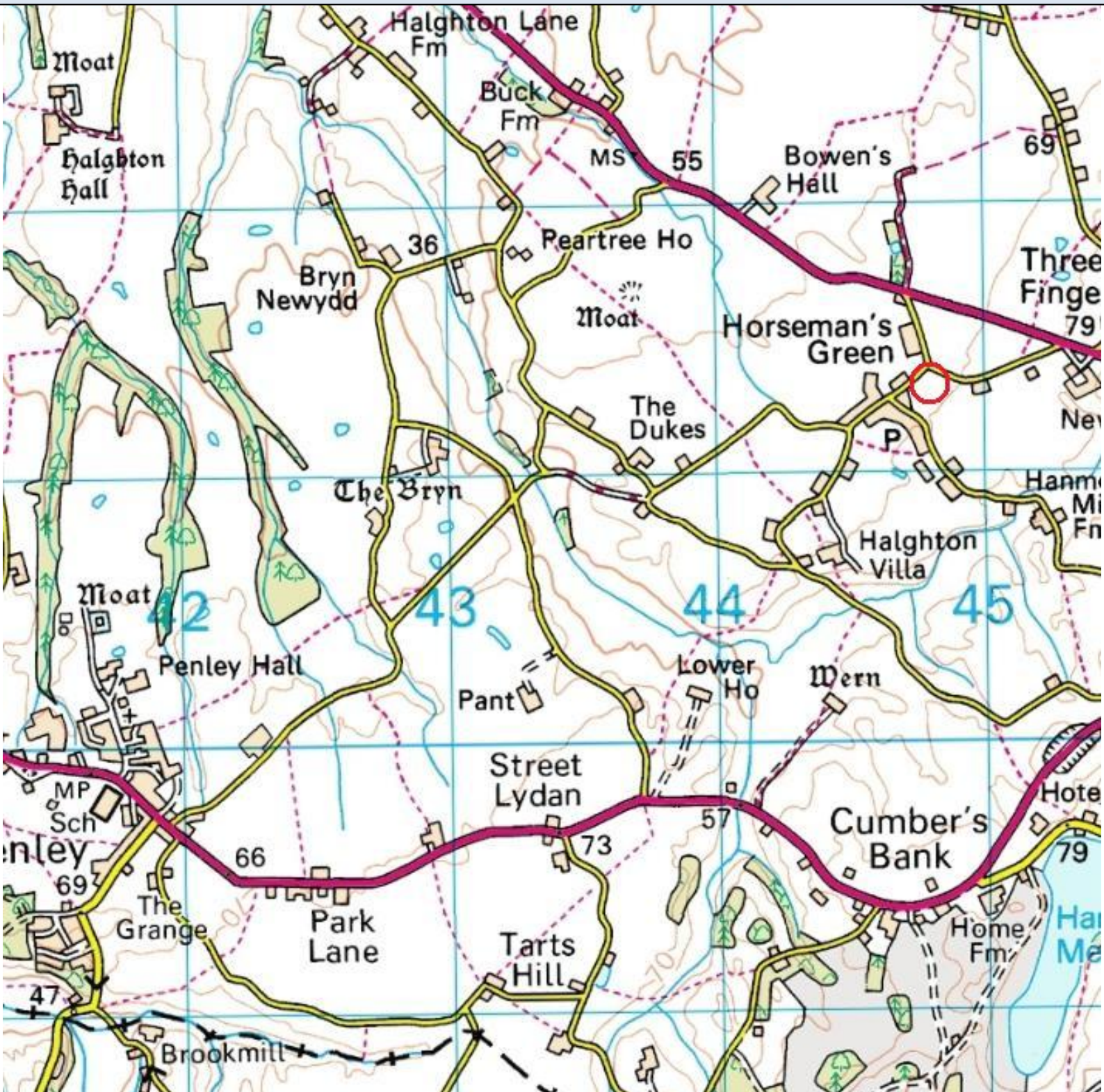


DESIGN, ACCESS & PLANNING STATEMENT

LAND AT WILLINGTON GRANGE · WILLINGTON LANE · HORSEMAN'S GREEN
WHITCHURCH · SHROPSHIRE · SY13 3BZ



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PROJECT DETAILS

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Date: 27.03.15
Job No: LSP/1750
Client Name: Mr. Colin Evans

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1.0 THE PROPOSAL

1.1 This is an application for full planning permission for the erection of a 3-bedroom dwelling with a detached triple garage and a new vehicular access.

