



Land Planning Ltd.

PLANNING CONSULTANTS



Philip Forster (Planning Case Officer)
Development Control
Wrexham County Borough Council
16 Lord Street
Wrexham
LL11 1LG



20th May 2015

Dear Mr Forster

Re: Application P/2015/0223 Reply to objection letter from Cadnant Planning

With reference to the objection letter from Cadnant Planning, on behalf of local residents, please see our response to each issue raised below.

National Planning Context - Planning Policy Wales (Edition 7, July 2014)

It is acknowledged that the application site lies outside the settlement boundary of Tallarn Green and is therefore considered as being within the open countryside. It is also accepted that under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that determinations must be made in accordance with the current adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A lack of a five year housing supply or an outdated adopted plan can be considered as material considerations.

Paragraph 1.2.1 states the planning system manages the development and use of land in the public interest, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. It should reconcile the needs of development and conservation, securing economy, efficiency and amenity in the use of land, and protecting natural

resources and the historic environment. A well functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development.

The goal of sustainable development is to “enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations.” (Paragraph 4.1.1)

Restricting development and growth can be just as detrimental to the quality of life of residents and future generations, as it reduces the sustainability credentials of villages in terms of available services and facilities. Better services, facilities and economic and social growth and sustainability are created and maintained by enabling gradual growth of settlements over time.

4.1 A definition of sustainable development in Wales

In Wales, this means enhancing the economic, social and environmental well-being of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own generations in ways which:

- promote social justice and equality of opportunity;
- and
- enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its

Limits – using only our fair share of the earth’s resources and sustaining our cultural legacy.

Sustainable development is the process by which we reach the goal of sustainability. The main outcomes are noted as follows:

Sustainable resource use

Within a lifetime of a generation we want to see Wales using only its fair share of the earth’s resources.

Sustaining the environment

Wales has healthy, functioning ecosystems that are biologically diverse and productive and managed sustainably.

A sustainable economy

A resilient and sustainable economy for Wales that is able to develop whilst reducing its use of natural resources and reducing its contribution to climate change.

A sustainable society

Safe, sustainable, attractive communities in which people live and work, have access to services, and enjoy good health and can play their full roles as citizens.

Sustainable development therefore relates to a wide range of objectives, including creating a resilient and sustainable economy, as well as creating attractive communities. Within smaller, rural settlements it is clearly accepted that all accessibility criteria may be not achievable, yet this does not automatically discount these locations as suitable for development (paragraph 9.1.2).

Within Paragraph 1.2.2 it states the planning system must provide for an adequate and continuous supply of land, available and suitable for development to meet society's needs. It has already been noted that Wrexham County Borough Council Joint Housing Land Availability Study 2014 states there is only a 3.1 year supply. This has decreased from the 2013 study which showed a 3.4 year supply. These figures clearly indicate a continuous reduction in housing numbers and therefore the council must meet the requirement in such cases to take appropriate steps to increase the land supply as set out in TAN1.

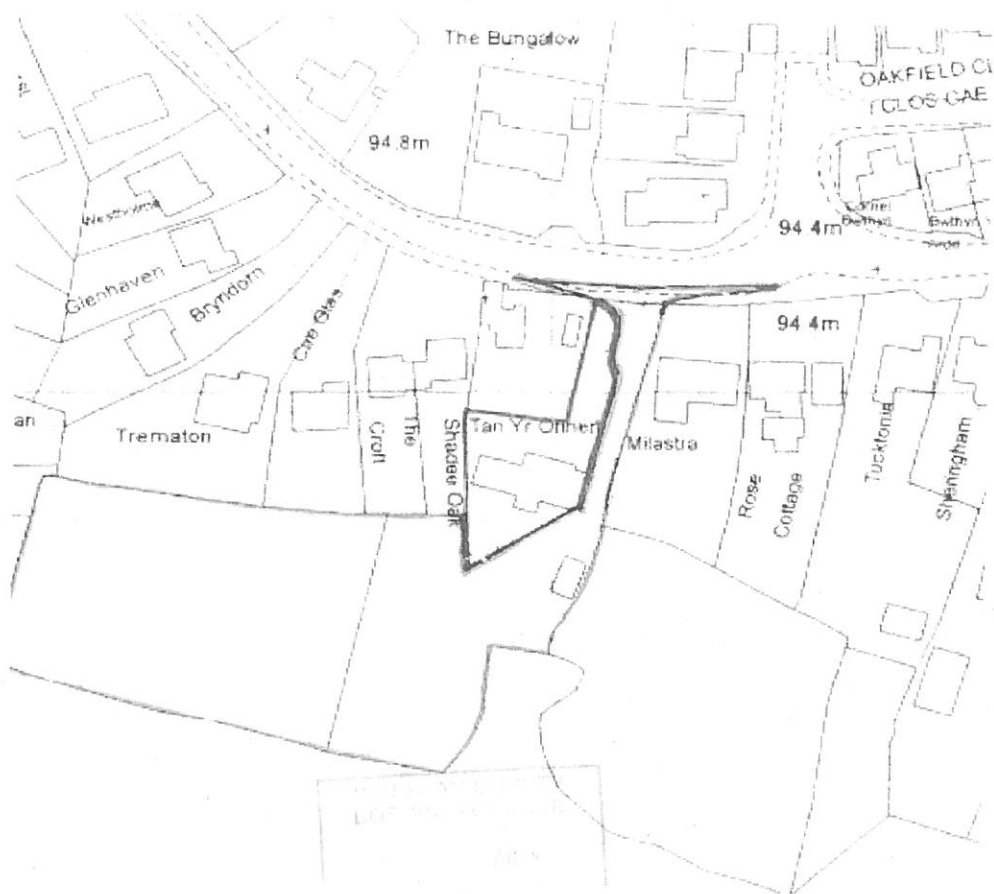
Although previously developed land would be preferential for new development, until sufficient land has been made available for delivery, without enabling some

