

PLANNING 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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Document 1 Candidate Site Register Document

Document 2 Moss Valley 'Strategic Green Wedge Review Stage 1'

1. Introduction

This report considers the planning 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

The scheme proposes:

- The Erection of 82 Dwellings including
 - o 12 x 2 bedroom houses
 - o 37 x 3 bedroom houses
 - o 33 x 4 bedroom houses
- Highway Improvements including re-alignment of the Summerhill Road, Top Road and Bottom Road junction
- Footpath Links and Improvements
- The re-creation of the historic parkland setting on 1.99 hectares of land to the north west and west of the site adjoining Moss Wood
- The introduction of public access to and through the site

An extract of the site layout is shown below.



2. The Site and its Context

The land lies within Summerhill around 2½ miles to the north west of the centre of Wrexham. The whole of the promoted site is shown below (although the area for development is significantly smaller – see section 5.2 below)



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. The 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 Top Road on the eastern boundary to the Moss Wood on the western boundary.

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 footpath 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.

The land is contained on 3 sides by residential development to the north, east and south.

The site contains clear and defensible boundaries.

4. Planning Policy

4.1 Current Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area is the Wrexham County Borough Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011 which was adopted in February 2005.

The UDP shows the whole of the application site situated within an area of open countryside and within the Green Barrier.

However the site lies directly adjacent (and surrounded on 3 sides by) the development boundary of Gwersyllt/Summerhill/Rhosrobin/Bradley.

The following Local Planning Guidance Notes are also relevant

LPGN 07	- Landscaping and Development
LPGN 10	- Public Open Space on New Housing Developments
LPGN 13	- Housing in the Countryside
LPGN 16	- Parking Standards
LPGN 17	- Trees and Development
LPGN 21	- Space Around Dwellings
LPGN 24	- Designing out Crime
LPGN 27	- Development Contributions to Schools
LPGN 28	- Affordable Housing
LPGN 30	- Design
LPGN 32	- Biodiversity and Development

4.2 Emerging Local Development Plan (LDP2)

The site lies within the settlement of Gwersyllt/Summerhill/Rhosrobin/Bradley which is a Tier 2 settlement as defined within the LDP2.

A copy of the LDP2 Consultation 'Candidate Site Register' is attached as Document 1 and this indicates that:

"The site complies with the Council's Preferred Strategy, however there are constraints that are unlikely to be overcome to allow the site to be developed"

The Officers initial comments relating to the suitability of the site state that:

"Site Ref: GWE8CS Land off Top Road, Summerhill
Tier 2 Settlement Hierarchy Ward Gwersyllt West

Greenfield site outside but in the edge of the settlement limit of Gwersyllt.

Grade 3 agricultural land although this has not been tested by site survey.

The site is also within the green barrier.

The site has number of trees and relic hedgerows, provide these can be retained there are no ecological objections to the allocation of the site.

The site is accessed off Top Road, a narrow road with no pedestrian provision. The junction of Top Road with Summerhill Road is substandard and unsuitable to cater for any further significant development. The site may be suitable to cater for a limited development subject to the provision of a site access and significantly improved pedestrian provision.

The site is within 250m of a closed landfill site and contamination remediation may be required although this would not preclude allocation.

There is no spare education capacity in the locality without further extension to the schools in the area.

There are also mineral constraints associated with the site (coal and sand and gravel). Development of the site could potentially sterilize the coal beneath the site and if the site is to go forward in the in LDP, the prior extraction and justification for the sterilization of the resource will be required.

Development could be accommodated here without adverse impact on the landscape.

Discount on highway grounds.

Highways comments

The site has a frontage on to a classified highway within a 30mph speed limit. The road varies in width between 4.2 and 4.8m and is considered inadequate to cater for any further significant development. There is no pedestrian provision along Top Road. The alignment of junction of Top Road with Summerhill Road is substandard in current design terms. The addition of significant volumes of traffic through this junction is considered inappropriate. The route to the site is a fairly arduous drive along roads of substandard design. I have concerns that the local highway network is capable of catering for any further significant development.

Conclusion:

Although the site is accessed by a substandard road network it is considered that the site may be suitable to serve a limited number of residential dwellings subject to the provision of an adequate site access and significantly improved pedestrian provision.

Further clarification email sent on 13th Jan 2014. Additional comments as follows: Given the existing substandard design layout it is not possible to support the site. However visibility concerns could be overcome if it were possible to construct a new junction at Top Road / Summerhill Road. Top Road would need to be improved along the full site frontage. I have concerns over the capacity of the approach roads - Summerhill Road, Little Mountain and Wheatsheaf Lane but it may be possible to address this with a transport assessment which would determine eventual site numbers. It is likely however that 120 could not be supported"

The proposal fits within the sustainable principles of the LDP2 and complies with the Preferred Strategy.