1.2 The application is a resubmission of planning application no. P/2014/0687 which was refused consent by Wrexham Council on a notice dated 3rd November 2014 for the following reason:

“The proposed development would be unsatisfactory and undesirable because the development involves a Greenfield site and it is located outside any settlement limits as defined in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan. To allow the development would be materially detrimental to the countryside and it would represent an undesirable visual intrusion into the landscape. The development does not maintain existing settlement patterns and it would not accord with the character of the site or make a positive contribution to the appearance of the locality. The development therefore, conflicts with Policies PS1, PS2, PS4, GDP1a) and H5 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan”.

1.3 This application seeks to address these reasons both in detail design and siting and in terms of the relevant planning policy background contained in Planning Policy Wales and the relevant Technical Advice Notes particularly with regard to the Council’s lack of a 5-year supply.

2.0 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The application site is located in Horseman’s Green on the south side of Willington Lane. Willington Grange was constructed in 2002 and a Certificate of Completion was issued by the Council on 12th July 2002.

2.2 The site forms a part of the existing residential curtilage of Willington Grange which is served from Willington Lane.

2.3 It is proposed to form a new vehicular access from Willington Lane to serve the proposed development.

3.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

3.1 The application is one for full planning permission.

3.2 No objections were previously raised to the principle of the proposed new access to serve the development subject to conditions. The Officers Report with respect to the previous application (no. P/2014/0687) advised that access to the site would require visibility splays of 2.4 metres x 33 metres in both directions as measured to the centre line of the adjoining carriageway in order to accord with Manual for Streets. It is also advised that vehicle movements along the lane are minimal and the traffic generated from the use would be acceptable if some form of carriageway widening/passing place to facilitate the passing of vehicles along the narrow sections is included and this can be accommodated within the existing highway verge. It is noted that the proposed access appears to be 16 metres wide and 2.4 metres deep

and this area would widen the highway to at least 5.2 metres in this location and provides a passing place for this section of highway. It is also advised that the access needs to be surfaced with hard bound material to facilitate its use.

- 3.3 Drawing no. WG-GA-600 submitted with the application contains reference to this advice.
- 3.4 Detailed arrangements for the disposal of both surface and foul drainage were included with the previous application. Drawing no. WG-GA-600 prepared by Woodside Developments on behalf of the applicant details these arrangements. It describes how porosity tests have demonstrated that the ground is clay based and unsuitable for the use of soak-a-ways and proposes a controlled surface water drainage system. Foul drainage is to be dealt with by way of a sewage treatment plant the clean water from which to further outfall to a proposed reed bed which will further enhance the cleaning process.
- 3.5 These proposed arrangements are entirely sustainable in nature and will be further enhanced by the inclusion of a wildlife pool as an extension of the proposed reed bed, as shown on the submitted site layout plan.
- 3.6 A **Phase 1 Ecological Assessment** has been prepared by Star Ecology. A copy of the report is enclosed with the application papers at **Appendix 1** and concludes that the site is of low ecological value and the trees within the application are not considered to have bat roost potential. Hedgehogs and bats may use the site for foraging and as such, the mitigation measures set out in section 8.0 of the report should be conditioned. There is considered to be a low probability of Great crested Newts (GCN) being present on the application site however, Risk Avoidance Measures (RAM) are suggested within the report and can again, be conditioned to any consent.
- 3.7 A **Tree Survey** and report has been prepared by Sylvan Resources. A copy of the Report is enclosed with the application papers at **Appendix 2**. Its findings have been utilised to prepare the proposed site plan.
- 3.8 Specifically, the proposed dwelling has been rotated clockwise direction and pulled further from the southern boundary to avoid conflict with the root protection zone of the retained tree.
- 3.9 The northern boundary of the site is considered to be specie poor and as such, additional landscaping is shown on the proposed site plan. A full landscaping scheme can be conditioned however, this should incorporate the suggestions made within the Ecological Assessment as listed on the site plan.
- 3.10 A **Landscape Assessment** of the application site has been prepared by Chris Burnett Associates. A copy of the Report is enclosed with the application at **Appendix 3** and its conclusions are referred to in paragraph 11.5 below.
- 3.11 All of these various matters have been considered in terms of a review of the design and siting of the proposed dwelling. The site layout incorporates the relevant elements in a revised arrangement in order that the overall development better responds to and visually enhances the character and appearance of the locality.

