

Full planning permission for the demolition of existing dwelling and associated curtilage buildings and replacement with the development of single detached dwelling and associated garage and store building at the site of Moor Cottage



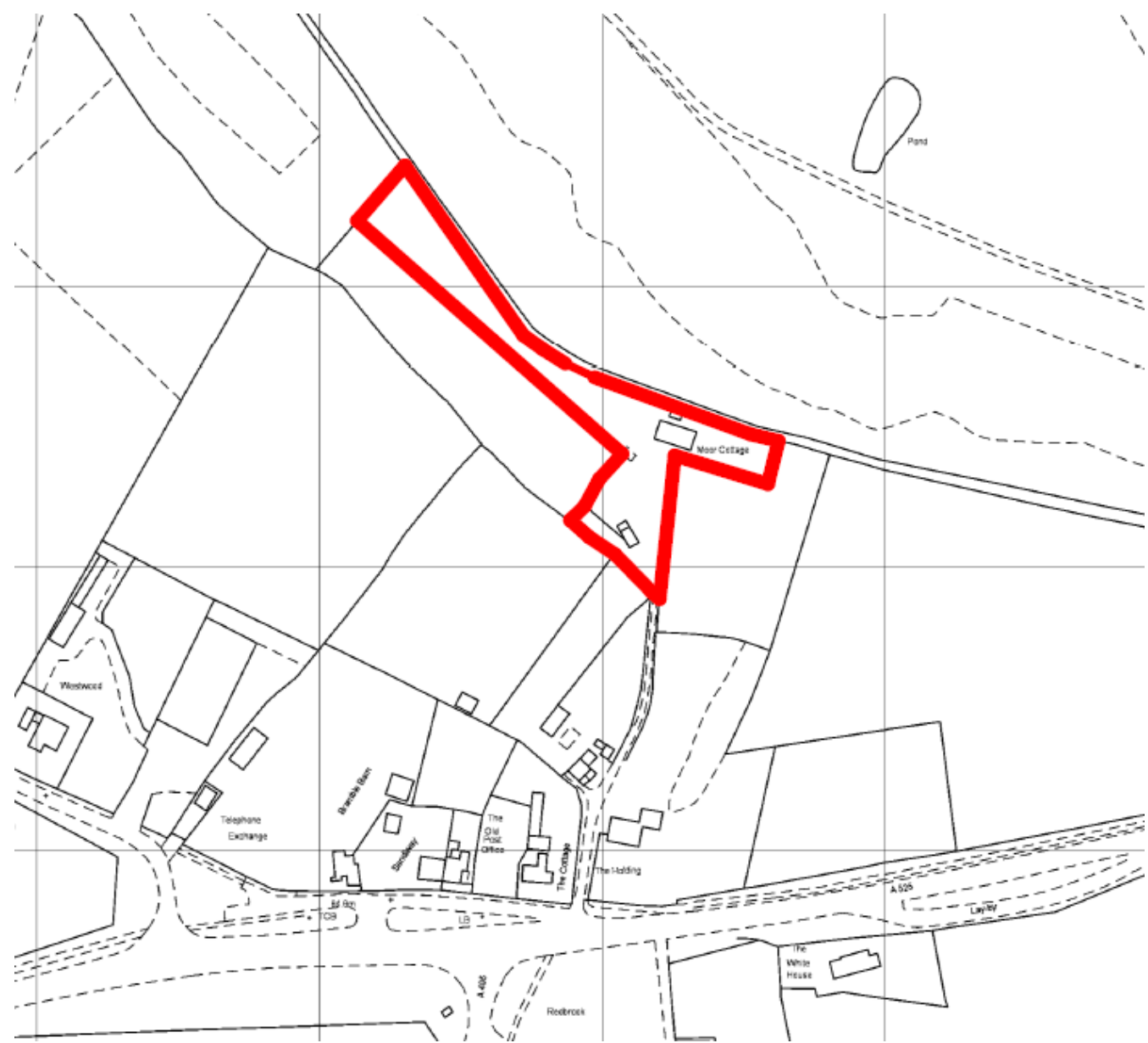
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1. Foreword

This design and access statement has been produced on behalf of Mr M and Mrs S Gourlay to accompany an application for full planning permission for the demolition and replacement of a single dwelling and associated curtilage buildings.

