



Appendix17
Extract from
LDP(2) -
Section 5.1
(Spatial
Options)

Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 - 2028

Preferred Strategy



FEBRUARY 2016

housing | open space | employment | community | transport | education

Chapter 5: Spatial Options

5.1 Overview

Alongside deciding on the actual level of growth needed over the Plan period, the LDP must also put forward a clear Spatial Strategy identifying where this growth should be located. It is therefore necessary to translate this projected level of growth (chapter 4) into broad geographical locations.

The Spatial Strategy is guided by the following:

- LDP Vision and Objectives;
- Sustainability objectives identified in National Planning Policy⁽⁷³⁾;
- the generation and assessment of spatial options in the SA;
- an understanding of the development potential of the County Borough (sites assessment)⁽⁷⁴⁾; and
- Background Paper 2: Settlement Hierarchy and Distribution of Development (February 2016)

Our own evidence base⁽⁷⁵⁾ demonstrates that we have a limited supply of deliverable brownfield sites remaining within existing settlement limits across the Borough and this is a diminishing resource. It will be necessary therefore to bring forward greenfield sites on land adjoining existing settlements in the most sustainable locations to address the identified housing and employment land needs over the Plan period. This will be the case regardless of the levels of growth.

5.2 Sustainable Development Patterns

Planning Policy Wales states that Development Plans should secure a sustainable settlement pattern which meets the needs of the economy, the environment and health⁽⁷⁶⁾.

The key messages regarding sustainable settlement patterns include locating development to reduce the need to travel by car by maximising accessibility to employment opportunities, services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport. Development should be directed to existing urban areas which are well served by public transport, and which benefit from concentrations of jobs, facilities and services. It is also important to recognise within the context of delivering sustainable development, that there are differing priorities for urban and rural areas⁽⁷⁷⁾ which also need to be reflected in the Preferred Strategy.

Based on sustainable development objectives⁽⁷⁸⁾, the Settlement Hierarchy and Development Potential Background Paper⁽⁷⁹⁾, sets out a sustainable settlement hierarchy which has been used to inform and generate options⁽⁸⁰⁾ in respect of the location of new growth in the County Borough. This evidence⁽⁸¹⁾ has assessed each settlement on the

73 <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/140731chapter-4-en.pdf>

74 See background paper 4 and Candidate Sites Assessment Methodology (February 2016) <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

75 Urban Capacity Sites Update (2015) – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

76 Chapter 4, Section 4.7, Para 4.7.2, Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016) <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/140731chapter-4-en.pdf>

77 Section 4.6, Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016) <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/140731chapter-4-en.pdf>

78 Section 4.4, Chapter 4, Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016) <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/140731chapter-4-en.pdf>

79 Background Paper 2: Settlement Hierarchy and Development Potential (February 2016 – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>)

80 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (Preferred Strategy) Appendix F (2015) – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

81 Background Paper 2: Settlement Hierarchy and Development Potential (February 2016 – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>)

basis of existing facilities and their capacity, infrastructure, employment opportunity, planning constraints, viability and opportunities for new development which has been informed by the sites assessment process⁽⁸²⁾.

A tiered approach (based on the existing settlement limits as defined in the current Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011) is used to group settlements with similar characteristics in terms of facilities and services. This information, combined with development opportunities, constraints and viability has then been used to direct development to appropriate locations, and ensure sustainable and proportionate growth in the most appropriate areas. Figure 4 shows the findings of the settlement hierarchy and the following provides a brief narrative of the tiers within the hierarchy:

Tier 1: Primary Key Settlement – Settlement which has a critical role to play in the success of the region, and which acts as an important service and employment centre for surrounding settlements and including the rural hinterland;

