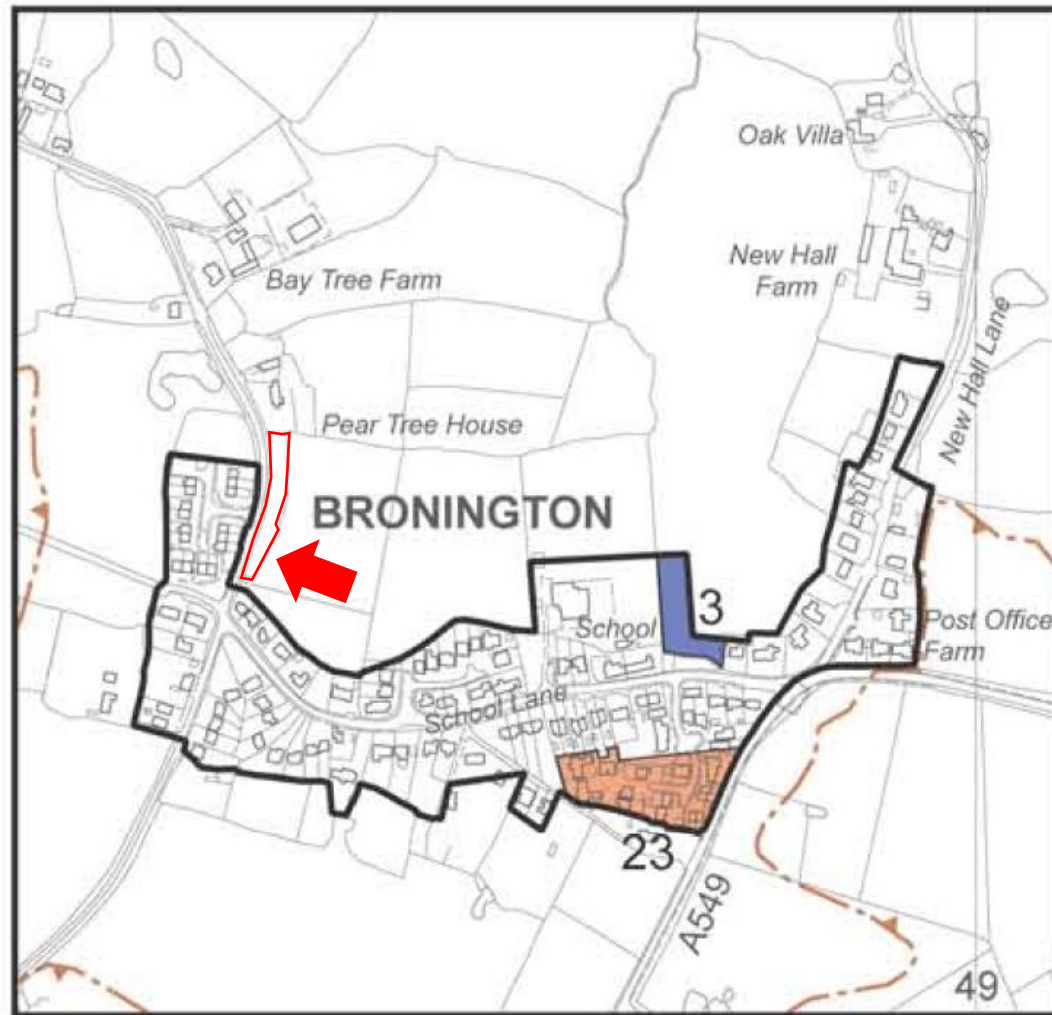
4. The Development Plan

- 4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The publication of the Council's new Local Development Plan (LDP2) has been the subject of long delays, principally arising from the withdrawal of LDP1 from Examination in 2013. Whilst weight can be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, this is dependent on the stage of preparation reached.
- 4.3 The revised LDP2 has not yet reached the 'submission' stage. As such, the emerging LDP will have little or no bearing on the consideration of this application.
- 4.4 The current Development Plan for Wrexham therefore comprises the Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP), adopted in February 2005, and covering the period 1996 to 2011. Whilst retaining development plan status, the UDP is clearly now 7 years out of date.

Settlement Strategy

- 4.5 The UDP Planning Strategy for housing development is to allocate most new development within or adjoining Wrexham and the urban villages to the west of the Borough.
- 4.6 In the 'Rural Villages', the range of services available is generally confined to those meeting purely local needs.
- 4.7 The settlements themselves are surrounded by attractive countryside and some are not conveniently accessible by public transport. New development is therefore restricted to small sites.
- 4.8 With the exception of the smallest hamlets, development boundaries have been defined for all settlements. These boundaries establish a clear limit beyond which new development will not be allowed.
- 4.9 Inside settlement boundaries, development will normally be acceptable provided it accords with the built environment policies in Part 2 of the Plan and complies with the Council's supplementary planning guidance and adopted standards.
- 4.10 Bronington is significant rural village, containing well over 100 existing properties. The UDP Inset Map 19 identified a development boundary around the settlement, and one allocated housing site.
- 4.11 The inset map is shown below, with the application site identified.