The documents submitted in support of the planning application consider the key issues raised by the Officers comments relating to the suitability of the site.

4.3 5 Year Land Supply - Planning Policy Wales (Feb 2014)

Planning Policy Wales sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government and translates the Government's commitment to sustainable development in the planning.

Planning Policy Wales indicates at paragraph 9.2.3 that:

"Local planning authorities must ensure that sufficient land is genuinely available or will become available to provide a 5-year supply of land for housing judged against the general objectives and the scale and location of development provided for in the development plan. This means that sites must be free, or readily freed, from planning, physical and ownership constraints, and economically feasible for development, so as to create and support sustainable communities where people want to live. There must be sufficient sites suitable for the full range of housing types. For land to be regarded as genuinely available it must be a site included in a Joint Housing Land Availability Study¹¹. The Welsh Government will monitor development plans and their implementation to ensure that sufficient housing land is brought forward for development in each local planning authority and that economic development and related job opportunities are not unreasonably constrained"

There is a clear requirement to provide a 5 year supply of housing land within Planning Policy Wales (2014)

4.4 5 Year Land Supply - Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1

TAN 1 states in part '8. Transitional arrangements' that:

"8.2 Therefore local planning authorities that do not have either an adopted LDP or UDP will be unable to demonstrate whether or not they have a 5-year housing land supply and effectively will be considered not to have a 5-year supply. Those LPAs without an adopted development plan will be unable to produce a JHLAS until an adopted LDP is in place. However, as mentioned in paragraph 3.3 above, local planning authorities without an adopted LDP should continue to carry out an objective assessment of their housing land supply on an annual basis in preparation for their LDP"

As the Council does not have either an adopted LDP or UDP the Council do not have a 5 year land supply.

Part 6 of TAN1 relates to the issue of housing supply and states that:

"6.2 The housing land supply figure should also 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 or where the local planning authority has been unable to undertake a study, the need to increase supply **should be given considerable weight** when dealing with planning applications provided that the development would otherwise comply with development plan and national planning policies."

4.5 5 Year Land Supply - WCBC (JHLAS)

The latest Wrexham County Borough Council Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) for 2013 presents the housing land supply for the area at the base date of April 2016.

The document acknowledges that in the absence of an up-to-date Unitary Development Plan and adopted Local Development Plan (in accordance with latest Welsh Government Guidance within TAN1) there is no requirement for a Local Authority to produce a JHLAS and the authority is considered to have a zero land supply.

The historic land supply figures are shown in Appendix 3 – Previous Land Supply Data (large Sites) and this is shown below:

Year	5 year supply - Number of Homes				Number of years supply	Supply beyond 5 years – Number of Homes	
	1	2	Smll	S106		3	4
2007	546	1966			14.99	614	13
2008	411	1728			7.52	783	14
2009	154	1470			6.08	783	398
2010	175	1241			5.35	838	165
2011	381	968			3.9	1028	63
2012	191	786			3.5	824	52
2013	198	666			3.4	405	328
2014	89	690			3.1	546	54
2015	166	1124	75		NA	319	23
2016	234	383	69	88	NA	1036	154

The historic figures show a considerable and on-going undersupply of housing in the area compounding the undersupply of housing within the Council's area.

Historically Wrexham County Borough Council Joint Housing Land Availability (JHLAS) Study for 2013 acknowledges that expediting planning applications is the only viable alternative to increase housing land supply in the short term. The document stated at paragraph 3.5 that:

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 In acknowledgement of a lack of a 5 year housing land supply, the Council have been discussing potential developments with landowners and developers and providing relevant information. It will continue to do so in order to assist the successful delivery of further housing sites within the County Borough and to ensure there is a 5 year land supply when the LDP is adopted.

3.2 The Council will continue to:

- Take a pro-active stance in supporting appropriate growth in the County Borough where it meets policy objectives and identified local needs. This is not just about increasing housing numbers, but to promote sustainable growth in the right locations which meets the needs of local communities.
- Work with the Wrexham Town Centre Masterplan to inform policy by setting a clear strategy and framework vision, objectives and actions for the Town Centre.
- Promote a Development Team Approach to major development proposals.
- Liaise with developers to understand the problems they face in the current market conditions.

4.6 5 Year Land Supply - Conclusion

Planning Policy Wales and TAN 1 requires each Local Planning Authority to ensure that sufficient land is available to provide a 5-year supply of housing land within their areas.

The Wrexham County Borough Council Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) for 2015 concludes that there is not a 5 year supply of housing land.

TAN 1 specifies that if Local Planning Authorities cannot provide a 5-year supply of housing land the need to increase supply should be given considerable weight when dealing with planning applications.

The current application seeks to assist in the increase in the supply of housing land within the Wrexham County Borough area in line with the requirements of Planning Policy Wales and TAN 1.