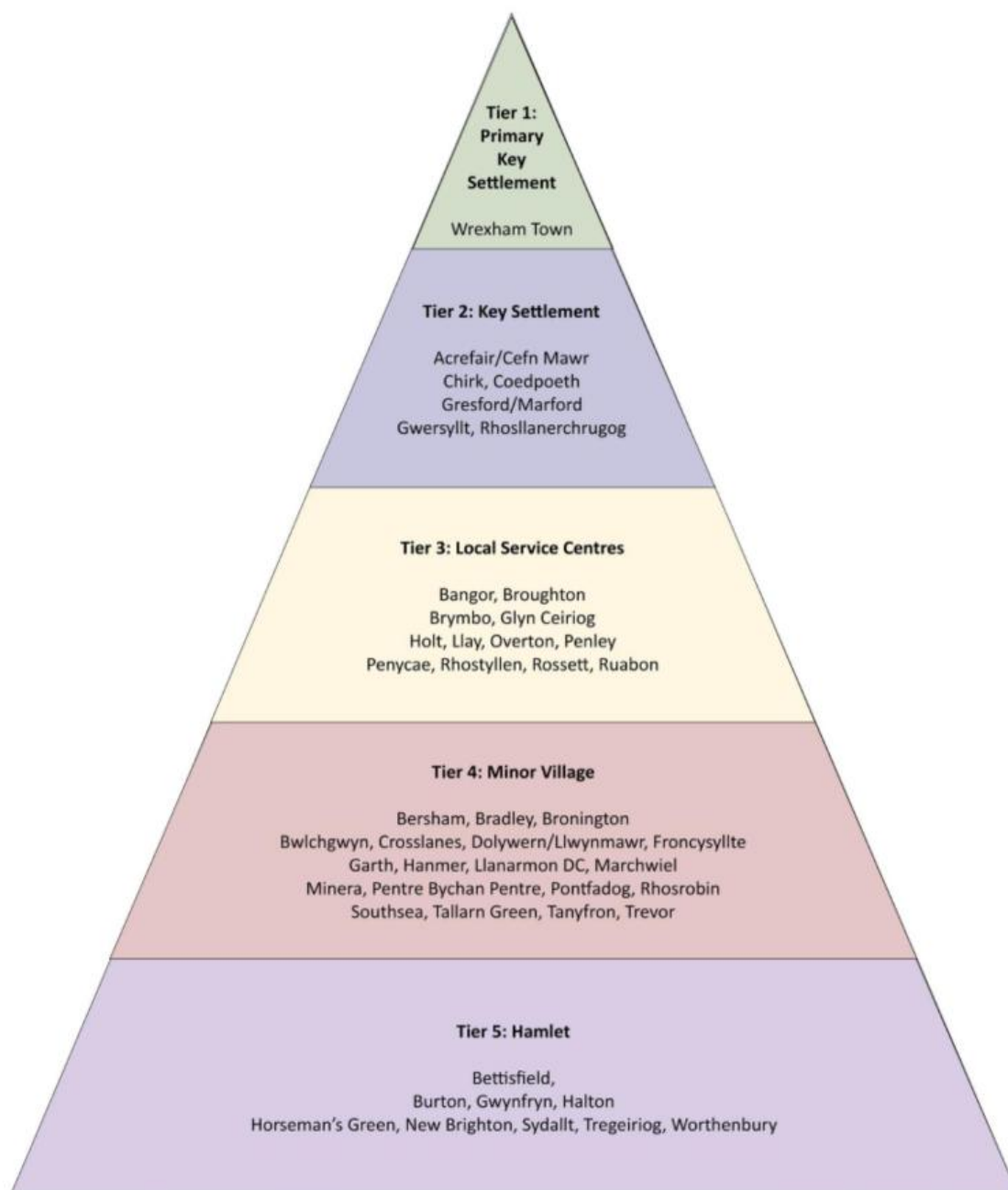
Tier 2: Key Settlement – Settlements which support communities, but which are dependent upon the Primary Key Settlement for some key amenities. Some services are present and they have good access to public transport;

Tier 3: Local Service Centres – Settlements with fewer services and which have relatively good accessibility by non-car modes.

Tier 4: Minor Village – Settlements with limited facilities with some access by non-car modes;

Tier 5: Hamlet – Settlements with no services and limited or no access by non-car modes.

