



Client. North Wales Housing Association

Job No. 14011

Date. November 2015



**Social Housing Development
Bonc Wen, Rhosllannerchrugog
Design and Access Statement**



CONTROL SHEET

The following table lists the current issue number of each section and appendix contained within this document. An update of this control sheet will be issued with any updated Document

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1.0 Context

1.1 Physical Context

- 1.1.1 The application site consists of a parcel of land located at the centre of a shopping and residential area in Rhosllannerchrugog, Wrexham and lies within the settlement limit as defined by the current Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011.
- 1.1.2 The site is currently a Local Authority car park and cleared land formerly occupied by the Local Authorities Local Housing Office and a Community Centre. The Community Centre remained on site until circa 1989 and the Housing Office remained in use until it was demolished in early 2015. The site was identified by Wrexham County Borough Council for the provision of affordable housing in 2010.
- 1.1.3 The application site was granted Outline Planning Consent for Residential Development on 26 July 2010; Application code RHO P/2010/0243.
- 1.1.4 The aerial photograph below identifies the application site in the context of its surroundings.



1.2 Social Context

- 1.2.1 The proposed development will offer additional housing within the existing residential area.
- 1.2.2 The area includes a good range of community facilities and services including a Primary School and also has easy public footpath access to an area of public open space to the rear of the site.
- 1.2.3 The site is identified as an urban village in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan constituting an important centre for convenience shopping from a relatively small local catchment area and being capable of supporting some additional growth, particularly on derelict or underused land.
- 1.2.4 The site is positioned within an accessible location as identified in Section 4 of this Statement making it ideally suited for residential development as well as complying with the aims of National and Local Planning Policy in terms of ensuring that new development is accessible by sustainable transport methods.

1.3 Economic Context

- 1.3.1 Given that the proposal is for residential development it will not lead to any significant economic benefits in the long term. However, in the short term, the proposal will provide employment for those contracted to carry out the construction works.

1.4 Policy Context

- 1.4.1 The National Planning Policy Guidance that has been taken into consideration in relation to the proposals is set out within;
 - Planning Policy Wales (Edition 7, July 2014);
 - Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2: Planning and Affordable Housing;
 - Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Noise;
 - Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design;
 - Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18: Transport.
- 1.4.2 The Local Planning Policy Guidance that has been taken into consideration in relation to the proposals is set out in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011 which was adopted in February 2005. The proposals fully consider the guidance contained within;
 - **Strategic Policy PS1**
New development for housing, employment, and community services will be directed to within defined settlement limits/employment areas.

- **Strategic Policy PS2**
Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
- **Strategic Policy PS3**
Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land, in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible.
- **Strategic Policy PS4**
Development should maintain the existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated with the existing transport network to help reduce the overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car.
- **Planning Strategy – Housing**
Paragraph 3.7 advises that the aim is to allocate most new housing development to a range of sites within and adjacent to existing built up areas; to make optimum use of previously developed or vacant land; to make use of spare capacity in infrastructure and services; and to focus on locations with reasonable public transport, walking and cycling links.
- **Policy GDP1 Development Objectives**
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.
- **Policy EC13 Surface Water Run-Off**
Development which would result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the water environment due to additional surface water run-off will not be permitted.
- **Policy H7 Affordable Housing**
Where there is a proven lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, the Council will negotiate with developers to provide an element of affordable housing in new proposals of 25 or more homes.
- **Policy T8 Parking**
Development granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby. Special regard will be paid to the following;
 - The availability of public transport
 - The proximity of public car parking
 - The proximity to local services and facilities
 - Road safety hazards arising from on-street parking
- **Outline Planning Application Code No. RHO P/2010/0243**
Outline Planning Consent for residential development was granted for the site on 26 July 2010 and although now expired the Conditions therein have been acknowledged within the proposals and especially with regard to the

provision of 100% affordable housing and the retention of 42 parking spaces in the existing car park.

2.0 Existing Usage

2.1 The site consists of:

- Public car park supporting residents, businesses and visitors to the village;
- Vacant land which formally contained a Community Centre (thought to have been demolished in 1989);
- Vacant land formally occupied by the Local Authority's Local Housing Office which was vacated in late 2014 and demolished in early 2015.