5. Other Planning Issues

5.1 Sustainability

The site has the following sustainability credentials

- a. The site lies immediately adjacent to the Tier 2 Settlement of Gwersyllt/Summerhill/Rhosrobin/Bradley
- b. The settlement contains a wide range of services and facilities including
 - Wide range of Shops
 - Heulfan Primary School (Ysgol Heulfan) – 360m distant
 - Bryn Alyn Secondary School (Ysgol Bryn Alyn) – 280m distant
 - Bus Services alongside the site frontage (Services 21/21A/23)
 - Local employment opportunities Mold Road Industrial Estate, Rhosddu Industrial Estate and Wrexham town centre
 - Community Centre at Gwersyllt Resource Centre – 600m distant
- c. The site lies close to the urban centre of Wrexham
- d. The scheme would improve the road/highway network with an improved road junction and road widths along Top Road
- e. The scheme would create additional footpaths within and through the site to improve walking opportunities within the local area and the permeability of the site
- f. Trees and hedges within the site would be retained
- g. An ecology report has been being prepared which suggests that there are no significant impacts upon protected species
- h. The historic parkland landscape setting will be re-introduced to the western area of the site

The site lies within a sustainable location which accords with the Council's Preferred Strategy

The scheme creates a sustainable development which would contribute to the local community.

5.2 Extent of the Residential Development

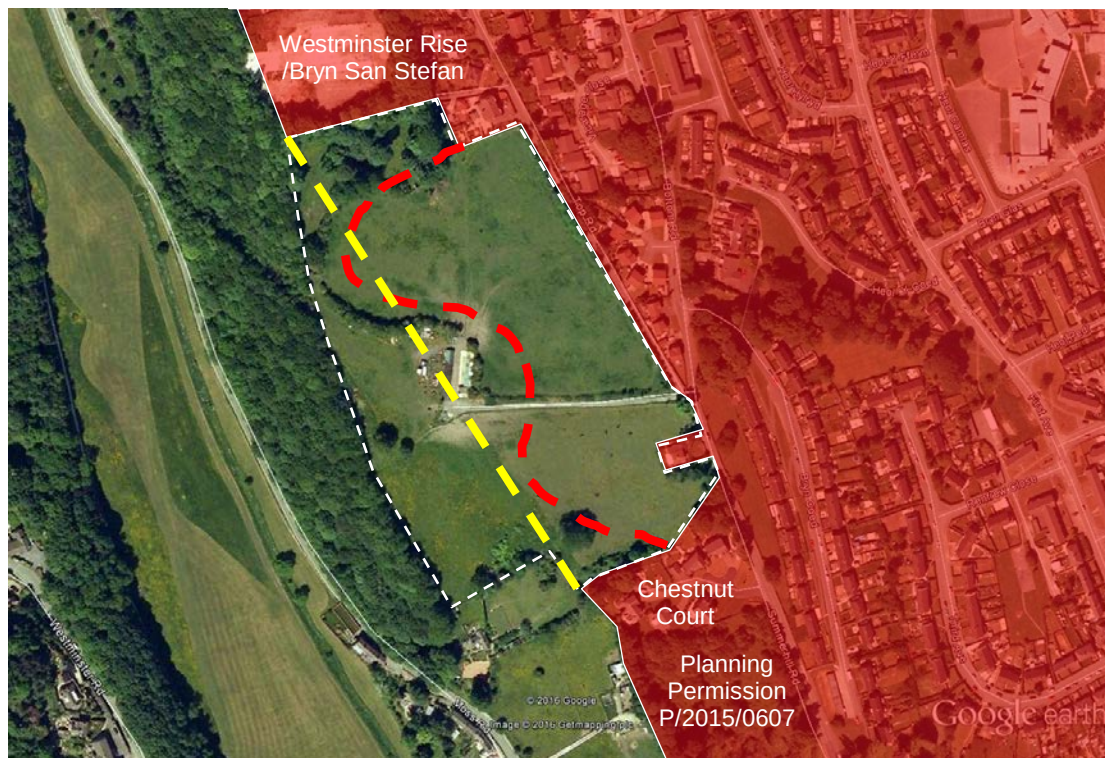
The scheme proposes the allocation of 3.31 hectares (out of the total site area of 5.42 hectares) of land for residential development.

Given the existing residential development surrounding the site it is anticipated that any new dwellings should be contained by the general extent of the existing residential development.

The principle of this containment is shown on the aerial photograph below which shows the housing surrounding the site washed over in red.

The general extent of the site is shown with the dashed white line.

The residential development would be contained within the approximate area of the red dashed line and the suggested layout is shown on 'Drawing TRS-SP01 Proposed Site Plan'



This clearly demonstrates that the residential part of the scheme is constrained on its northern, eastern and southern boundaries by existing housing development which is shown by the yellow dashed line above.