The format of this report is principally derived from Technical Advice Note 12 “TAN 12: Design (2014)”.

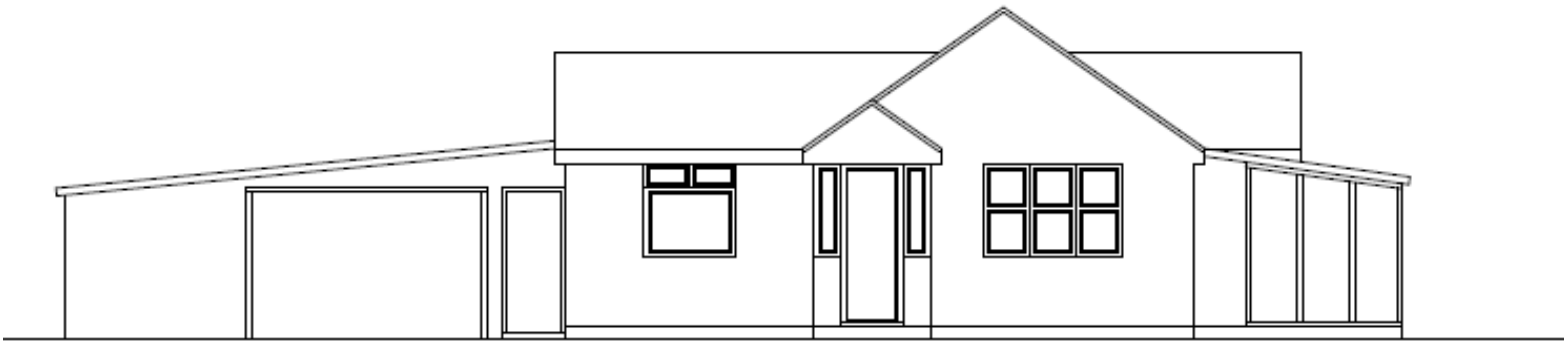


2. Assessment→Involvement→Evaluation→Design

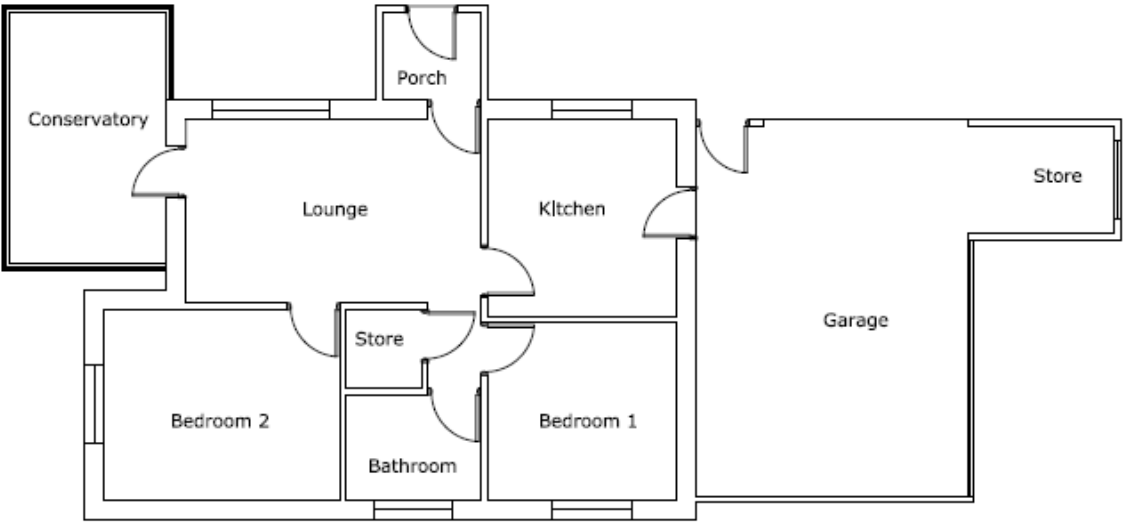
The existing dwelling is principally accessed via an unadopted track, which is set back from the A525 (Wrexham Road) and cuts between two detached properties of varied age and architectural detail.