- 3.12 The Officers Report to Committee with respect to the previous application made specific reference to the proposed triple garage and associated parking as evidence of a lack of sustainability. The applicant advises however that, this building will in fact be used to accommodate a whole range of agricultural equipment necessary for the upkeep and maintenance of the land, including a tractor and trailer as well as private cars. It is better described as an agricultural store/tractor shed/garage. The associated hard-standing is necessary to manoeuvre this equipment and is appropriate for a large detached dwelling in this rural location however, this has been reduced in size to that of the previous application and will be porous in quality.

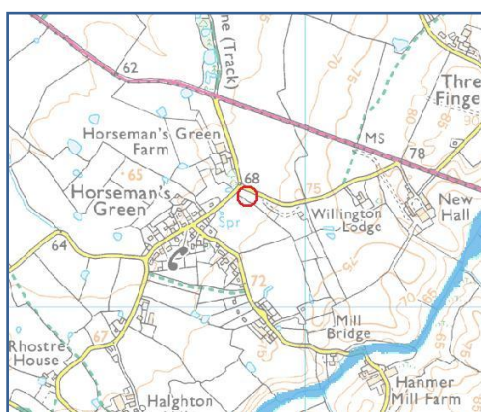
4.0 DRAINAGE & FLOOD RISK

- 4.1 The detailed arrangements for the disposal of foul and surface water drainage are described at paragraph 3.4 above. No objections to these arrangements were raised with respect to the previous application and it is therefore assumed that these arrangements are acceptable.
- 4.2 We note that a resident raised concerns regarding the possibility of increased ground water flooding within the area as a result of the proposed development. In this regard the Officers Report to Committee advised that:-

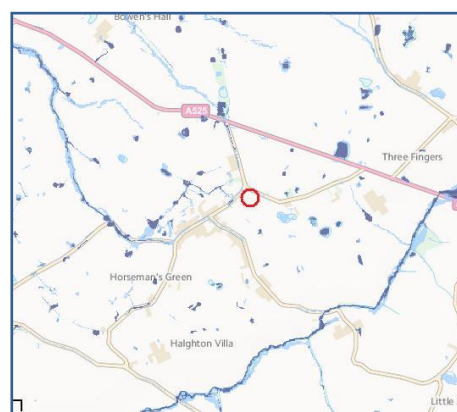
“... a SUDS is likely to be required as part of any integrated design for the development and this would require careful consideration as part of a planning condition...”

It is considered that the Report prepared by Woodsyde Developments and submitted with this planning application fully deals with these issues. See **Appendix 4**

- 4.3 The Environment Agency Flood Map and Surface Water Flooding Map for the area are shown below which confirm that the site is not at risk from flooding.



