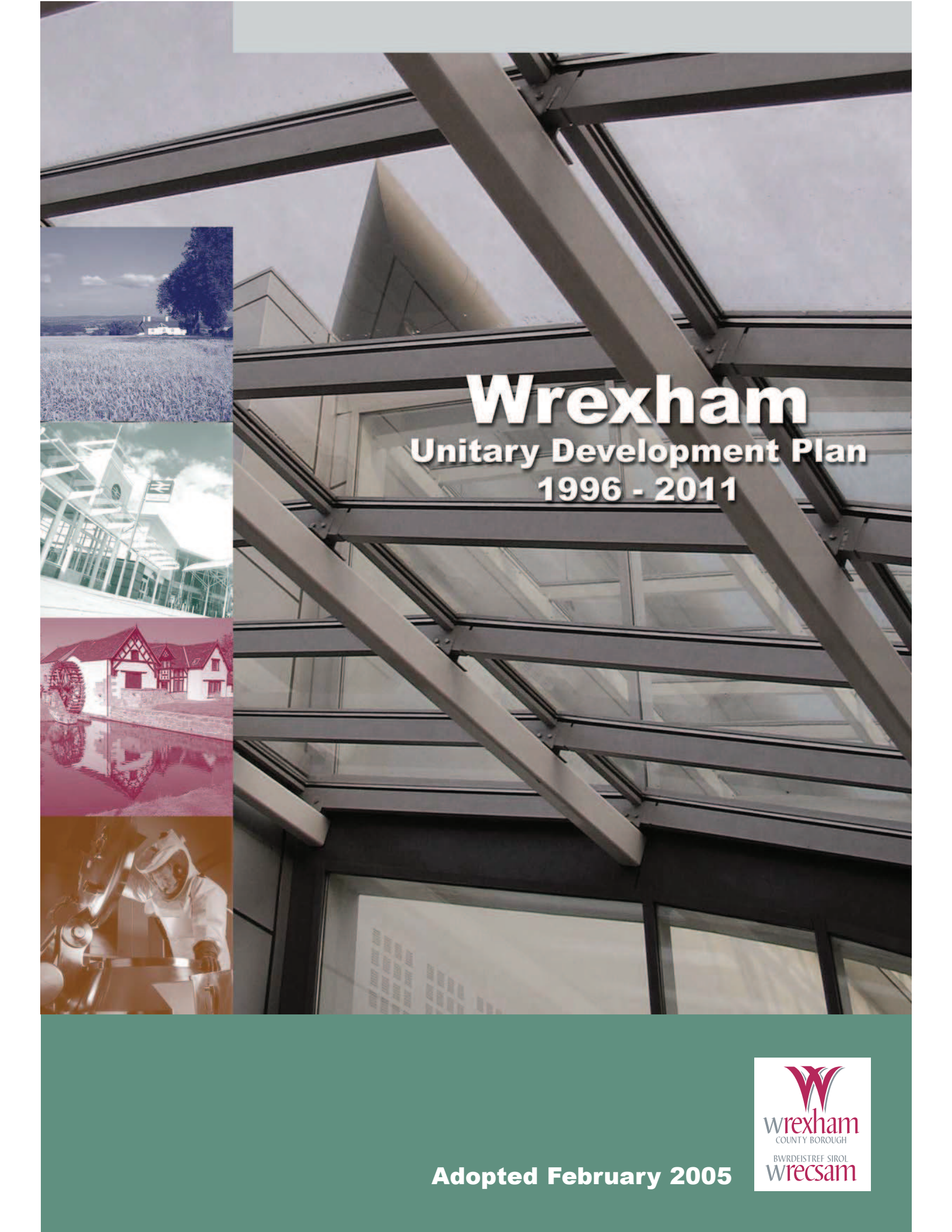




Wrexham

Unitary Development Plan 1996 - 2011

Adopted February 2005



6.13 However, infilling defined as the development of no more than two dwellings in a small gap within a well developed built frontage, may be acceptable where no environmental damage occurs. This definition excludes sites which extend into the countryside beyond the limits of neighbouring curtilages. Infill housing development should reflect the line of older adjacent property. The opportunities for such development in the countryside are very limited.

6.14 In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to allow the erection of a dwelling in the countryside for those, who, by virtue of their particular job requirements need to be available on a full-time basis at their place of work and cannot live in a nearby settlement or building. (i.e. agricultural or forestry key workers). In these cases an essential housing need in connection with the management of the enterprise and the enterprise's long term economic viability must be satisfactorily established; in the case of the agricultural workers' dwellings this will require a specialist evaluation of the need.

Residential Occupancy Conditions

Policy H6 Planning applications for the discharge of conditions restricting the occupancy of dwellings to agricultural or forestry key workers will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that:-

- a) the long term key worker housing need has ceased; and
- b) bona fide attempts over a period of at least twelve months at a price reflecting the existence of the occupancy condition, bearing in mind general market conditions, have been unsuccessfully made to sell or rent the property to persons eligible under the original condition.

6.15 Changes in the scale and character of agriculture may affect the requirement for dwellings for occupation by agricultural or forestry workers. Such dwellings should not be kept vacant simply by virtue of planning



conditions restricting occupancy which have outlived their usefulness. Applications to discharge agricultural or forestry occupancy conditions will be considered realistically in relation to evidence that the long term need for such dwellings is no longer warranted and that unsuccessful attempts have been made over a reasonable period, and at a price reflecting the existence of the occupancy condition, to sell or rent the dwelling.

Affordable Housing

Policy H7 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. The initial benefit of discounted prices will be retained for subsequent and future occupants through the scheme's management by a suitable local housing body with the aid of legal agreements.

Policy H8 In exceptional circumstances, where a proven need from persons unable to compete in the local housing market cannot be met within rural settlement limits, consideration will be given to other limited affordable housing proposals on the edge of settlements where:-

- a) no more than 5 dwellings can be accommodated on a site which forms a logical extension to the settlement limit and the development reflects the surrounding townscape and landscape in form, bulk, design and materials; and
- b) the initial benefit of discounted prices will be retained for subsequent and future occupants through the scheme's management by a suitable local housing body with the aid of legal agreements.

6.16 Increasingly in some parts of the County Borough, there are genuine difficulties in securing an adequate supply of affordable housing for local people. The term "affordable housing" refers to both low cost market and subsidised housing, irrespective of tenure, ownership, or financial arrangements, that will be available to people who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market. The problem is caused by a combination of a significant decline in the supply of Council and other affordable rented housing, and the inward migration of commuters and retired people. These pressures raise property values and effectively squeeze out local people in the housing market. The problems are particularly acute for those on below average earnings or not earning at all.

6.17 An assessment of the level and distribution of demand for affordable housing, tempered by an evaluation of existing opportunities for such facilities, is critical to the application of this policy. Proposals for low cost housing will be directed to sites within settlement limits and the Council will negotiate with developers to provide an element of low cost housing in proposals of 25 or more homes. Due consideration will be given to the size, character and location of the site, particularly with regard to its convenient proximity on foot or cycle to local services and public transport. Proposals will be assessed in relation to the Wrexham Housing Needs Survey (1999). This identified a shortfall of just over 1000 social sector dwellings and nearly 600 private rented sector limits; this demand varies dramatically between local settlements. However, the areas where demand is being generated may not necessarily be the locations where future needs and demands should be, or can be met given the many and varied local planning constraints. The findings of any surveys commissioned by the Council into Local