

Report to Planning for Committee
Park Road, Rhosymedra
23/12/15

The site lies within a well-established, popular, residential area of Wrexham with the majority of the dwellings in the vicinity being privately owned and generally consisting of two, three and four bed houses.

Rhosymedre is six miles from Wrexham town centre where supermarkets, shopping centres, schools, university, leisure centres, train stations, bus station and public open spaces/facilities are provided. The general locality of the site provides more local facilities with Ruabon, Cefn Mawr, Rhosllanerchrugog and Chirk being the main neighbouring settlements. The area has a number of small local businesses and shops in addition to the relatively new 24hr Tesco supermarket within 0.4 miles from the site. A new primary school was completed in 2012 and the nearest train station is Ruabon being approximately 1.2 miles and which also provides a bus terminal. The secondary school is located in Ruabon.

Wales & West have entered into a package deal with Saxonby Homes who have designed the scheme to ensure compliance with the Development Quality Requirements (DQR) and have used the Association's pattern book of designs. The architect working for the developer is one the Association uses regularly and they are very familiar with the Association's requirements.

The scheme mix provides a range of property types given the scale of the development.

The property mix is for 30 Units of Affordable Housing:

6	x	2 Bed 3 Person Bungalows
1	x	2 Bed 3 Person Bungalow Full Wheelchair
18	x	2 Bed 4 Person Houses
5	x	3 Bed 5 Person Houses

Demand and need analyses

The opportunity to include a number of bungalows is welcomed as such provision is often difficult to achieve on sites due to the need to maximize density to achieve land values.

There are currently the following numbers on the Wrexham Councils Social Housing Waiting List for Rhosymedre:-

1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
98	36	13	1	148

Including the settlements in closest proximity to the site, the waiting list data is as follows:-

1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
594	264	110	21	989

Hometrack data indicates a growth in housing demand for smaller properties however it also indicates the property prices for homeownership for entry level two bed and three bed houses are in many areas beyond the reach of those on the average household income for the region. The private rented sector is very strong with current rents considerably higher than social rents.

In seeking the advice of local lettings agents, there is evidence of an acute shortage of good privately rented accommodation in the area with empty properties being re-let very quickly. Currently there are no properties to rent privately in Rhosymedre. The closest properties available for private rental are in Ruabon where three bed houses are around £650pcm, but only four are currently available.

There are no two bed properties available in the Rhosymedre or Ruabon. Local housing allowance rates for the 2015/16 financial year are £460pcm for two bed accommodations and £537 for three beds.

An analysis of existing stock in Rhosymedre has been undertaken to ensure that the proposed mix is not saturating the area with the same property types. There are 164 Local Authority properties in total within Rhosymedre, of which 91 properties are one bed accommodation. 43 properties are two bed accommodation and 30 properties are three bed accommodation. Data has also been obtained to establish lettings information and this informs us that in a 12 month period there were only nine relets (5.4% of the total stock). There are no two bed affordable bungalows in the town.

Taking all the above information into account, Housing Services would welcome investment into the area by Wales and West and Saxonby Homes to provide Affordable Social Housing Properties in an area of particularly high housing need and provided specifically for local people.

The scheme makes good use of a disused brownfield site to deliver a mixed community of affordable homes for rent and contributing to provide a long term solution to the demand for rented accommodation on the council's social housing waiting list.

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