Fluvial



Pluvial

Extracted from: <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk>

5.0 ACCESSIBILITY

- 5.1 The proposed arrangements for providing access to the proposed development have been prepared by Woodsyde Developments on behalf of the applicant and are shown on Drawing No. WG-GA-600. It is noted that no highway objections were raised to these arrangements.
- 5.2 In terms of general accessibility the application site is served by Willington Lane which provides easy access to the A525 at a point some 6 miles distant from Whitchurch and some 10 miles from Wrexham. The A525 provides good access to the wider road system in the area. The minor roads in the locality provide good access to the nearby settlements.
- 5.3 Local bus services serving the area are described later in this statement.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 6.1 The environmental sustainability of the proposed development is achieved through the design and landscaping of the proposed development with particular regard to:
- The sustainable drainage system proposed to serve the development;
 - The creation of new habitats for local flora and fauna and;
 - The high level of sustainability proposed for the dwelling described at paragraph 6.2 below.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the thermal envelope of the dwelling is to be specified to achieve well in excess of the current Part L Building Regulations and to achieve a SAP/EPC of A, as well as meeting the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 as a minimum. Self-sufficient energy sources are to be utilised in the form of ground source heating and PV panels to the south facing garage/dwelling roof space which will maintain a combined high level of energy for the occupiers with minimum draw on the local mains supply. Glazing is also to be well in excess of Part L requirements and Argon filled units will be utilised to limit heat loss.
- 6.3 This sustainable approach is an integral part of the applicants' brief to the Architect.

7.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 7.1 The previous planning application for the erection of a detached (3-bedroom) dwelling and new vehicular access was refused consent on a notice dated 3rd November 2014 for the following reason:-

“The proposed development would be unsatisfactory and undesirable because the development involves a Greenfield site and it is located outside any settlement limits as defined in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan. To allow the development would be materially detrimental to the countryside and it would represent an undesirable visual intrusion into the landscape. The development does not maintain existing settlement patterns and it would not accord with the character of the site or make a positive contribution to the appearance of the locality. The development therefore conflicts with Policies PS1, PS2, PS4, GPD1a)

and H5 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan”.

- 7.2 Prior to the planning application being submitted, the applicants’ Architect (Base Architects) had sought pre-application advice from the Council. The associated correspondence is attached at **Appendix No. 5**

8.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

- 8.1 The Council’s general advice in this regard is described in the response to the pre-application enquiry enclosed at **Appendix No. 6**

- 8.2 More specifically the planning refusal notice dated 3rd November 2014 and referred to above, described the relevant policies in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan as being EC4, GDPI, H5, PS1, PS2, and PS3. The associated Committee Report refers also to TAN1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies and to the latest Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) (2013) which confirms that there is a housing supply of only 3.4years and that as a result consideration regarding the supply of houses within the Wrexham area must be considered and that Planning Policy Wales (PPW) also includes a requirement that new development must be on the basis of **a presumption in favour of sustainable development**. Reference is also made to the objectives for sustainable development as set out in paragraph 4.4.3 of PPW.

- 8.3 PPW (2014) provides the overriding policy background against which this development must be considered, particularly in view of the Council’s lack of a 5-year housing supply and the resulting presumption in favour of sustainable development described in paragraph 4.2.2 of PPW.

- 8.4 **Chapter 4: Planning for Sustainability** has the following advice of relevance to this proposed development as follows:-

- **Paragraph 4.1.3** advises that sustainable development will be the central organising principle of the Welsh Government by placing sustainability at the heart of the decision making process.
- **Paragraph 4.4.3** promotes the use of previously developed land and buildings and seeks to locate new development to minimise demand for travel, especially by car.
- **Paragraph 4.7.7** advises that in rural areas the majority of new development should be located in those settlements which have relatively good access by non-car modes when compared to the rural areas as a whole. Local Service Centres **or clusters of smaller settlements where a sustainable functional linkage can be demonstrated** should be designated by local authorities and be identified as the preferred locations for most new development.
- **Paragraph 4.7.8** advises that infilling or minor extensions to existing settlements may be acceptable.

