

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Erection of 82 Dwellings, Realignment and
Improvements to Top Road, Formation of Public Open
Space and Provision of Affordable Housing

Land off Top Road, Summerhill,
Wrexham LL11 4SP

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1. Introduction

This report considers the Design and Access issues associated with the planning application at Land at Top Road, Summerhill, Wrexham LL11 4SP.

The application proposes:

Erection of 82 Dwellings, Realignment and Improvements to Top Road,
Formation of Public Open Space and Provision of Affordable Housing

2. Description of the Site

The land lies within Summerhill around 2½ miles to the north west of the centre of Wrexham. The whole of the site is shown below (although the area of the built development is significantly smaller)



The total site area is around 5.42 hectares (approx. 13.5 acres)

To the north lies the recent residential development of Westminster Rise/Bryn San Stefan developed by Gower Homes.

In the north eastern corner of the site are a pair of semi-detached properties 1 and 2 Grey Holt.

To the east is Top Road and beyond are the dwellings off Vicarage Close, Plas Alyn Crescent and Pountneys Corner and the wider settlement of Gwersyllt.

In the south eastern corner the site adjoins Summerhill Road and wraps round the existing property Ridge Mount. The site also adjoins the rear boundaries of No's 3, 4 and 5 Chestnut Court.

In the south west corner the site adjoins Tyn-y-Coed which is set at a lower level than the site in the Moss Valley, accessed off Moss Road.

Moss Wood runs along the western boundary and extends down to Moss Road within the Moss Valley.

3. Characteristics of the Land

The site lies on the western edge of the settlement of Summerhill and in total amounts to around 5.42 hectares (approx. 13.5 acres).

Within the centre of the site is Chestnut Height Stables a range of stables partly used for DIY livery. The whole of the site is used for the grazing of horses.

The land rises gently from the eastern boundary with Summerhill to the Moss Wood on the western boundary. The Moss Wood boundary then falls steeply into the Moss Valley below.

A low wall and hedge mark the sites boundary with Top Road. There are a series of trees which create a parkland setting in the North West corner of the site.

There is a strong and mature hedge line within the site which creates a crescent shape in the north western corner. The hedgerows are variable in condition, with some good and others fragmented or over mature.

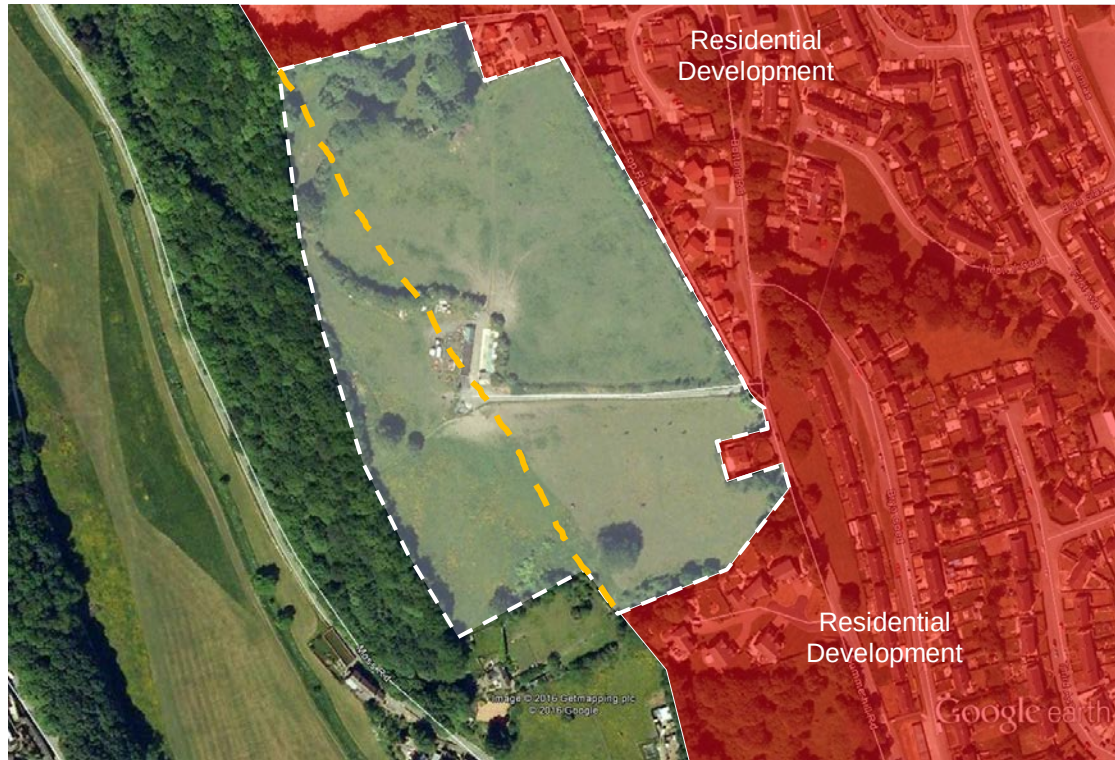
The access to the site and the stables runs from the junction of Summerhill Road, Top Road and Bottom Road. The access is directly onto this junction and is substandard in terms of its width and alignment.