development on Greenfield sites, the council will be restraining future growth and development and working against the national targets of providing a continuous 5 year supply of land.

Appeal Decision – School Lane, Bronington Ref. P/2014/0387

This appeal decision noted within the objection letter is obviously in a different location and the land in question is very different to the current proposal. This application relates to back land development with no direct road frontage.

Image showing the site at Bronington



The inspector notes that the general layout of the area is linear, following the line of the road and that the proposed development would undermine the areas open rural character by extending the existing cluster into open countryside. This is clearly very

different from the application at Tallarn Green, which has direct road frontage and by careful design, adheres to the existing character and general layout of the area.

The application at Bronington was not turned down purely on the grounds that it is outside the settlement boundary and it is clear to see from the site plan that development in that location would be detrimental to the character of the immediate location. As each application is unique and decided on its own merits, the appeal decision relating to Bronington is of little relevance to the application at Tallarn Green.

Development Plan Policy

Wrexham County Borough Council is preparing the Local Development Plan (LDP) which will replace the current adopted Unitary Development Plan. The emerging LDP is not forecast for adoption until 2018. The current plan is The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 - 2011 as adopted by Wrexham County Borough Council on the 14th February 2005.

The application site is just outside the settlement boundary of Tallarn Green and is therefore considered to be within an area designated as Open Countryside. However, under local policy H5, this site is considered to provide for infill development and as such, this application would accord with local planning policy.

This proposed development is on the edge of the settlement boundary and will help to enhance positive growth of the area, in turn providing economic benefits to the local community. The application site will provide a safe and accessible environment, with sufficient private recreational space, helping to promote healthy communities.

As can be seen from the proposed site plan and location plan, this site would qualify as infill development, being a gap in an otherwise built up frontage. It would not be described as scattered development as the site is between existing housing and on the edge of the settlement boundary. There are houses to either side of the site and due to the character of the area; there is sufficient space for three houses.

Image of the proposed site plan



Aerial View of the site



Development of this site would not 'join up' the two existing settlement areas of Tallarn Green, nor create ribbon development. Development here would retain the character of the area by size and scale of the proposal, along with suitable landscaping. Larger parcels of land to the north west and south east would inhibit to the two settlements from becoming one continuous development. Nonetheless, the traditional character of many rural settlements is often essentially spread out, mainly linear development with sporadic farms and farm buildings and cottages set further back. This proposal would not alter that general character of Tallarn Green.

With regard to policy GDP1, the proposed development will be designed to respect its surroundings and contribute positively to the character of the area, having particular regard to the prevailing layout, landscape, density, scale and height, massing, appearance and materials.

The scale, layout, position and design of the proposed dwellings will have a minimal impact on existing residential properties and complement the existing built environment, including the available amenity space, access and parking provision.

This outline application is reserving design details for future consideration; however the designs will take account of the local environment and a more rural character in housing design would be appropriate here, being on the edge of the village.

Existing boundary treatments will be retained where possible and enhanced by a sympathetic planting and a landscape scheme (to be submitted at a later date). Existing, healthy trees will be retained to ensure that the natural environment, features of the landscape and associated wildlife habitats are disturbed as little as possible and thereby mitigate the impact of the new development, in accordance with policies GDP1 (h) and EC4.

