

The Planning Inspectorate

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COMMENTS ON CASE

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable for it. This can be found in the notification letter attached. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender. Your comments can also be made on-line at www.planningportal.gov.uk.

This form will be published on the Planning Portal, please do NOT sign it. This is to ensure that all personal data is protected in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Case Reference:

Address of site

LAND AT PONT ADAM CRESCENT
RUABON
WREXHAM

Postcode
(if known)

SENDER DETAILS

Name

Acting On Behalf Of
(leave blank if writing on your own behalf)

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?
(Neighbour, Councillor, Owner, Tenant)

What kind of representation are you making?

52 Pont Adam Crescent
Ruabon
Wrexham
LL14 6EE

10th March 2015

The Planning Inspectorate
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: - Welsh Assembly Government Reference H6955/A/14/2229577 - Planning Application P/2014/0241 – Land at Pont Adam Crescent, Ruabon

We are writing to object to the appeal made by Castlemead Group, following Wrexham County Borough Council decision to refuse the planning permission to build 49 dwellings on Pont Adam Crescent, Ruabon.

The Introduction of the Technical note produced by Axis on behalf of Castlemead Group states, "The development of a small residential scheme". There are approximately 150 properties currently on the estate and an additional 49 properties constitutes an increase of around 33% which we feel is not "a small development" in this location.

Highway Access

The main highway access to Pont Adam Crescent from the village of Ruabon is via Church Street.

As soon as traffic leaves the main road passing through Ruabon onto Church Street the road narrows immediately not allowing vehicles to pass thus creating a one way traffic flow. This effect causes traffic to back up onto the main road which then has a knock on effect to traffic on the main road especially traffic approaching from the Railway Station as there is a blind bend at this section of road.

Once this initial narrow section of road is negotiated it very quickly becomes a "pinch point" which again does not allow two way traffic flows, again creating one way traffic. There are a number of these "pinch points" along the route of Church Street with sections of the highway that are subject to highway controls including traffic calming ramps.

The road width on the length of route is very narrow made even worse during school times when, due to the sections of narrow footpaths pupils regularly use the highway to walk on for the whole stretch from the commencement of Church Street up to the school. As well as narrow sections of footpaths along the route, there are also several sections where there is no established footpath giving the children no option but to walk in the highway.

In a previous Council highways report on the road it has been established that it has an inadequate width in a number of sections with an inadequate horizontal alignment and a substandard pedestrian provision unsuitable to accommodate the increase in traffic flow.

It is noted in the report prepared by Axis they accept that the route is restricted in width and forward visibility may be a concern, and that the geometry of the route may not accord fully with standards. Having accepted these important issues we are at a loss to understand why they then attempt to dismiss them as being of no consequence. If they do not conform to the requirements then how can there be any justification to challenge/dismiss them.

It is interesting to note in 2.10 of the Axis report that "footways are available to at least one side of the carriageway for the full length of the B5097 between Pont Adam Crescent and Tatham Road to the West. What it totally fails to identify is that once the section of footpath reaches the brow of Tatham Road, the road narrows not allowing two way traffic flow, and there is no footpath on either side of the road making walking a very dangerous occupation

In section 2.12 of their report they try to justify the increase in traffic based on assumptions without knowing the number of additional vehicles using the route.

The report also identifies a small number of "recorded" accidents along the restricted section. However, I am aware of a number of incidents which have occurred which have not been reported to the authorities.

The road becomes both intolerable and dangerous during the school "runs". The traffic flow causes chaos with drivers ignoring the highway controls and cause traffic jams. Children walking to school are also in danger as there are sections of the route that does not have a footpath (as previously mentioned) causing pedestrians to have to walk with no protection from passing traffic.

Whilst there are two alternative routes to Pont Adam Crescent, Tatham Road (as previously mentioned) for a long stretch has no public footpath at all, and you really do take your life in your hands walking along this section. The other alternative is the Penycae Road which again is a poor road with poor pedestrian access. In reality the increase in traffic flow to the proposed site will be via Church Street and with the proposal for an additional 49 properties to be built the increase, as previously indicated, will potentially increase the number of vehicles on the road by 50 to 150. It was noted following the planning application not being granted that a "counter/speed recorder" appeared across the road on a section adjacent to the narrow one way section of road over the river bridge. If it was put in place to record speed it is a totally un-appropriate location as there is no two way flow at that point if vehicles from the opposite directions approach at the same time. Vehicles have to slow down to cross the bridge and many vehicles have to cross the bridge from the school at a standing start as the traffic management does not allow two vehicles to pass one another at the same time over the bridge. When only one vehicle approaches the speed can be very fast. If it was to record the number of vehicles using the road it was put in place when there was significant less traffic flow due to school holidays/exams.