The property is not fully evident from the public realm and the curtilage is masked from the cluster of buildings, which address the highway by virtue of distance from the frontage and the screening provided by established planting. The property is in close proximity to 'Red Brook', which lies directly to the northern boundary cutting through the rural setting and meandering from the east up to the northwest. The residential curtilage currently contains a single dwelling and associated outbuildings, which are incidental to the enjoyment of the property. The current dwelling is single storey in height and has evidently been altered over time with a series of lean-to additions in evidence but the main dwelling is constructed with a dual pitched roof and gable ends. The dwelling currently provides two bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, lounge and conservatory with associated garage and store room. The curtilage also contains a series of outbuildings/containers, which are planned for removal and which total 70 sqm.



South Elevation



Ground Floor Layout



The current dwelling has been constructed in brickwork, painted white with a slate roof and does not relate to further dwellings, which exist within the cluster of properties fronting onto the A525 (Wrexham Road) in terms of scale or fenestration. The site is located approximately 3 miles to the west of the centre of Whitchurch; which can be accessed via bus within a 6-7 minute journey from stops within walking distance of the site.

It is necessary to assess the policy context in relation to this application site and, following review of the Unitary Development Plan for Wrexham (1996-2011), it is evident that the following strategic policies are of direct relevance in considering whether the principle of development is acceptable in this case:

Policy	Policy Text	Compliance
PS1	New development for housing, employment, and community services will be directed to within defined settlement limits/employment areas	The proposal comprises a replacement dwelling outside of defined settlement insets – See Policy H10
PS2	Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment	Comply - Proposal would increase height of current dwelling but would not materially alter the scale in overall footprint – the dwelling would take reference from local development and would not result in a detrimental impact upon the countryside instead seeking to enhance the site and surroundings
PS3	Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value, or comprises agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a quality	Comply - Site utilises brownfield land and would not result in degradation of ecological, landscape or amenity value
PS4	Development should maintain the existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated with the existing transport network to help reduce the overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car	Comply - Maintains existing settlement pattern and would not intensify use of the site but rather seek to enhance the quality of accommodation available within the residential curtilage, which is located within close proximity of existing transport network and associated bus routes
GDP1	Development Objectives a – k to ensure new development achieves the following: • Positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality • Personal and community safety and security • Ensures design conserves energy and water resources • Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access • Ensure built development is located with convenient access to public transport facilities • Safeguard the environment from adverse effects of pollution • Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation • Ensure development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion or contamination • Secure sustainable development	Comply - The development would enhance the appearance of the site by developing a replacement dwelling that takes a lead from surrounding scale and architectural detailing as evident within immediate setting. The development would result in energy efficiencies within the built envelope resulting in reduced emissions compared with the existing property and would be designed to prevent an increased risk in flooding, avoid the mobilisation of any contaminants and protect existing ecological habitats.
H10	Replacement dwellings may be permitted in the countryside only where:- a) the existing dwelling is habitable or capable of being made habitable without substantial reconstruction or substantial increases in floor area. b) the existing dwelling is not of architectural or historic interest, or is a prefabricated or temporary structure. c) the proposed dwelling: i) is located on the site of the original dwelling; or ii) is exceptionally, where a planning constraint can be overcome, located within the curtilage of the existing building; and iii) reflects the floor area, form, bulk, and character of the original dwelling; and iv) satisfies Policy GDP1	Comply – the existing dwelling is currently habitable but applicant is seeking to provide enhancements to living accommodation, overall emission rates and architecture. The dwelling is not of architectural or historic interest and would be situated within close proximity of the existing footprint but slightly adjusted to reduce flood risk vulnerability, yet still within the existing curtilage. The development represents an increased level of accommodation, albeit still providing a single dwelling, but importantly reflects the overall footprint of the existing unit and the scale and architectural qualities of existing dwellings adjoining the site.
T8	Development granted planning permission will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby, in accordance with the Council's current parking standards. Special regard will be paid to the following factors, as appropriate:- a) the availability of public transport nearby, b) proximity to public car parking, c) proximity to local services and facilities, d) road safety hazards and amenity considerations arising from on-street parking in the vicinity of the site.	Comply – the development would provide sufficient in-curtilage parking for residents and potential visitors in a secure environment within a freestanding garage and store, which would be incidental to the dwelling and replace the existing series of outbuildings thus not harming the intrinsic open character of the surroundings. It is clear that sustainable modes of transport are readily available with bus stops located within walking distance of the site and providing a 6/7 minute journey to local services and amenities contained within the centre of Whitchurch.

