

Ben Embrey,

I refer to your enquiry ENQ/2014/0104 dated 27 March 2014.

Firstly I apologise for the delay in responding. The Wrexham planning office has recently received a large number of applications, and unfortunately due to staff reductions we are not always able to meet our published targets.

In respect of the proposal, both National and Development Plan policies are relevant material considerations for any planning application for the site.

From a National Policy context, this is covered by Planning Policy Wales (Edition 6) and various Technical Advice Notes – and all these documents are available via the Welsh Government web site.

Accordingly it should be noted that the Technical Advice Notes of TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning, TAN 12: Design, TAN 18: Transport and TAN 22: Sustainable Buildings will be relevant.

For the Local Planning context, I can confirm that the Wrexham UDP is still the relevant development plan for the area, and a copy of this is available on-line via the Council's web site. Accordingly, a proposal of this nature should consider policies PS1, H1, H5, GDP1, EC2, EC4, EC6 and T8 of the plan.

Some of these UDP policies are also supplemented by further adopted guidance, and therefore you should consider Local Planning Guidance Notes – also available via the Council's web site. Accordingly you should consider the relevance of LPG7: Landscape and Development, LPG17: Trees and Development, and LPG32 Biodiversity and Development.

On the basis of these policies, and published validation requirements for planning applications (i.e. as published in relation to 1APP guidance), these components will help provide context for the mandatory Design and Access Statement as this applies to Wales.

The actual content requirement for a DAS can be found in Article 7 of Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012.

One of the 5 topic areas to consider as part of the DAS is 'environmental sustainability', and therefore the application should contain a pre-assessment report under the Code for Homes to ensure that the chosen design of the dwelling has a realistic chance of obtaining Level 3 and 1 credit under Ene.

There should also be an assessment of any on-site ecology to ensure that appropriate reasonable avoidance measures (RAMs) and mitigation if required is considered. A tree report should also be prepared to examine the need for maintaining root protection areas in relation to trees within or near to the site. All these elements help inform the design process, and by having this information, it also helps with some of the answers to sections on the application form.

Planning history concerning the site includes the following:

	P/2000/0687	Erection of replacement dwelling and construction of new vehicular access
P/2004/0146	Erection of conservatory	
P/2005/0670	Single bay extension to existing implement shed	

None of this history has significance for the principle of development.

Specific policy issues

Before commissioning any specialist reports for the site, it should be noted that the site is located outside any settlement boundary as defined within the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

As a result, the principle of erecting a dwelling within the countryside is not supported unless they are required for an essential agricultural or forestry need. Otherwise the new dwelling is only allowed as a result of conversion of an existing building (see UDP policy H3), or it should provide a replacement dwelling (policy H10), or form an affordable housing scheme (policy H8). This proposal is clearly not a conversion or replacement scheme, and no evidence in connection with any essential agricultural or other forestry need, or affordable purpose has been submitted with the enquiry – and downsizing is not considered to be a justification to allow new dwellings in the countryside. As a result and in the absence of any suitable justification, it is very unlikely that the principle of a new dwelling will be supported. Regarding any agricultural or rural need – you are advised to consider Welsh Government's PPW document, and TAN6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities.

I can confirm however that there is no other specific policy allocation for the site – although land to the south (over 850m away) is indicated as an area subject to mineral protection, and land to the north is an area allocated as a Special Landscape area.

As a final point, although the Wrexham area does not currently have a 5 year lands supply as required by paragraph 9.2.3 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW), this proposal will not be seen as making a significant contribution towards increasing housing land supply within the area. Therefore any justification for allowing a new dwelling based on a housing shortage is unlikely to be relevant in this particular case.

In relation to the access, it appears that the access towards Horseman's Green direction has restricted visibility (due to the position of the splayed entrance wall) and this should be assessed in light of extra traffic that will be generated by the use. Guidance regarding this is found in Annex B of TAN 18: Transport

The advice is based on the planning policies, guidance and circumstances that apply at the time of this response. This advice may not be relevant may should policies or circumstances change before a formal planning application is submitted. You should also note that the above comments are the informal views of an Officer of the Council and do not commit the Council in the determination of any formal planning application.