2.2 The proposal includes for the development of the vacant land while retaining the majority of the car park for continued public use.

3.0 Design Principles

3.1 Planning Policy Wales and TAN 12 are the principle planning documents of the Welsh Government which set out the context for the consideration and evaluation of all types of development. The main thrust of the documents is to promote sustainable development by ensuring that the planning system provides for an adequate and continuous supply of available and suitable land to meet society's needs in a way that is consistent with overall sustainable principles.

3.2 Planning Policy Wales also seeks to promote resource efficient settlements that minimise land-take and urban sprawl, locates development so as to minimise the demand for travel, ensures that all communities have good quality housing for their needs in safe neighbourhoods and promotes access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open space.

3.3 As outlined in Section 1.2 above the proposed site is located at the centre of an existing residential area offering a good range of community facilities and easy access to public transport. The site is, therefore, ideally suited for residential development as well as complying with the aims of National and Local Planning Policy in terms of ensuring that new development is accessible by sustainable transport methods.

3.4 The principle of the design is to provide a combination of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings with an access road suitable for adoption by Wrexham County Borough Council Highways.

3.5 Analysis of the surrounding area identifies that existing residential properties are predominantly two storey, semi-detached dwellings constructed from traditional materials with facing brickwork and rendered walls, slate and tiled roofs and timber and Upvc windows and doors. Existing plot boundaries are from brick walls, timber

panel fencing and hedging which are generally low level to road frontages offering a sense of enclosure whilst maintaining an open appearance.

- 3.6 The design reflects this local vernacular and is considered to be in-keeping and complimentary with the built form of the surrounding areas.
- 3.7 In terms of topography the site has a 1.2m level change rising from the car park towards the rear (north west) boundary. The site of the former Community Centre is flat with a retaining wall to two sides. The proposals include for a steady gradient to the central access road giving access to the dwellings at various levels by the inclusion of strategically placed retaining walls.
- 3.8 The layout has been developed to maximise the through views to the former tree lined railway line beyond which forms part of the local footpath network.
- 3.9 As part of the design process consultation has taken place with Wrexham County Borough Council's Highways Engineers to ensure compliance with the Borough's adoptable road standards and to ensure the layout provides suitable access for refuse vehicles. Consultations have also taken place with Wrexham County Borough Council's Planning, Asset and Economic Development and Housing Departments to ensure that the proposals meet with current, local, social housing needs, presents a scheme that fits well within the application site and has a positive effect upon the amenity of the surrounding residential developments.

4.0 Accessibility – Vehicles and Pedestrians

- 4.1 Guidance outlined in Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18 has been considered in the preparation of the proposed residential development.
- 4.2 Planning Policy Wales seeks to promote resource efficient settlements that minimise land-take and urban sprawl, locates development so as to minimise the demand for travel, ensures that all communities have good quality housing for their needs in safe neighbourhoods and promotes access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open space.
- 4.3 Planning Policy Wales also advises that Local Authorities should consider the issue of accessibility for all including the needs of those with visual and hearing impairments and those with limited mobility, the elderly and people with young children.
- 4.4 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18 aims to ensure that new development is located where there is, or will be, good access by public transport, walking and cycling thereby minimising the need for travel and fostering social inclusion.
- 4.5 TAN 18 also identifies that it is important to consider people's needs in terms of car parking and in particular to ensure that adequate numbers of suitably designed parking spaces are provided in appropriate locations.
- 4.6 Local Planning Policy T8 'Parking' advises that developments granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby. Special regard will be paid to the following;