Therefore the housing development does not extend into open countryside and provides the rounding off of the settlement in this location.

The scheme provides for a logical expansion of the settlement which can be provided within a phased timetable to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

5.3 Affordable Housing

The development would provide affordable housing in line with the UDP Policy H7 (or as subsequently amended by the emerging LDP2) which requires a 20% provision of affordable housing to be provided.

These 16 units would be a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom houses with the locations and tenures to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

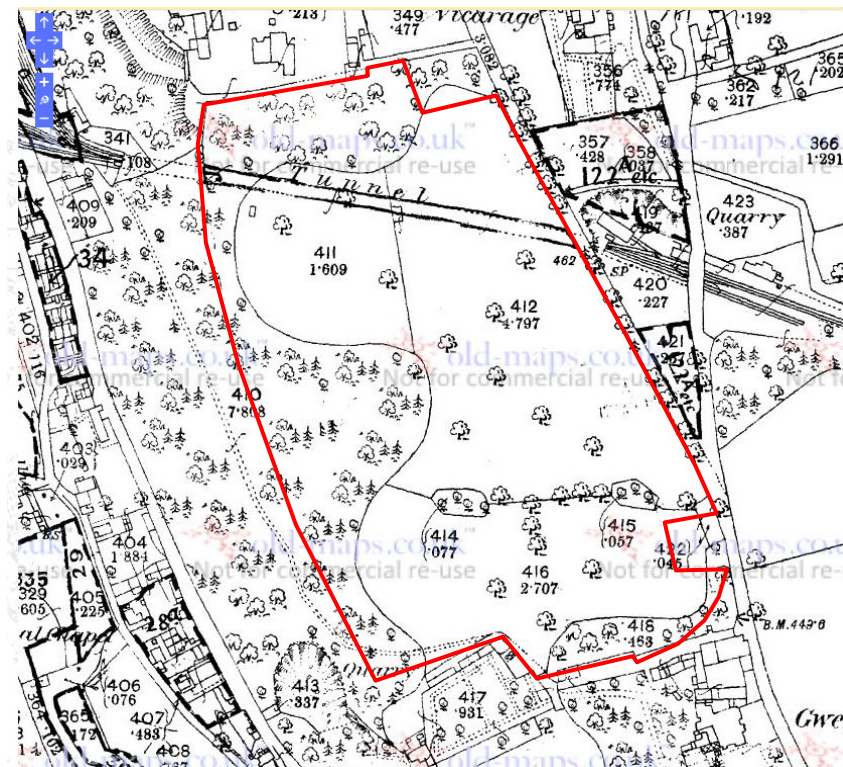
5.4 Historic Setting of the Site

A review of the historic landscape setting has found that the site was part of the estate of Gwersyllt Hill Hall. There are tall brick estate walls along the northern and southern boundaries and parkland tree species around the edges of the site (notably sweet chestnut and turkey oak), indicating the site was parkland at some point.

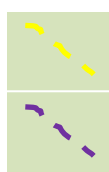
The hall was quite grand but demolished in the 1980s (and was subsequently developed into Chestnut Court).

The Hall was home to the famous architect Thomas Penson, which is worthy of some interpretation within the open spaces.

Below is the historic map extract showing the site in the 1870s. Note the original boundary line of Moss Wood, which is still marked by the hedgerow/treeline in the northern half of the site.



An extract from the Proposed Site Plan Drawing TRS-SP01 is shown below.



the historic hedge which remains on the site.

new planting to re-create the line of the historic parkland/woodland

The open space on site would then:

- be landscaped to re-create the historic landscape setting
- be open and available to public access for recreational space and walking routes
- provide the new line of the green barrier (which would run along the new highway within the site)

The re-instatement of the historic parkland landscape setting will allow the creation of significant open spaces within the site along with the opening up of the site via new footpath routes which would be a significant planning gain to the local community

5.5 Green Barrier – Current Position

The land is currently shown to be within the Green Barrier as defined within the current Wrexham UDP.

The purposes of a Green Barrier include:

- i) to prevent the coalescence of urban areas and villages with other settlements;

- ii) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- iii) to protect the setting of urban areas and villages;
- iv) to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

The current Green Barrier is currently being reviewed within the 'Strategic Green Wedge Review Stage 1' document dated February 2016.

The site is identified within the Area 6 – Moss Valley.

An extract of the text in relation to the Moss Valley Green Wedge is attached as Document 2 and the conclusion reads:

Overall Conclusion: Area 6 – Moss Valley

The gaps between the various settlements (Gwersyllt, Broughton, and Brymbo) are narrow, with all settlements in close proximity to each other, as such the risk of coalescence and the impact upon the openness of the area are more pronounced.