- 8.5 **Chapter 9: Housing** has the following relevant advice:

- **Paragraph 9.1.2** advises that local authorities should promote development that is easily accessible by public transport, cycling and walking, **although in rural areas the required development may not be able to achieve these criteria in all circumstances.**
- **Paragraph 9.2.22 and 9.3.2** regarding housing in rural areas advises that local authorities should employ sustainability principles benefitting the rural economy and local communities while maintaining and enhancing the environment and the choice of housing recognising the needs of all. **It is recognised that many parts have isolated groups of dwellings and that sensitive infilling of small gaps, or minor extensions to such groups may be acceptable but** that much depends on the character of the surroundings, the pattern of the development in the area and the accessibility to main towns and villages.

8.6 This policy background clearly lends support to the proposed development in that:

- The application site forms part of the existing residential curtilage of Willington Grange closely related to the built form of Horseman's Green and is land with an existing use as curtilage land **and is not agricultural land in open countryside.**
- Horseman's Green is a location with relatively good access by non-car modes when compared to the rural areas as a whole. A check of local bus services has identified a regular hourly service (no. 146) between Whitchurch and Wrexham with stops including Hanmer, Penley, Overton and Bangor-on-Dee (GHA Coaches). The service operates Monday to Saturday. In addition, Wrexham Taxis operate service no. 45F on Mondays only from Bettisfield to Wrexham calling at Hanmer, Horseman's Green, Tallarn Green and Bangor-on-Dee and the X46 service from Wrexham to Whitchurch operates Monday to Saturday leaving Wrexham at 7.00 a.m. and calling at Hanmer, Overton and Bangor-on-Dee early morning before the rush hour.
- Although only the 45F calls at Horseman's Green, it is perfectly feasible for persons wishing to use the service to pick it up in Hanmer either by walking or cycling, as Hanmer is only 1.8 miles distant via Striga Lane or by being dropped-off by car. Details are attached for information.
- Whilst Horseman's Green is not in itself a local service centre, **it does form part of a cluster of smaller settlements where a sustainable functional linkage can be demonstrated** (see below map) and as such is an appropriate location for new housing development in accordance with paragraph 4.7.7.



8.7 The following is offered as evidence of this functional linkage:

1. Horseman's Green forms an integral part of a wider rural community which in our view includes Hanmer, Penley and Tallarn Green.
2. An appraisal of the range of services available in this rural community 'cluster' has identified the following:-

Hanmer:

Primary School
 Village Stores and Post Office
 Florist
 The Hanmer Arms Public House
 St. Chad's Church

Tallarn Green

Borderbook Primary School
 Village Hall
 Methodist Church
 Nursery School

Penley

Maelor School (mixed comprehensive)
 Madras Primary School

Penley Stores
 Village Hall
 Community Hospital
 Car repair/service garage
 Industrial Estate
 Penley Grange Care Home
 Cafe
 Bowling Green
 Coach Depot

3. The nearby larger settlements of Overton-on-Dee and Bangor-is-y-Coed also provide shared services for this rural community including:-

Overton-on-Dee

Medical Practice
 St. Mary's Aided Primary School
 Playgroup
 Chemist/Pharmacy
 Londis Store
 Dentist
 Post Office
 The White Horse Inn Public House
 Other shops (including a Butcher and Fish and Chip Shop)

Bangor-is-y-Coed

Parish Church
 National Hunt Racecourse
 The Royal Oak Hotel
 A range of tourist accommodation
 Dentist

4. Additionally a whole range of services are available close by in Whitchurch and Wrexham.
5. Distances and associated car travel times from Horseman's Green to these settlements have been obtained from Google Maps as follows:-

Village/Town	Distance	Time
Hanmer	1.6 miles (via Striga Lane)	6 minutes
Penley	2.5 miles (via A539)	7 minutes
Tallarn Green	2.5 miles (via A525)	8 minutes
Overton-on-Dee	6.0 miles (via A539)	13 minutes
Bangor-is-y-Coed	4.9 miles (via A525)	14 minutes
Whitchurch	6.6 miles (via A525)	14 minutes