82 Background Paper 5: Site Assessment Methodology (February 2016) and and Sites Register (February 2016) <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>



Settlement Hierarchy

Settlement hierarchy⁽⁸³⁾

5.3 Spatial Options

Based on the settlement hierarchy work, three alternative options were presented to Key Stakeholders for consideration during the Issues and Options consultation⁽⁸⁴⁾. These options have also been tested against the SA framework⁽⁸⁵⁾.

83 (source – para 5.4, Background Paper 2: Settlement Hierarchy and Development potential (February 2016) <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>)

84 LDP Vision, Objectives and Strategic Growth and Spatial Options, March 2015 <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

85 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (Preferred Strategy) Appendix F (2015) – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

It was acknowledged that there could be potential to arrive at a Preferred Strategy that combined an element of more than one Option presented, or indeed an alternative option if identified through the consultation process⁽⁸⁶⁾.

Each option considered different distributions of growth and explored the extent to which they could deliver sustainable development. Each was underpinned by the aim of maximising the use of brownfield land within existing settlements despite this diminishing resource.

All three options (as presented in table 2) proposed a significant amount of new development being located in and around Wrexham Town and on Wrexham Industrial Estate (employment use), directly supporting the aims of the Wales Spatial Plan⁽⁸⁷⁾. The submission of candidate sites⁽⁸⁸⁾ has helped to inform the broad location of potential growth areas within each option but precise site boundaries were not defined. A broad outline of potential areas of change was identified as part of the consultation and it is possible that the Deposit Plan may include amended or different allocations to those sites submitted following the assessment process.

Each option is however reliant on the allocation and delivery of Key Strategic Sites (KSS)⁽⁸⁹⁾. These sites are considered to be fundamental to delivering the Plan strategy and are defined as single sites which are capable of delivering in excess of 500 new homes and / or significant employment provision. Indication is also provided on how it is intended to address the provision of non-strategic sites (both housing and employment) which will form part of the deposit Plan within the strategic policy section (see chapter 6) below.

A summary of the options presented to Key Stakeholders is provided in Table 2. Each option will involve the loss of the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land as well as mineral resources. This was made explicit during the stakeholder consultation⁽⁹⁰⁾ and further detail in relation to this can be found in the SA⁽⁹¹⁾.

Option 1	Option 2	Options 3
Primary Key Settlement (Wrexham Town) Focussed – including Key Strategic Sites Concentrates the majority of new growth in and around Wrexham Town	Primary Key Settlement (Wrexham Town) – including Key Strategic Sites and Key Settlements Spreads the growth between Wrexham Town and the Key Settlements in the County Borough;	Primary Key Settlement (Wrexham Town) - including Key Strategic Sites, Key Settlements and Local Service Centres Being a combination of option 1 and 2 but also including growth in some of the Local Service Centres which help to sustain the more rural areas of the County Borough

Table 2: Summary of Spatial Options presented in the LDP Vision, Objectives and Strategic Growth and Spatial Options (March 2015)

86 Para 5.25, LDP Vision, Objectives and Strategic Growth and Spatial Options, March 2015

87 http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/planning/ldp2/march_2015/vision_document_2015.pdf

88 See separate Sites Register (February 2016) <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/130701wales-spatial-plan-2008-update-en.pdf>

89 See separate Sites Register (February 2016) <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

90 Initial Sustainability Report (Preferred Strategy) 2015, Appendix F <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

91 Pages 15, 17, 18 and 20 LDP Vision, Objectives and Strategic Growth and Spatial Options, March 2015 <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

92 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (Preferred Strategy) Appendix F (2015) – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

5.4 Consultation and collaborative working findings

The consultation revealed⁽⁹²⁾ that there was no agreed consensus over the spatial growth options, with Options 2 and 3 (table 2) receiving equal preference (28%). A small number of variations to the options and a further option were proposed in response to this part of the questionnaire. However, no detailed supporting evidence was submitted to justify why these alternative options should be given consideration or be favoured at this stage.