The close proximity of settlements means that the relative openness of the green wedge is important, and the openness would not be maintained to the same extent should it be covered by a general open countryside policy.

The designation therefore serves the function of preventing coalescence in the area, and managing development in order to maintain openness.

The designation is set along defensible boundaries, serving to manage the urban form in this location and separating settlements in close proximity to each other. It also serves to safeguard the countryside from encroachment.

It is therefore recommended that the green wedge designation be retained in this location, with the purpose of preventing the coalescence of settlements and maintaining the openness of the area between settlements.

5.6 Green Barrier – Significance of the Site

The scheme proposes the re-alignment of the Green Barrier boundary to allow the development to proceed. The following issues are relevant to this site:

- i) to prevent the coalescence of urban areas and villages with other settlements;

comment in the context of this site

The land sits within the extent of the existing residential development to the north, east and south and does not project beyond the general extent of this existing development.

To the west of the site, areas of open space would be retained in order to contribute to the wider Green Wedge designation.

The site is contained along its western boundary by the Moss Wood which creates a significant screen from wider views from the west.

Due to this tree screen the site does not encroach upon the Moss Valley which is a key element of the Green Wedge designation in this locality.

The photograph below shows the view from the Moss Valley towards the site which is entirely screened by the large mature Moss Wood.



The view from Moss Road to the south west of the site is also screened by topography and existing trees and woodland.

Any development would be set back into the site and would not be visible from this strategic vantage point. The view from Moss Road is shown in the photograph below which an arrow identifying the south western corner of the site



Due to the specific circumstances noted above, the site

- is not visible from the Moss Valley Green Wedge

- does not impact upon the Moss Valley Green Wedge
- does not narrow the gap between Summerhill and Pentre Broughton to the west due to the existing development which contains the site (see section 3 above)

ii) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;

comment in the context of this site

The land sits within the extent of the existing residential development to the north, east and south and does not project beyond the general extent of this existing development.

Therefore there is no encroachment into open countryside

iii) to protect the setting of urban areas and villages;

comment in the context of this site

The scheme proposes the retention of areas of green barrier/wedge on the north western and western sides of the site and the re-instatement of the historic parkland landscape in order to ensure that the scheme is suitably integrated into the grain of the existing settlement

iv) to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

comment in the context of this site

It has been acknowledged within the LDP2 that the Green Barrier will need to be re-aligned in order to provide the level of development required within the district up to 2028

The land sits within the extent of the existing residential development to the north, east and south and does not project beyond the general extent of this existing development

On the basis of the above the site does not significantly contribute to the key aims of the Green Barrier/Wedge policy.

5.7 Green Barrier – The Surroundings

The existing Green Barrier in the area of the site is shown in the aerial photograph below.



However recent developments and planning permissions have meant that certain sites within the Green Barrier no longer meet the aims of the Green Barrier policy noted at 5.5/5.6 above. Specifically the following sites no longer meet the aims of Green Barrier policy.

- Site 1 – Chestnut Court built in the 1990s
- Site 2 – Application P/2015/0607 for 20 dwellings approved 14th Jan 2016

These sites are shown on the aerial below



The line of the Green Barrier should be adjusted in order to reflect the existing residential development along with the proposed site as shown below



5.8 Green Barrier Conclusion

The scheme proposes the logical adjustment of the Green Wedge and the following points are key to the proposed re-alignment:

- the boundary of the Green Wedge needs to reflect the recent changing position in respect to the existing residential encroachments into the Green Wedge (shown as Site 1 and Site 2 above)
- the proposed re-alignment allows a housing development which is surrounded by houses on 3 sides
- given the individual circumstances the proposed residential site does not contribute to the aims of the Green Barrier nor the wider Moss Valley Green Barrier designation
- the Green Barrier designation would remain on the western side of the site
- the value of the site to the Green Barrier would be enhanced by the
 - o re-instatement of the historic parkland setting on the western side of the site
 - o introduction of public access to the site adjacent to Moss Wood

5.9 Mineral Constraints

The LDP2 Consultation 'Site Register' Document indicates that:

There are also mineral constraints associated with the site (coal and sand and gravel). Development of the site could potentially sterilize the coal beneath the site and if the site is to go forward in the in LDP, the prior extraction and justification for the sterilization of the resource will be required.

The site along with other sites on the eastern part of the Moss Valley has historically been worked for minerals. This site is accessible only from the Top Road Summerhill Road/Bottom Road and the access to the site runs through residential areas towards the main distributor road A483.