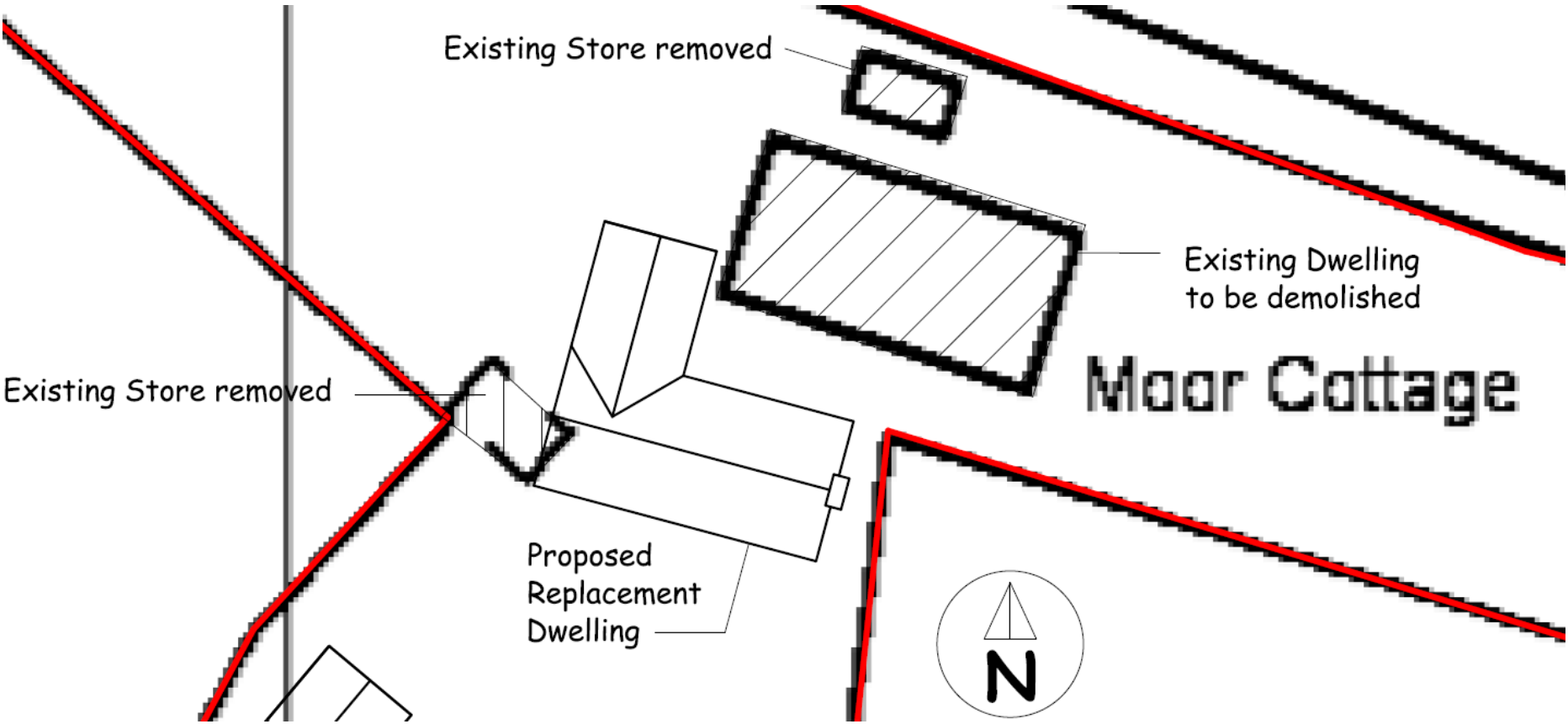
Material Considerations:

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 7, July 2014)

Local Planning Guidance Notes: 6, 7, 13, 16, 21, 30

The principle of development is considered to be acceptable as detailed within the summary table above, which was consulted when designing the scheme from the outset. The development would result in the replacement of a dwelling, which is currently occupied but in need of upgrade in relation to energy efficiency performance and to provide enhanced living accommodation for the applicant.