As indicated in the proposed site layout plan, with sufficient space between neighbouring residences, this proposal should not have a significantly detrimental effect on the amenities of adjacent properties. All overlooking distances have been adhered to.

Improvements to the existing access are proposed which will enhance the existing entrance to the site. A shared driveway access to two properties is proposed to reduce the number of new entrances from the highway and comply with visibility distances required to provide safe access to and from the site.

It is acknowledged that Tallarn Green is a small village, but it is on the outskirts of the key service centre of Malpas, which provides access to all main community services and facilities. The site is situated within close proximity to the settlement boundary of Tallarn Green where there are some existing local facilities, including:

- public transport links via local bus services;
- a primary school,
- a village hall with tennis courts,
- a community recreation / football field,
- small, local businesses including a service centre, shop and Post Office at Threapwood within approximately 1 mile.
- The Queen's Head pub, Sarn within walking distance
- Wrexham and Whitchurch are within a 20 minute drive by car or via the flexible taxi bus service run by Wrexham County Borough Council
- The application site has good accessibility to existing immediate and local services

It is also noted within national policy that sustainable modes of transport to all facilities may not be achievable for development in smaller settlements, but that does not automatically prohibit development.

In order for a village to survive it needs to grow and develop. Small scale development offers opportunities to the local community in terms of increased revenue, more people to support local services and facilities to enhance their economic sustainability and employment opportunities, not least, throughout the construction process.

Within Wrexham Unitary Development plan, Policy H7 relates to affordable housing. This policy states that where there is a lack of local affordable housing, the Council will negotiate with developers to provide an element of affordable housing in new proposals of 25 or more homes. Due to the small number of new homes being proposed, affordable housing provision has not been included as part of this application. Nonetheless, should a local need be proven and in order to satisfy national policy with regard to mixed developments in rural areas, then a portion of

affordable housing provision on the site can potentially be included, subject to discussion with the local authority housing team, as required.

Protected Species & Phase 1 Habitat Survey

With regard to the site known as Tallarn Green and the ecological issues that have been raised as objections, the ecological consultant has provided the following statement:

The maps consulted during the desk top survey did not show any ponds within the vicinity. With this being the case a GCN presence or absence survey of the ponds is required. Gaining landowners permission is required and if access is denied to survey the ponds we would produce a GCN mitigation method statement which is designed on the assumption GCN are present at the site.

Other Material Considerations

The removal of a portion of hedgerow would be required to create the proposed access driveways. However, as only a small portion of hedge would be required to be removed, with the remainder being retained, it is unlikely that it would change the character considerably to the detriment of the general appearance of the road.

For such a small scale development as proposed, it could hardly be described as urbanising the village. Moreover, with a careful landscape scheme to include the planting of hedgerows to demarcate dwellings and create landscape buffers, that would soften the built form and reflect the rural character of the immediate location.

With regard to the open outlook of the area, this would not be unduly affected by development of this site as there are no buildings to the south west, leaving open

views over the agricultural land to this outlook, with sporadic development of cottages and farm buildings to the northern aspects, with trees and fields beyond.

Summary & Conclusion

The application site is within an area of open countryside on the edge of the settlement boundary of Tallarn Green. Nonetheless, as Wrexham County Borough Council Joint Housing Land Availability Study 2014 states there is only a 3.1 year supply, the council must take appropriate steps to increase the land supply as set out in TAN1. Until such time as sufficient Brownfield sites become available, some development on Greenfield sites will be required.

National policy requires that such development should adhere to the principles of sustainability. Sustainability refers to social, economic and environmental impacts. The full details of the development are reserved for future consideration, but the dwellings will of course meet all the latest building regulations. The dwellings will be built to comply with Building Regulations, incorporating environmental and energy efficient design features along with some of the latest modern facilities and technology, to include the use of efficient insulation, energy efficient heating and electrical systems and water efficiency, including storing and re-using rain water.

Being within close proximity to main services and facilities is a key principle of sustainable development in order that future residents can use modes of transport other than the car to reach such facilities. Nonetheless, it is accepted within national policy that in rural areas it is not always possible to achieve this. Tallarn Green may have limited community services and facilities, but it is within close proximity of Malpas which is a key service centre. In addition, it is only with growth of a village that services 'on-site' become available due to economic viability.

With regard to the character and surrounding appearance of the area, it is disputed that such a small, proposed development would harm the character of the village, lead to a merging of the two settlement areas or create ribbon development. The open aspect of the area will be retained due to surrounding agricultural land and landscape buffers will ensure the rural character of the street scene is maintained.

Yours sincerely



Director