The junction of Top Road onto Summerhill Road/Bottom Road is badly aligned which causes difficulties with traffic entering and leaving the junction.



There are no public footpaths/routes within or through the site

The context of the site is shown in the aerial photograph below.



The site is shown above with a dashed white line and highlighted white.

The land is contained on 3 sides by residential development to the north, east and south and the general extent of the existing residential development is shown with the orange dashed line.

The site contains clear and defensible boundaries.

4. Design & Access Issues

4.1 Accessibility – Existing

The existing site is accessed off a substandard junction onto Top Road.

There are no public footpaths/routes within or alongside the site. The areas around the site include various pinch points which inhibit safe pedestrian movement around the site.

The site lies within the settlement and close to the services and facilities within Summerhill and Gwersylt.

4.2 Accessibility – General

The details of the traffic and access are discussed in detail within the Transport Assessment dated March 2017 provided by Croft Transport Solutions Hill Quays, 9 Jordan Street, Manchester M15 4PY. This report concludes that:

- 8.1.1 This report has considered the traffic and transportation issues relating to proposals to develop a site for residential purposes on land off Top Road in the Summerhill area of Wrexham. The following conclusions have been drawn:
- The site is located close to a range of key amenities and facilities and existing and proposed pedestrian infrastructure will enable safe pedestrian movement between the development site and local services.
 - The development proposals will significantly enhance the existing local highway network and pedestrian infrastructure in the vicinity of the site.
 - The site benefits from being located in close proximity to the bus stops located on the Top Road and Summerhill Road which provide services that are ideally placed to cater for the needs of the residents and visitors.
 - The capacity assessments undertaken show that the traffic associated with the development can be accommodated by the existing road network and will not have a material impact.
 - The proposed development will be accessed by a safe and efficient vehicular access arrangement and can be adequately serviced.

- There is no evidence to suggest that the proposals would have an adverse effect on road safety or the number of accidents in the vicinity.
- A Framework Travel Plan will be implemented to encourage the use of non-car modes to take advantage of the sustainable travel accessibility credentials of the site.

8.1.2 Based on the above it is the conclusion of this report that there are no material reasons why the proposed development should not be granted planning consent on highways or transportation grounds.

4.3 Accessibility – Re-alignment of Summerhill Road/ Top Road/Bottom Road junction

To the east of the site Summerhill Road and Bottom Road are the priority routes within the village.

The Summerhill/Bottom Road junction with Top Road sits on the eastern boundary of the site.

These roads lie within the 30mph limit and are shown below.



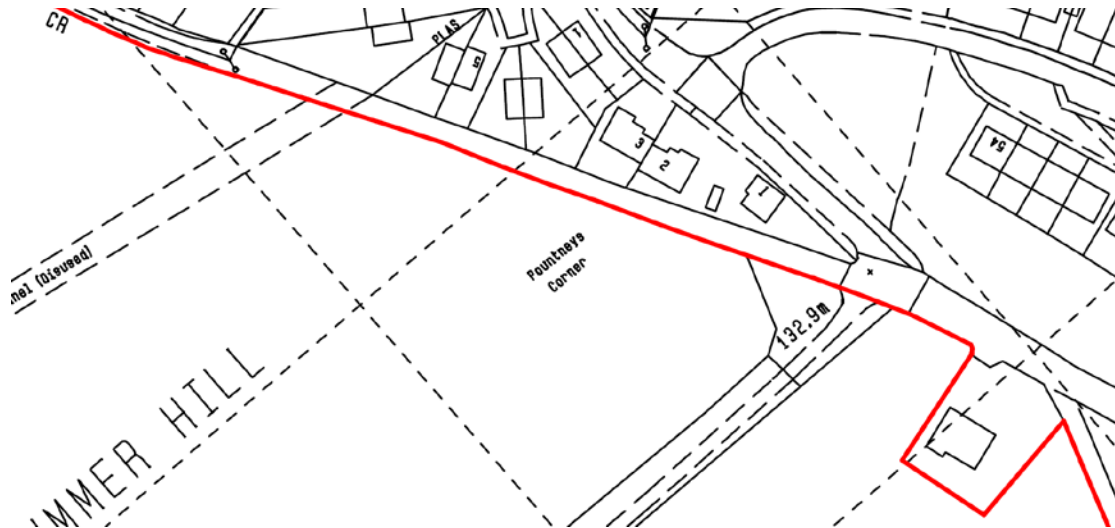
Top Road runs at an acute angle which creates a substandard junction in terms of its width, alignment and visibility as shown below.