Bronington UDP Inset Map



19. Bronington

4.12 The principle of development has been established within the development boundary. The village overall was therefore regarded by the development plan as an acceptable location for housing development.

4.13 The application site lies outside but immediately adjoining the settlement development boundary. Therefore, in Planning terms, it is classed as open countryside, and planning permission for housing development would only be granted in exceptional circumstances, as defined by UDP policy. These circumstances include dwellings for agricultural workers or affordable housing, in line with UDP policies H5 and H8, neither of which applies to the application site.

4.14 Whilst the site lies just outside the UDP development boundary, it is nevertheless closely associated with the settlement, and not isolated from it. The site is clearly within the general confines of the settlement, having existing development opposite (Maesllwyn Close) and to the immediate south.

4.15 Furthermore, there is another significant material consideration – the lack of a five-year supply of

housing land – which renders the UDP development boundary out-of-date. This is discussed further in the next section.

5. Other Material Considerations

The 5-Year Land Supply and Relevant National Planning Policy & Guidance

- 5.1 In addition to the policies in the development plan, a most significant material consideration in the determination of this application is the current lack of a 5-year deliverable supply of housing land in Wrexham County Borough.
- 5.2 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) places a very clear responsibility upon local planning authorities to maintain a 5-year deliverable supply of housing land at all times. This is confirmed in PPW paragraph 9.2.3
- 5.3 The planning application is submitted in response to the lack of a 5-year deliverable supply of housing land. The Wrexham County Borough Housing Land Monitoring Statement (April 2017) confirms that, because there is no adopted Development Plan in force, the Council currently has a 'zero' housing land supply. The shortfall in land supply is therefore substantial.
- 5.4 Wrexham Council therefore urgently needs to increase the supply of developable housing land in the County by granting planning permission for suitable sites in sustainable locations.
- 5.5 Technical Advice Note 1 (January 2015) advises at paragraph 6.2 that the housing land supply figure should be treated as a material consideration in determining planning applications for housing. Where the current study shows a land supply below the 5-year requirement, the need to increase supply should be given considerable weight when dealing with planning applications, provided that the development would otherwise comply with national planning policies.
- 5.6 The Council is currently preparing its new LDP2, which is soon to be submitted to the Welsh Government for Examination. The LDP will not be adopted until late 2019, and it will therefore be some considerable time before its planning policies can be given weight in development management decisions.
- 5.7 The most recent adopted development plan for the area is the Wrexham UDP, which has now expired. The UDP designated Bronington as a 'rural village', where new development could take place within the development boundary. One site in the village was also allocated for housing development in the UDP.
- 5.8 Therefore, the most recent adopted development plan for the area identified Bronington as a location where new housing development could take place.
- 5.9 In the above circumstances, the fact that the application site lies outside the development boundary for Bronington is no longer the main determining factor. The development boundary cannot currently be used as the primary tool to restrict the location of new housing development in the village.
- 5.10 Instead, a different balance of considerations exists, and considerable weight must now be awarded

to the lack of a 5-year deliverable supply of housing land.

5.11 Consideration must also be given to the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”, set out in Planning Policy Wales. This is dealt with below.

6. The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

6.1 Paragraph 4.2.2 of Planning Policy Wales states that :-

“The planning system provides for a presumption in favour of sustainable development to ensure that social, economic and environmental issues are balanced and integrated, at the same time, by the decision-taker when; taking decisions on individual planning applications”

6.2 The sustainability of the application proposals is discussed further below.

6.3 Section 2 above (site description & surroundings) has demonstrated that, in physical terms, the application site lies within the existing built up area of the village.

6.4 Although the application site is excluded from the UDP development boundary, it is well-enclosed with mature hedgerows, is not prominent in the wider landscape and will therefore assimilate easily within the physical confines of the village, rather than extending it into the larger tracts of open and undeveloped countryside which form an important part of the rural landscape and the village setting.

6.5 It is considered that the application site is a good location for small scale new housing development, outside of the current development boundary. It is sustainable in terms of the settlement pattern and because of the enclosed nature of the site. It would not be visible in the wider landscape.

6.6 The majority of land adjoining the village consists of much larger agricultural fields that are very open in nature. Therefore, the application site would not create an adverse precedent for other development which would be harmful to the character of the village, due to the enclosed nature and scale of the site.

6.7 The level of services available in the village is reasonable, including key services of the Primary School and Village Shop. The development will further support these services, shown opposite.

6.8 Employment is available in the large town of Whitchurch to the east, which is a short drive from the application site.

6.9 Weekly shopping trips to Whitchurch and Wrexham can also be made by public transport, using the hourly return bus services.