Wrexham	9.5 miles (via A525)	19 minutes
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6. The applicants themselves have strong local connections in the local community. Indeed Mrs. Evans actually has a part-time job in the village store/post office in Hanmer, which illustrates a functional linkage in accordance with the advice set out in PPW and work on Willington Grange was certified complete on the 12th July 2002 and Mr. and Mrs. Evans have resided there since that time. Previous to this they lived at Dynocks Mill, Oldcastle, which is only some 3 miles from Horseman's Green, where they converted the Mill to residential use and lived there from 1988 to 2002. They have strong links and knowledge of the area and make regular use of the many services in the settlement cluster as described above.

9.0 POLICY CONSIDERATION

- 9.1 The previous reasons for refusal refer to Policies PS1, PS2, PS4, GDP1a) and H5 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan, which was adopted by the Wrexham Borough Council on the 14th February 2005.
- 9.2 In relation to this Plan, Welsh Government Advice (e.g. TAN1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies) advises in paragraph 5.1 that in cases where the land supply is below the 5-year requirement the need to increase housing supply should be given **considerable weight** when dealing with planning applications, provided that the development would otherwise comply with national planning policies.
- 9.3 The Committee Report advises that the latest Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) confirms that there is a housing supply of **only 3.4 years** and therefore consideration regarding the supply of houses within the Wrexham area must be considered. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) also includes the requirement that new development must be on the basis of a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**.
- 9.4 We note that an updated development plan was rejected by the Welsh Office in 2012 on the basis that the Council should raise its 10-year target of 8,000 homes to 11,700.
- 9.5 Having regard to these matters, it is our view that, presumption in favour of sustainable development should be the basis for the determination of this application. In view of the lack of a 5-year housing supply, the policies contained in the Wrexham UDP 1996-2011 (adopted 2005) can be considered to be out of date and the provisions of PPW 2014 take precedence. We do however comment on the Policies relied on as follows:-
- 9.6 **Policy PS1:** This policy directs new development to within defined settlement limits. Horseman's Green does not have a defined settlement boundary and it is our view that the proposed development would fall within the settlement as demonstrated in this Report.
- 9.7 **Policy PS2:** The reports prepared and submitted with the application clearly demonstrate that the development will not materially affect countryside,

Landscape/Townscape character, open space or, the quality of the natural environment.

9.8 **Policy PS4:** We demonstrate that the development will maintain the existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated with the existing transport network.

9.9 **GPD1a):** This is a check list applicable to all new developments. The reference in this case is to clause a) which relates to issues of scale, design and layout and use of materials and landscaping. We will demonstrate full compliance with these issues. This Policy advises that **only** the conversion of buildings (Policy H3), sub-division of dwellings (Policy H4) and affordable housing (Policy H8), infilling subject to Policy GDP1 and an essential need to house a full time agricultural or forestry key worker, will be permitted outside defined settlements. We will demonstrate that the proposed development does fall within the settlement limits of Horseman's Green and therefore that the terms of this Policy do not apply.

10.0 MOVEMENT TO/FROM, AND WITHIN DEVELOPMENT

10.1 The proposed development represents a very low activity in terms of vehicular movements, being limited to the normal domestic activities of the applicants Mr. and Mrs. Evans.

11.0 CHARACTER

11.1 **Scale:** The application is for a single dwelling and associated tractor/shed/private garage and is of scale entirely appropriate to the area.

11.2 **Appearance:** The house has been designed to be in accordance with the local vernacular following a character assessment within the locality which displays an eclectic mix of architectural styles and features. The proposed design includes the following local character features:

- The use of red brick;
- Distinct gable ends;
- Soldier Courses;
- Stone head/cills.