Traffic also tends to speed along Summerhill Road and into Top Road which creates a dangerous position for vehicles and pedestrian.

The scheme proposes to re-align Top Road so that it sits at 90° to Summerhill/Bottom Road. The new Top Road would sweep into the site and rejoin the existing Top Road creating a safer road junction.

The Location Plan shows the current alignment of the road and an extract is shown below.



Drawing TRS-SP01 – Proposed Site Layout shows the principles of this re-aligned junction and an extract is shown below



The details of the junction improvement have been discussed with the Highway Authority and the details are considered further in the Transport Assessment dated March 2017 provided by Croft Transport Solutions Hill Quays, 9 Jordan Street, Manchester M15 4PY.

The provision of the improved road junction will act as a natural traffic calming measure and considerably reduce traffic speeds within the local area which will improve traffic safety in the vicinity.

The re-alignment along with the associated footpaths will also assist in the safe pedestrian movements around the junction.

4.4 Accessibility – Width of Top Road

Top Road along the eastern edge of the site is contained by stone walls and a mature hedgeline.

At present pedestrians walk along the roadway and a very narrow kerbed verge on the eastern side of the road.

The scheme proposes the setting back of the existing boundary wall to provide a carriageway between a minimum of 5.5m wide and 6.5m wide.

The wall would be rebuilt to ensure the rural character of the existing road is retained.

Top Road accommodates a bus route (ARRIVA route 21/21A) and so this improvement would significantly assist with traffic movements along Top Road.

4.5 Accessibility – Footpath along Top Road

As noted above Top Road does not include a formal footpath along the site frontage between the Summerhill/Bottom Road junction and 1 Grey Holt. At present pedestrians walk along the roadway and a narrow kerbed verge on the eastern side of the road.

The scheme includes the provision of a 1.8m wide footpath within an area of open space set behind the rebuilt frontage wall.

Natural surveillance of the footpath would be provided from the new houses within the site.

This would significantly improve pedestrian safety in the local area.

4.6 Accessibility – Link to Footpath GWE/7

The existing Footpath GWE/7 runs to the north of the site between Top Road to the east and the Golf Club within Moss Valley to the west.

The footpath also links with the existing housing estate Westminster Rise/Bryn San Stefan developed by Gower Homes.

The scheme proposes a new opening within the boundary wall along the northern edge of the site to provide a link from the existing site to this footpath GWE/7.

This opening of this footway allows greater permeability through the site and into the wider area.

4.7 Accessibility – Link to Footpath GWE/8

The existing Footpath GWE/8 runs to the east of the site between Top Road (to the west) and Bottom Road (to the east) and lies between the Vicarage Close and Plas Alyn Crescent housing developments.

The provision of the footpath within the site would assist with accessing this footpath GWE/8 and provide a direct route to the centre of the settlement and local services and facilities.

The provision of this safe crossing point allows a greater permeability through the site into the wider area.

4.8 Accessibility – Footpaths and Open Space within the Site

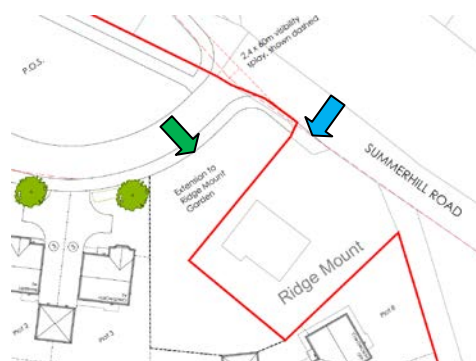
The scheme allocates 1.99ha of open space within the site. As part of the opening up of the site to wider public access this would be available as a public area of open space which would include a quality area of open space along with an equipped play area.

4.9 Accessibility – Vehicular Access to Ridge Mount

The current property includes a substandard access onto Summerhill Road which is lacking in visibility splays and a suitable internal vehicle turning area. This leads to dangerous manoeuvres into and out of the site onto Summerhill Road.

Land would be dedicated to the property in order to provide a suitable access off the newly aligned access into Top Road (along with a larger garden area).