If planning permission was applied for mineral workings within the site it is anticipated that this would be refused due to:

1. the road infrastructure in the local area being incapable of accommodating the number, type and size of HGV and articulated vehicles associated with the long term removal of minerals from the site
2. the extraction of minerals from the site and particularly the noise, dust, traffic movements and general disturbance would seriously impact upon the amenity of the existing dwellings on the immediate northern, eastern and western boundaries of the site

It is acknowledged that not all sites which lie above mineral deposits are capable of mineral extraction. The unsuitability of the site as noted above is sufficient justification for the sterilization of the resource. In reality the mineral deposits are sterilized due to the unsuitability of the site regardless of the outcome of the review of the LDP2 and/or a planning application for development on the site.

Therefore the 'mineral constraints' should not constrain the future development of the land and should not prevent the suitable development of the site.

5.10 Deliverable Site

The market for housing within Summerhill and the wider settlement remains strong. The site is available for immediate development and Macbryde will discuss the phasing of the site with Wrexham Council if the site is granted planning permission.

5.11 Services

There are no known adverse physical and environmental constraints to the development of the site and the site has access to all public utilities and services.

6. Conclusions

Summerhill is part of a wider settlement which represents a highly sustainable location at which to concentrate development in accordance with the strategic plan for the area.

The proposed land offers a readily available site which is capable of development and is deliverable. Macbryde Homes wish to develop the site in 2017/2018 showing a clear wish to bring the site forward for housing.

The site lies immediately adjacent to the settlement and is ideally placed within walking distance of the services and facilities of Summerhill.

The site has clear and defensible boundaries which will allow the development to be readily assimilated into the grain of the village.

The housing site would occupy around 3.31 hectares (60% of the total site area of 5.42 hectares) and would provide a range of house types to reflect the local community along with affordable housing in line with Council policy.

The footpath routes through the site allow for the immediate permeability of the development and allow quick and easy pedestrian access to the village centre.

The site provides considerable highway benefits in providing an improved junction at the Top Road and Summerhill Road/Bottom Road junction. This will reduce traffic speeds and improve traffic safety in the vicinity of the site.

The scheme provides a series of public footpaths routes into and through the site in order to assimilate the development into the wider area.

The scheme proposes the dedication of 1.99 hectares of land for public open space on the eastern side of the site. The open space allows for the re-creation of the historic parkland setting of the Gwersyllt Hill Hall, home to the famous architect Thomas Penson. Interpretation of the historic setting of the site would be provided within the open spaces.

The site does not significantly contribute to the aims of the Green Barrier/Wedge designation and the scheme would not impact upon the wider Moss Valley designation. The value of the site to the Green Barrier would be enhanced by the re-instatement of the historic parkland setting on the western side of the site and the introduction of public access across the site.

There are no known adverse physical or environmental constraints to development.

The proposed site offers a sympathetic and sustainable opportunity for the development and expansion of the settlement, along with significant community and highway benefits for the whole settlement.

Document 1
Candidate Site Register Document

Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028

Candidate Site Register

Site Ref: GWE08CS

Site Address: Land off Top Road, Summerhill

Settlement:

Gwersyllt/Summerhill/Rhosrobin/Bradley

Community: Gwersyllt

Ward: Gwersyllt West

Size Ha: 5.4

Greenfield: Yes

Brownfield: No

Settlement Hierarchy Tiers: 2

With Planning Permission

as of 1st April 2015: N/A

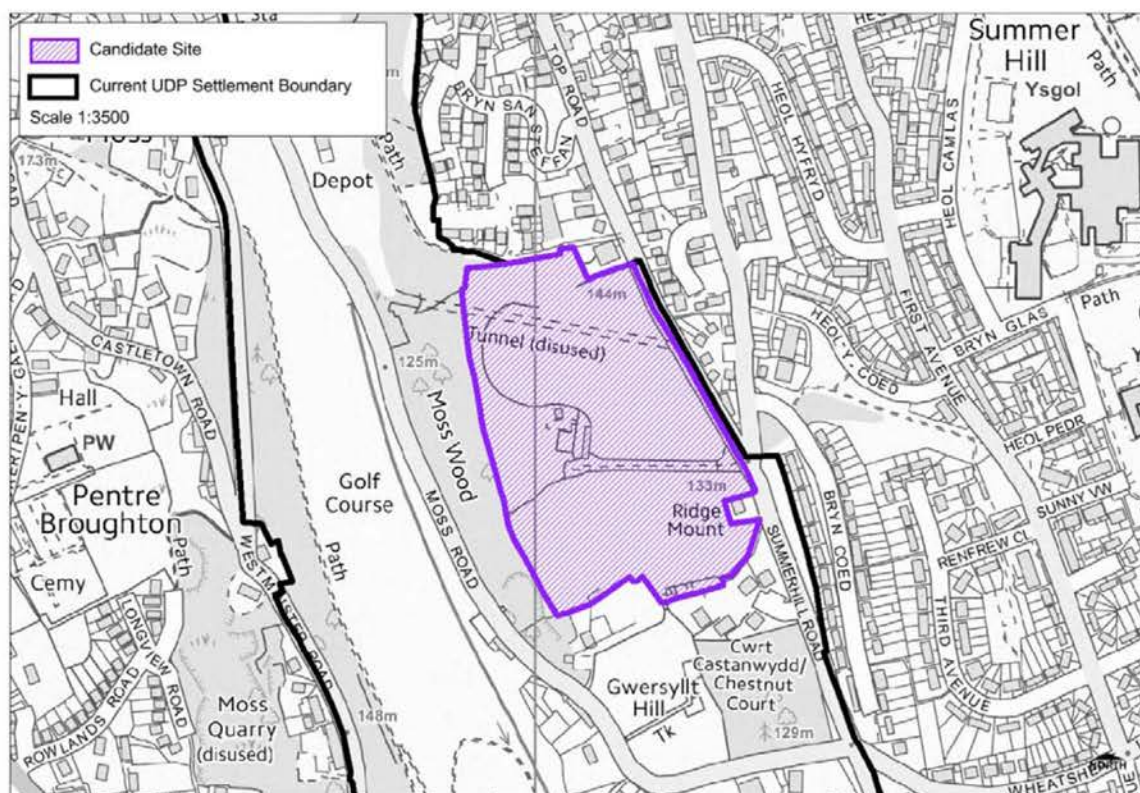
Current Use: Grazing Land

Proposed Use: Residential

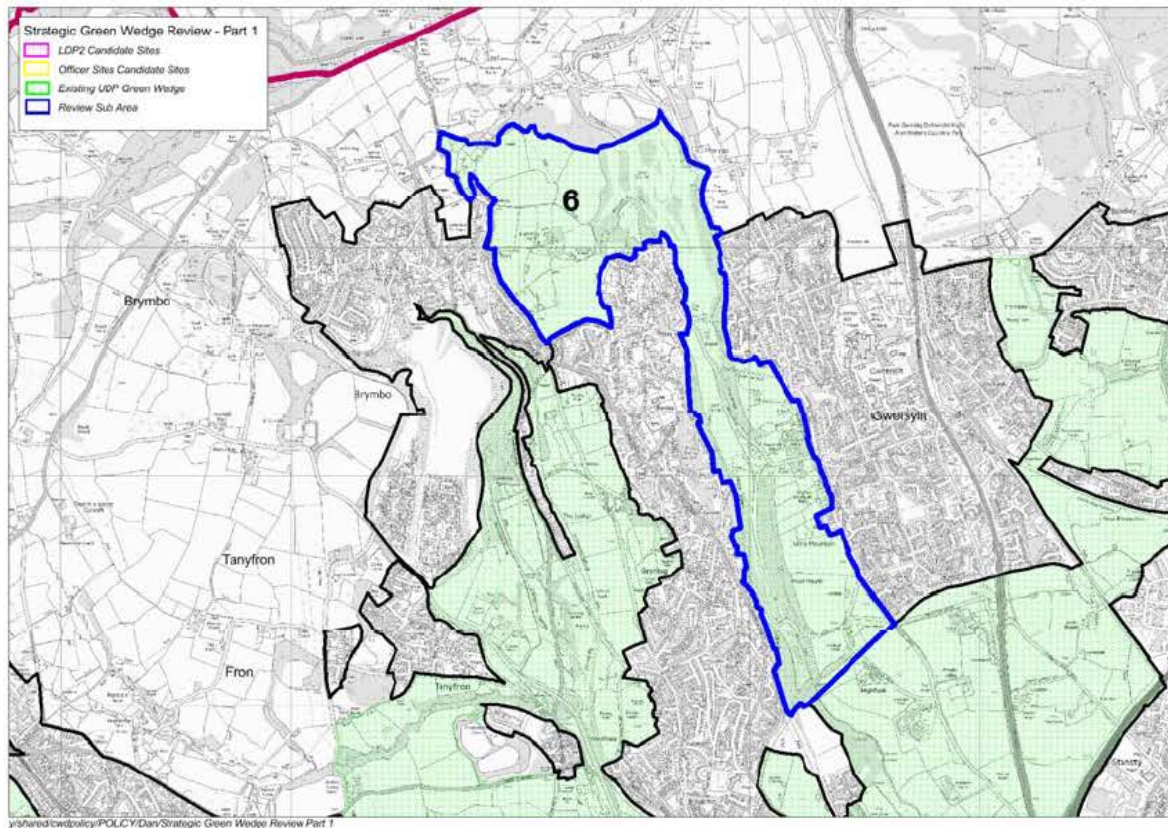
Small Sites: No

Large Sites: Yes

Comments: The site complies with the Council's Preferred Strategy, however there are site constraints that are unlikely to be overcome to allow the site to be developed.