5.5 Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

Each option (table 2) has been assessed against the SA framework⁽⁹³⁾. Of the three spatial options presented to stakeholders, the SA shows that option 3 (table 2) provides a more sustainable approach to the delivery of the plan. With viability, deliverability and sustainability constraints varying significantly throughout the County Borough, the greater flexibility presented by this option provides opportunities to select sites to deliver the LDP vision and objectives while avoiding and mitigating the worst impacts, particularly on the environment. The generation of options undertaken as part of the SA has enabled a further refinement to the strategy by identifying minor villages in tier 4 (Rhosrobin, Marchwiel, Bronnington, Southsea and Bradley) that could also help avoid negative environmental impacts and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development⁽⁹⁴⁾.

5.6 The Councils Preferred Spatial Strategy

Based on the findings of the SA⁽⁹⁵⁾, the Councils Preferred Spatial Strategy is a hybrid of option 3 (table 2) which was presented to Key Stakeholders during the Issues and Options consultation⁽⁹⁶⁾.

The Preferred Spatial Strategy concentrates development in the Primary Key Settlement (PKS, tier 1) of Wrexham Town and Wrexham Industrial Estate through the regeneration of brownfield land along with the release of key strategic greenfield site allocations (mixed use housing and community facilities, and employment) on the edge of settlement. As well as assessing options for Key Strategic Site (KSS) allocations⁽⁹⁷⁾ it has also been necessary to a review and amend the boundary of the current Green Wedge (Green Barrier) designation⁽⁹⁸⁾ on land surrounding Wrexham Town to enable the release of the identified Key Strategic Sites for mixed use housing and community facilities. The Green Wedge review⁽⁹⁹⁾ sets out the methodology used to assess the existing designation and makes a number of recommendations for changes which will be reflected in full at the Deposit Plan stage.

The proximity and accessibility of Wrexham Industrial Estate (WIE) to Wrexham Town provides sustainable opportunities for people to live and work in the same area, reducing the need to travel and commute out of the Borough to access employment opportunities elsewhere.

In addition, the spatial strategy also directs a proportion of new development to those settlements identified as Key Settlements (KS, tier 2) and Local Service Centres (LSC, tier 3) in the Settlement Hierarchy as appropriate in terms of the function, form, facilities

92 Issues and Options Consultation Report of Findings (June 2015) <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

93 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (Preferred Strategy, 2015) – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

94 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report 2015 (Preferred Strategy) Appendix F, 2015 –

<http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

95 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (Preferred Strategy, 2015) – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

96 LDP Vision, Objectives and Strategic Growth and Spatial Options, March 2015 <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

97 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (Preferred Strategy) Appendix F, 2015 – <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

98 Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011)

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/planning_portal/plan_policy/wxm_udp.htm

99 Strategic Green Wedge Review: Stage 1 (February 2016) <http://wrexhamldp.wrexham.gov.uk>

and viability of those settlements to deliver new development. Some settlements within the Minor Villages (tier 4) are also deemed suitable for development (Rhosrobin, Marchwiel, Bronnington, Southsea and Bradley) due to their proximity and relative accessibility by non-car modes to Wrexham Town.

It does not necessarily follow however that development will take place in all the settlements identified within the Councils Preferred Spatial Strategy. There may well be some settlements which are unsuitable for development and as such do not offer any opportunities for growth due to significant planning constraints (e.g. flooding) or infrastructure capacity issues (e.g. sewerage disposal). Additionally, there may be sites which are suitable for development in some of these settlements but due to viability constraints, may not present realistic and deliverable solutions to accommodating new growth in the County Borough over the Plan period; and their allocation could risk the soundness of the Plan.

The next stage is to gather evidence to support detailed allocation of non-strategic sites in the Deposit Plan and any necessary changes to the settlement limits in those areas of change. The ongoing site assessment process will play a key part in this and will provide evidence to justify the selection of sites and settlement amendments. Site allocations and changes to the settlement limits will be tested against the SA framework.

Question 4

Do you agree that the Councils Preferred Spatial Strategy presents the best opportunities to deliver sustainable development in the County Borough?

If No, please tell us what other alternative options should the Council be pursuing with reference to the available evidence base and the tests of soundness?

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