This land is shown on 'Drawing TRS-SP01 – Proposed Site Layout' with the existing access shown blue and the proposed access shown green in the extract shown right



4.10 Accessibility – Buildings

The site is generally flat and so circulation routes within and through the site will be level, firm and safe

Each property will have its parking area immediately adjacent to ensure ease of movement into the properties and the spaces will be provided in a mix of tarmac and pavements for ease of movement/access

The site is carefully designed to offer the maximum possible accessibility for users and visitors. This will include the provision for a disabled person to approach and gain access into the buildings from the point of alighting from a vehicle. A level approach will be provided (gradient less than 1:20) and its surface would be firm and even

An accessible threshold will be provided into the building, and the entrance door will include an appropriate opening width (min clear opening width of 775mm) to enable a wheelchair user to manoeuvre into the buildings. In addition the internal space in the entrance storey will allow convenient circulation by a wheelchair user and WCs will also be provided at ground floor

In accordance with current best practice in relation to pedestrian access the scheme shall comply with:

- BS 8300:2009+A1:2010 Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice; and
- Building Regulations Approved Document Part M (2013 edition)

4.11 Environmental Sustainability

Resource efficiency means minimising the use of energy for heating, lighting and other energy uses. It also means using materials and construction methods that do not require a lot of energy to either produce or build.

The minimum requirements to achieve resource efficiency in new construction are set out in the Building Regulations and the scheme will meet these requirements to ensure resource efficiency in new construction.

The following sustainability issues have also been considered:

- wherever possible materials will be sourced and produced locally and will come from a source that can be renewed without harm to the environment
- the scheme will avoid the use of tropical hardwood and look for timber which is certified as coming from sustainable sources,
- the site is serviced by mains water, electricity, gas and drainage,

- foul water drainage will be to the existing public sewer system,
- to promote safe and secure storage facilities for cycles, thereby promoting cycle use as an alternative to the car the following will be provided:
 - o all garages to include wall mounted cycle racks
 - o properties without garages will be provided with a shed in the garden for safe cycle storage

The above points will ensure that the properties are 'sustainable' in terms of its building design and the supply and use of energy and water.

The development of the site will be sustainable and in line with current building standards.

4.12 Character and Design

There are no Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the site, nor is the site within or adjacent to a Conservation Area.

The properties in the local area are an eclectic mix of house designs and materials.

The key features of local properties are:

- predominantly modern 2 storey houses with a number of bungalows on Bryn Coed to the south east
- predominantly brick walls with some properties painted render
- predominantly concrete tile roofs with small number of traditional properties using natural slate roofs and clay tiles
- predominantly white painted windows (or brown)

The scheme responds to the quality elements of the properties surrounding the site and will include

- 2 storey dwellings
- brick walling materials
- concrete tile roofs
- simple white casement windows with top light features
- arched brick heads

- porch details
- brick plinths
- projecting bay windows
- brick detailing within gables
- black guttering and downpipes

Typical elevations of the dwellings through the site are shown below.



The proposed buildings have been designed to reflect the scale and character of the properties in the vicinity and comply with thrust of policies GDP1 of the Unitary Development Plan and Technical Advice Note 12 Design (2009).

4.13 Character and Layout

The layout of the site has been carefully considered following on-going discussions with Officers of the Council's Planning Team.

The key elements of the layout are:

1. provide an improved Top Road, Bottom Road Summerhill Road junction
2. create a positive frontage onto Top Road
3. contain the built development within the confines of the existing built development (see Planning Statement page 11)
4. recreate the parkland setting to the west of the site including re-instating the line of the historic woodland
5. provide positive frontages onto the areas of open space



4.14 Community Safety

The proposed dwellings would provide natural surveillance and security for the roadways, footpaths, open spaces, gardens and parking areas within the site.

Due to the detailed design and layout, the site has clear and defensible boundaries and the adjoining roads and footpaths are clearly marked to ensure that the public are aware of there routes through the site.

The site will be suitably secured during the construction phase and the development will comply with all relevant public safety legislation.

4.15 Movement to, from and within the Development

The proposed development assists in sustainable development because it includes the following links:

- **Footpaths**

The local services and facilities (shops, schools community facilities etc) are within easy walking distance of the site.

Improvements to the footpath network are discussed in sections 4.5 to 4.7 above.

- **Public Transport Infrastructure - Rail**

Gwersyllt Train Station at Hope Street, Gwersyllt LL11 4LD lies around 700m from the site entrance and provides hourly trains into Wrexham and to Bidston (along with stops between).

- **Public Transport Infrastructure - Bus**

There are regular Bus Services serving the wider area including central Wrexham from Bus Services alongside the site frontage (Services 21/21A/23)

- **Transport Infrastructure - Road**

There are good local highway linkages close to the site including the A483 which lies 2kms to the south east and the A541 which is 600m to the east.

The movement to, from and within the site is convenient and safe.

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