Bronington Village Shop



Bronington Primary School



Relevant Appeal Decision

6.10 A planning appeal for a proposed housing development site at Tan yr Onnen, School Lane, Bronington was determined on 1st April 2015 (Appeal reference APP/H6955/A/14/2229673, WCBC Reference P/2104/0387).

6.11 Paragraph 12 of the Inspector's decision states :-

"The Council has accepted that there is insufficient land currently available within the area to provide a 5-year supply of housing. The most recent Joint Housing Land Availability Study conducted in 2014 concluded that there is a housing land supply of 3.1 years. The proposal would make a contribution therefore to housing supply and I have given that substantial weight. In this case however I consider that the benefit of additional housing supply does not outweigh the substantial harm that I have identified."

6.12 The Appeal was dismissed, but on the grounds that the Inspector considered that the proposed development would be out of accord with the pattern of development and the overall character and appearance of the area. It would also harm the living conditions of residents of neighbouring properties through noise and disturbance as a result of the additional comings and goings associated with the proposal.

6.13 The appeal was NOT dismissed on the grounds that Bronington is an unsustainable location for development.

7. Compliance with other Development Plan Policies & Guidance

7.1 The only issues which remain to be considered are whether the application proposals comply with the aims and requirements of the relevant policies within the adopted UDP, and with the Council's adopted supplementary policies in its Local Planning Guidance Notes.

7.2 The key policy here is UDP Policy GDP 1. This is reproduced below, along with a commentary on how the application proposals comply with its requirements.

Policy GDP1 All new development should:-

a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality – *this statement has demonstrated already that the proposed development accords with this criterion, as far as is possible with an outline application. The layout proposed has taken account of the need to retain some openness from the road frontage, and to vary the positions of houses to add interest to the street scene*

b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces – *The proposed public footpath along the site will provide a safe route to and from the development. Parking areas are overlooked by property frontages. The private gardens of the proposed properties will be well-screened and secure, owing to the mature*

frontage hedgerows.

c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources – *the positioning of the houses will allow the opportunity for householders to introduce renewable energy measures, such as solar panels. Fuller details of the specification of water-saving measures will be provided at reserved matters stage.*

d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality – *The two access roads will be 5 metres wide with 6 metre radii. Visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 43 metres can be provided. Parking will be provided to the Council's standards immediately adjoining each property. A new 1.8-metre footpath will extend across most of the site frontage.*

e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible – *The Wrexham and Whitchurch bus service 145 runs hourly in each direction. The proposed pedestrian footpath will give safe pedestrian access to the centre of the village.*

f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development – *this criterion does not apply to the application proposals.*

g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost – *water and electricity services are available close by.*

h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest – *the submitted ecology report demonstrates there will be no adverse effect on habitat, or on protected species.*

i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site – *the site does not lie within an area vulnerable to flooding (see the EA Flood Risk Maps at Appendix 1). The site has no potential contamination issues.*

j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity – *the proposed development would have no adverse impact on Welsh cultural or linguistic identity.*

k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area – *the statement has demonstrated that the proposals are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.*

7.3 UDP Policy H7 requires that an element of affordable housing is included within developments of 25 dwellings or more, which clearly does not apply to the application site. However, the proposals contain smaller semi-detached properties which will be available for purchase at the lower end of market values. They will therefore be 'lower-cost' open market houses.

7.4 Wrexham Council also has a number of adopted Local Planning Guidance Notes (LPGN) which are relevant to the application, as discussed below :-

- **LGP 10 – Public Open Space** – *this applies only to developments of 10 or more dwellings.*
- **LPGN 16 – Parking** – *at least 2 parking spaces per dwelling are shown on the sketch plan.*
- **LPGN 17 – Trees** – *the submitted Tree Report demonstrates that the proposals are arboriculturally sound.*
- **LPGN 21 – Space around Dwellings** – *No windows to habitable rooms will overlook each other, and sufficient space is provided around and between the proposed dwelling, and between the front elevations and those properties opposite and adjoining the site.*

7.5 Finally, national guidance in Planning Policy Wales (at paragraph 4.7.8) states :-

“Development in the countryside should be located within and adjoining those settlements where it can be best be accommodated in terms of infrastructure, access and habitat and landscape conservation. Infilling or minor extensions to existing settlements may be acceptable, in particular where it meets a local need for affordable housing, but new building in the open countryside away from existing settlements or areas allocated for development in development plans must continue to be strictly controlled. All new development should respect the character of the surrounding area and should be of appropriate scale and design.”

7.6 The application proposals can be seen to comply with this guidance, being a minor extension to an existing settlement, which was earmarked for development in the most recent development plan. The proposals are respectful of the existing character of the village will assimilate well with the existing settlement, rather than extending it inappropriately.

8. Conclusion

8.1 This report has demonstrated that the proposals are sustainable development. Planning permission should therefore be granted for the proposed development.

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Appendix 1 – EA Flood Risk Maps - Surface Water & Rivers/Sea