11.3 **Landscaping/The Site:** The application site is assimilated into the area by existing trees/hedgerows and recent additional planting carried out by the applicant. This existing landscape character will be retained and enhanced by the additional landscaping proposed as an integral part of the proposed development.

11.4 **Landscape Context:** The proposed development follows the landscape character of the area and will join with Willington Grange, Willington Lodge and New Hall to create a characterful part of the settlement of Horseman's Green.

11.5 **Landscape Assessment:** Chris Burnett Associates, Landscape Architects have considered the landscape issues contained in the previous refusal of planning permission and following a site visit have given the following advice:

1. *“Detrimental impact on the countryside and undesirable intrusion into the landscape”*. The site of the proposed house is situated in a small field adjacent to the settlement of Horseman’s Green. It is surrounded by mature, continuous hedges on two sides which have several large hedgerow oaks and a number of selected holly trees growing within them. Both hedgerows and hedgerow trees are in good condition. In addition there are a number of young specimen trees which have been planted by the owner, all of which are growing vigorously and are in good condition. The house will sit on the centre of the field and is of a scale that relates well to the land in which it sits, but more importantly will be significantly softened by the mature trees which surround it and also the young field trees. Only one of the young field trees will be compromised by the development footprint and this will be transplanted to another location within the property. In addition more trees will be planted to consolidate the softening effect in the hedgerows referred to above. The locations of these trees are marked on the photographs overleaf [*photographs attached with the correspondence at Appendix No. 3*]. The combination of existing mature, young and new trees and the small and proportionate scale of the proposed residence will ensure that the impact is far from detrimental especially when one takes into account that isolated dwellings, often associated with mature trees, are very much a feature of this location.

2. *“Conflict with the existing settlement pattern”*. The existing settlement pattern in the area immediately surrounding this location is of a dispersed nature with a number of isolated dwellings in close proximity. These include Horseman’s Green Farm, The Poplars and Willington Grange itself and the outskirts of Horseman’s Green itself which is a short distance away. As such an additional isolated residential dwelling would fit into this settlement pattern, provided it can be integrated into the landscape successfully, rather than conflict with it. Furthermore, the proposed development fits within the boundaries of an existing field pattern which will remain unchanged.

3. *“Conflict with the character and appearance of surrounding landscape character”*. For the reasons stated above, the proposed residence does not, in my view, conflict overtly with the character of the surrounding landscape. It is consistent with a pattern of dispersed settlement in the area where isolated dwellings are indeed part of the landscape character. Also the dwelling, which is small scale and proportionate to the scale of the plot in which it sits, will not stand out as an intrusive element as it will be partially concealed behind mature and establishing trees and more trees will be planted to consolidate this effect.

A copy of the letter and enclosures are included with the application.

- 11.6 In our view, this assessment negates the Council’s concerns that the site was separated from the village and just reflects the dispersed nature of the settlement where gaps between detached properties are a feature of the locality.

12.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 12.1 The proposal is for a private development and issues of community safety therefore do not arise.

13.0 CONCLUSION

- 13.1 The proposed development clearly accords with provisions of Planning Policy Wales as described above. It represents an appropriate development in the context of Horseman's Green itself and in the overall context of the cluster of small rural settlements of which it forms a part. In the light of the Council's lack of a 5-year housing supply the development has to be considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in PPW.

14.0 SUBMITTED APPENDICES & PLANS

- 14.1 Ecological Assessment
- 14.2 Tree Survey
- 14.3 Landscape Assessment
- 14.4 Highways Report (*inc plans*)
- 14.5 Pre-application Statement - BASE Architects
- 14.6 Wrexham Council Pre-app response
- 14.7 Bus Routes

Location Plan (LSP.1750.01)
Existing Site Plan (LSP.1750.02)
Proposed Site Plan (LSP.1750.03)
Constraints Plan (LSP.1750.04)
Proposed Elevations/Floor Plan (PL-002)