- The availability of public transport nearby
 - The proximity of public car parking
 - The proximity to local services and facilities
 - Road safety hazards and amenity considerations arising from on-street parking in the vicinity of the site
- 4.7 The previous Outline Planning Consent included a Condition stipulating that the existing public car park should facilitate 42 parking spaces together with a footpath to both sides of the road giving access to the development. This Condition has been reviewed as part of the pre-application consultations with the Council's Planning and Highways Departments and has been reaffirmed as a continued requirement. This has been incorporated as shown on the site layout plan. The access road zone crossing the existing car park, to give access to the development, will be upgraded to adoptable standards and will incorporate a drop-off lay-by for the existing recycling compound. This access road zone has been positioned to maximise the continued and effective use of the car park.
- 4.8 Previous Highway improvements have provided adequate visibility and awareness splays at the entrance to the site from the junction between Bonc Wen and Brook Street.
- 4.9 The central access road within the development area will be constructed to adoptable standards and includes a turning head suitable for refuse vehicles.
- 4.10 The application site is accessible by a range of transport methods including private and public transport. Bus stops are available in Market Street and Hall Street all of which are only a few minutes walk away. These are shown on the aerial photograph above.
- 4.11 The Welsh Government document Development Quality Requirements, Design Standards and Guidance, July 2005, advises that to fit sympathetically into the general environment car parking should not exceed 1 space per dwelling provided that there are no specific planning requirements stating otherwise.
- 4.12 There are local planning requirements and Local Planning Guidance Note No. 16 'Parking standards' advises of a maximum car parking standard of 1.5 spaces for a one bedroom dwelling, 2 spaces for a two bedroom dwelling and 3 spaces for a three bedroom dwelling.
- 4.13 Car parking has been provided generally in accordance with this local guidance with the one bedroom dwellings each having 1 space, the two bedroom dwellings each having 2 spaces and the three bedroom dwellings also having 2 spaces. All parking spaces are off-road and do not encroach onto or obstruct the main access road and footways.
- 4.14 Overall the proposals car parking provision is 18 spaces for the 11 dwellings and equates to a dwelling car parking provision of 78% of that advised as a maximum in the Local Planning Guidance. Due to the close proximity of public transport and the adjacent public car park this slightly reduced car parking provision is considered fully justifiable and appropriate for the development site.

- 4.15 All dwellings are provided with secure cycle storage/parking facilities. Each 2 and 3 bedroom dwelling is provided with 2 secure and private cycle parking spaces whereas each 1 bedroom dwelling is provided with 1.5 cycle parking spaces in a secure communal shelter.

5.0 Accessibility - Movements to, from and within the Dwellings

- 5.1 The approach to the new dwellings will offer clear and flat access, maximum gradient of 1:20, from the private and communal car parking areas and to the dwellings themselves.
- 5.2 Sufficient clear widths will be provided to door openings and corridors to meet current Building Regulations.
- 5.3 Toilet facilities will be provided to the ground floor of each dwelling the layout of which will comply with current Building Regulations and BS8300. These facilities will be of sufficient size to allow for the future provision of an accessible shower in accordance with the Lifetime Homes Design Guide.
- 5.4 The three bedroom bungalow (Unit 1) has been designed to be wheelchair accessible and will include increased circulation space in corridors and rooms, adjustable height fittings and worktops in the kitchens and a knock out panel for the possible future provision of a ceiling hoist between the principal bedroom and the bathroom.

6.0 Proposed Character

- 6.1 The design process included an analysis of the context of the application site. This analysis informed the design process and as such it is considered that the proposal offers development that complements the character of the surrounding area.
- 6.2 The aim has been to design a development that is in-keeping with the existing features of the area and to enhance the appearance and character of the site generally.
- 6.3 The design reflects the surrounding area with dwellings reflecting the existing street scene of semi-detached and terraced two storey properties.
- 6.4 Car parking has been located at the front of each dwelling ensuring residents' cars are overlooked from the property in accordance with the principles of Secure by Design. All car parking is off-road.
- 6.5 Boundary lines have been clearly defined to the rear of the dwellings but with a more open feel to the frontages reminiscent of the local street scene.
- 6.6 The density and spacing of the dwellings reflects the constraints imposed by existing buildings and is in line with Wrexham County Borough Council's Planning Guidance Note No. 21 'Space around Dwellings'.

- 6.7 The proposal, therefore, is considered appropriate for the area and provides eleven dwellings sympathetic to and in character with the adjacent properties and the surrounding area.