When leaving Pont Adam Crescent the junction has a restricted view due to a solid wall, and foliage not giving clear visibility of traffic coming from the direction of Ruabon.

Proposed Footway/Cycleway

With regards to the proposed Footway/Cycleway that would be installed. The route of this would take residents away from Ruabon and would increase the distance to walk to the village and is unlikely to be utilised to a great extent with residents opting to either walk to the village as they currently do along Church Street or alternatively use their cars, once again increasing traffic flow on the roads.

Estate Roadway

There are two access roads onto the estate formed as part of a Crescent which consists of a number of "hair pin" bends which are blind spots and require considerate and sensible use. One of these bends is outside a children's play-ground which is likely to be the access road mainly used to the proposed new site and which will make the area even more dangerous.

Sewage Drainage System

There has been a major problem with the sewage system on the estate over many years causing huge problems for the current residents, and any attempt to connect onto the existing system will potentially have a catastrophic effect.

Pont Adam Estate is a long established estate with the main demographics of the estate being detached houses and bungalows, with a number of bungalows having an open view over the green land. From the proposed development plan it is impossible to ascertain the demographics of the majority of properties, but as this developer has previously built in the village there may be some that are to be built as three storey, which along with the flats /apartments that they have indicated are totally out of keeping with the current estate and to try and build/squeeze 49 properties on the proposed piece of land will create a potential problem with so many properties sharing one drive. It is likely that cars will be parked everywhere.

Environment/Ecological

- **Wildlife** - The area designated to build these properties will have a devastating effect on the environment of the estate. Since the properties have been built, it has been the only "green area" on the estate and houses much wildlife, birds and insects which will be destroyed should the trees and hedgerow be removed. There is also an historic Oak Tree which is home for many birds, animals and insects and to dismiss the wildlife as the victims of "progress" is a disgraceful attitude. I note that there is a token gesture of public open space indicated on the plan which and will probably end up being a space to park cars.
- **Noise Impact** – The increase in traffic flow that will be caused by these new properties being built will increase the noise and disturbance to the residents on the estate.
- **Emissions Impact** – Again the increase in the traffic flow will increase the emissions from the vehicles into the atmosphere, again making the lives of the residents poorer.

Ysgol Rhiwabon

The main high school for the village is located very close to the entrance to the estate and at peak times the traffic flow causes chaos with the number of vehicles visiting the school to collect children and school buses and will become even more hazardous. In addition, as previously stated, there are the poor or no footpaths that the children use to walk to and from the school.

Schools and Medical Services

The proposed development will also have a huge impact on our three schools in the village. The junior schools are full to capacity as it is. The other impact will be on our medical services. It is a nightmare currently trying to get an appointment to see the doctor additional residents moving into the village will only exasperate the problem.

Summary

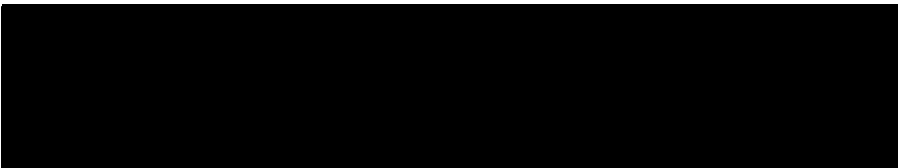
Having lived in Ruabon all my life it is a cause of huge frustration that the village seems to have become the developers "paradise" with the number of properties that have been built in the village over a number of years, with another development currently being constructed on the High Street. The whole "village community" is being destroyed as the villages of Johnstown and Rhosymedre become ever closer.

We strongly recommend that the planning appeal is not granted.

Please provide us with a copy of the appeal decision once it has been made.

Yours faithfully,

Mr and Mrs A. Owen and family



YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE (*continued*)