Area 6: Moss Valley



River valley located between Gwersyllt and Broughton. The area extends to the edge of Moss valley Golf Course and the area around Bryn Mally Hall Farm in the north to the southern edge of the Moss Valley Country Park.

Area 6 – Moss Valley	
Planning Policy Wales Purpose	Green Wedge characteristics of the area
Prevent the coalescence of large towns and cities with other settlements	Barriers The area is located between the settlement limits of Gwersyllt and Broughton. The steep topography of the valley, which is also heavily wooded, form barriers between the settlement edge and the green wedge beyond. Parts of the designation are set along defensible boundaries namely roads, and as stated above the steep topography of the southern section of the designation creates a barrier to development. There are parts of the designation set along domestic curtilages which are more prone to potential erosion as a result of curtilage land grabs.
	Physical Connection of Settlements The designation sits between the settlements of Gwersyllt, Broughton, and Brymbo (to the north west). Dependant on scale, development in the area could result in the physical connection of the two settlements.
	Existing Development Road linkages – Moss Road and some smaller lanes in the northern part of the designation. It is crossed by Poolmouth Road in the south. Urban elements - There are some residential dwellings along Moss Road, and a golf course in the northern part of the designation.
	Topography Moss valley consists of a steep sided valley, the area to the north is more undulating consisting of a golf course and farmland.
	Openness There is a sense of enclosure in the lower part of the Moss Valley due to the steep sided valley and tree coverage, however further north there are wider views and more of a sense of openness.
	Candidate Sites None present.
Conclusion The area of green wedge sits between two settlements that are in very close proximity to each other. At its narrowest the gap between Gwersyllt and Broughton is 0.18km (0.1 miles). Broughton and Brymbo merge into each other at a narrow point along Station Road. The designation is set along defensible boundaries on the whole, although domestic curtilages, which form part of the boundaries are considered less defensible. Whilst development is less apparent in the lower part of the designation (as a result of the topography and tree coverage). The northern part (where the gap between Gwersyllt and Broughton is at its narrowest) development on the edges of the two settlements are in very close proximity. The result is that this area would be particularly sensitive to development, which could further reduce a sense of openness. Overall it is considered that the designation does serve a function in avoiding coalescence between Gwersyllt, Broughton, and Brymbo.	
Manage urban form through controlled expansion of urban areas	Ribbon development No
	Isolated development (Candidate Site Specific) N/A

	Well connected N/A
	Round off the settlement pattern (Candidate Site specific) N/A
	Provide a good existing barrier The designation is largely set along defensible boundaries. The topography of the moss valley acts as a specific barrier to development. There are parts of the existing designation which are set along domestic curtilages, which are more susceptible to erosion.
Conclusion The designation is partly set along defensible boundaries including roads and settlement limits. The large area of settlement boundary bordering the area of green wedge can result in the erosion of these boundaries as is often the case in urban-rural fringe areas. Topography in part of the designation would seem to effectively manage urban form without the need for a specific land use designation. Despite this, the boundaries do play an important role in the management of urban form in the area. In particular where the gap between the settlements is at its narrowest in the north.	
Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.	Defensible Boundary The steep sided topography of the valley would seem to preclude development; however there may potential for encroachment from the settlement edges where they consist of the edges of residential curtilages.
	Other Countryside Characteristics The area contains Local Wildlife Sites and individual and areas of TPO.
	Existing Buildings (Candidate Site Specific) N/A
Conclusion The defensible boundaries are the key characteristic which assists in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment. The open character of the areas between the settlements in the north of the area being of particular relevance.	
Protect the setting of an urban area.	Proximity to Area of Built Heritage No
Conclusion The designation in this location does not serve this purpose.	

Assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. Settlement Limits - This is controlled by settlement limits and the principles of PPW in relation to the preference for the reuse of land.	
N/A	Other Designations / Relevant Planning History The area includes Local Wildlife Sites and a large part of the area is a Country Park. Erection of 20 dwellings including access (P/2015/0607 – granted) land south of Chestnut Court, Summerhill.

Overall Conclusion: Area 6 – Moss Valley The gaps between the various settlements (Gwersyllt, Broughton, and Brymbo) are narrow, with all settlements in close proximity to each other, as such the risk of coalescence and the impact upon the openness of the area are more pronounced. The close proximity of settlements means that the relative openness of the green wedge is important, and the openness would not be maintained to the same extent should it be covered by a general open countryside policy. The designation therefore serves the function of preventing coalescence in the area, and managing development in order to maintain openness. The designation is set along defensible boundaries, serving to manage the urban form in this location and separating settlements in close proximity to each other. It also serves to safeguard the countryside from encroachment. It is therefore recommended that the green wedge designation be retained in this location, with the purpose of preventing the coalescence of settlements and maintaining the openness of the area between settlements.

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