7.0 Community Safety

- 7.1 During the design process design measures such as layout, appearance and landscape have been carefully assessed to help to prevent crime. It is proposed that the fully designed scheme will be assessed under the Secure by Design Scheme and the recommendations adhered to.
- 7.2 The following safety measures have been considered as part of the design process;
- Security through natural surveillance; overlooking of car parking areas from habitable room windows;
 - Sense of ownership through clearly defined boundaries between private and public areas;
 - Adequate street lighting for all communal areas;
 - External environment designed to avoid the inadvertent creation of opportunities for crime through, for example, providing hiding places or facilitating access to upper floors of buildings.

8.0 Environmental Sustainability

- 8.1 The site consists generally of made-up ground and due to its historical use as railway sidings there are areas of contamination all as detailed in the following appended reports;

- Desk Study and Site Walkover Report dated September 2014 prepared by Datrys Consulting Engineers;
- Ground Investigation Report Reference: SRL164 dated 27 April 2015 prepared by SRL;
- Geotechnical Design Report dated November 2015 prepared by Datrys Consulting Engineers.

The recommendations included in the Geotechnical Design Report will be strictly followed and the proposed levels allow for minimal disturbance of the contaminated ground and the inclusion of an inert material capping layer and ground gas membranes.

- 8.2 The proposed development will fulfil the requirements of the current Building Regulations in terms of environmental sustainability and also meet Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes Assessment procedure or the equivalent.

8.3 As well as implementing energy efficiency measures to reduce energy demand and carbon omissions to fulfil the Building Regulations, other measures have also been considered including biodiversity and local environment, sustainable materials, water, waste management and sustainable building standards;

- Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction
The development will meet the requirements of the current Building Regulations as well as achieving Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes or the equivalent. Buildings will be detailed with high levels of insulation and good air tightness values to help protect against climate change. Low energy light fittings will be used throughout and the development will be subject to a full SAP Assessment.
- Biodiversity and local environment
The development area of the site is land comprised, predominantly, of hard surfacing. Boundaries comprise of brick walls and timber panel fencing to the north east and south west, a public footpath to the north west and an open car park to the south east. The proposal will return this vacant land to effective use substituting significant areas of hard surfacing with gardens/soft landscaping. The former railway line footpath adjacent to the site offers significant mature landscaping linking visually into the new development.
- Sustainable Materials
Locally sourced, sustainable materials with a low environmental impact will be used where possible. All timber will be sourced from sustainable managed forests and certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.
- Water
The Geotechnical Design Report, included with this Statement, advises that the site is not suitable for the use of soakaways. Surface water disposal, therefore, will follow the principles of SUDS and, via attenuation, will be discharged into the existing combined drainage system at an agreed rate subject to the necessary approvals.
It has been established via the Environment Agency Flood Risk Assessment Service that the site does not lie in a flood zone.
- Waste Management
Appropriate facilities for the sorting, storing and recycling of waste will be included for each dwelling. Wrexham County Borough Council's refuse/recycling collection service is already in place for the surrounding residential areas. The existing neighbourhood recycling compound, adjacent to the car park, will be retained and access improved by the inclusion of a drop-off lay-by.

- Sustainable Building Standards

Nationally recognised and quality assured standards will be used to demonstrate that environmentally sustainable design solutions have been incorporated into the proposed development. These include, but are not limited to, the Code for Sustainable Homes and Lifetime Homes assessment schemes.

9.0 Land Use

9.1 The site consists of:

- Public car park supporting residents, businesses and visitors to the village;
- Vacant land which formally contained a Community Centre (thought to have been demolished in 1989);
- Vacant land formally occupied by the Local Authority's Local Housing Office which was vacated in late 2014 and demolished in early 2015.

9.2 The site lies within the settlement limit as defined by the current Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011 and was identified by Wrexham County Borough Council for the provision of affordable housing in 2010.

10.0 Noise Pollution

10.1 Some noise may be generated during construction works but once complete it is anticipated that the proposed residential use will not create any greater noise levels than that of the previous uses of the site.

11.0 Air Quality

11.1 There may be a limited amount of dust resulting from the construction works.