The design is to be influenced by the surroundings in terms of character, scale and appearance, taking close account of vernacular materials where relevant but it should be noted that the siting of the dwelling is still largely inconspicuous from the public realm. The new dwelling would result in accommodation over two floors, and the addition of a basement level, which would provide store and games room. At ground floor the dwelling would provide entrance hall, lounge and open plan kitchen and living room. The first floor accommodation would then provide a master bedroom with en-suite facility, a main bathroom and three further bedrooms. The footprint of the dwelling has been re-located slightly further south (away from Red Brook) but still within the existing curtilage and would maximise the benefit of solar gain to all living spaces.



After reviewing the Local Planning Guidance Notes it was evident that the following were of direct relevance to the proposed development:

06: Access to and use of buildings – In this case there is no requirement for the submission of an Access statement given the scale of development proposed. However, in terms of the key aims it is confirmed that parking under cover and secure will be made available within the proposed garage and store building. Whilst the submission does not include detailed landscaping plans, the document is a 'living document' and recognises that external landscape areas should be laid to provide firm, non-slip surfaces. In terms of access the development will avoid excessive changes in level especially at entrances.

07: Landscaping and Development – The development takes clear guidance from the principles contained within the guidance note in respect of hard and soft landscapes. In this case the development proposes a replacement dwelling and therefore limited intervention is proposed instead favouring the retention of the existing rural character of the site and surroundings and wishing to avoid the sterilisation of such character with modern landscape design. Accordingly the introduction of hard landscaping would be limited with use of a simple palette of materials preferred where necessary to assist the movement of residents. As stated within the guidance some areas of soft landscape may be of nature conservation interest and may contain protected species. As part of the submission an ecological survey was commissioned and the findings suggest that the site does have the potential to host a number of UK priority species/groups such as Bats, West European hedgehog, Common Linnet, Hedge accentor, Tree Sparrow and Yellowhammer but it is noted that most would be confined to trees and hedgerow within the site boundaries. Given that the proposals would not promote any form of arboricultural management, this habitat will not be adversely affected by the proposals.

13: Housing in the Countryside – This note gives relevant guidance in relation to UDP Policy H10 Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside and it is considered that the proposal would accord with the broad aims of the policy in that the proposed development results in a one-for-one scenario. The proposed development does increase the floor area of the property, yet no material changes to the overall footprint. However, the guidance note recognises that developments will aspire to achieve a level of accommodation consistent with meeting residents' reasonable living aspirations, whilst safeguarding the countryside from unnecessary and out-of-scale development. In this case the applicant wishes to re-develop the site to provide an enhanced family dwelling that will effectively reduce the overall carbon footprint, maintain and be sympathetic to the character of the rural setting and existing biodiversity and take reference from properties within close proximity of the site in terms of overall scale and materials palette. Whilst the floor area has grown, it is considered that the overall position, scale and appearance of the dwelling would not cause significant detriment to the countryside and wider landscape. The applicant is acutely aware of the value of the landscape and certainly does not wish to harm the intrinsic character but simply provide a superior property and continue the active stewardship and protection of the site therefore officers are encouraged to visit the site and look upon the internal space currently provided and take a reasonable view upon the level of accommodation required to provide a family home as opposed to making a judgement on the basis of a 2-dimensional plan.

16: Parking Standards – It is clear from this note that the Council does not have minimum parking standards yet illustrates maximum standards to inform the policies within the UDP. In this case it is clear that the application site is well served by public transport with bus stops located within walking distance along Wrexham Road. Therefore the secure and covered provision for 2 parking spaces is considered to be adequate provision for the proposed development with added provision for secure cycle parking possible within the proposed parking and storage building.

21: Space around Dwellings – This document principally informs the standards required to ensure that residential amenity is safeguarded and that a quality living environment both internally and externally is provided for future residents. In this case it is clear that the design proposals would meet all expected standards in terms of separation distances, private garden provision, bin storage and car parking.

30: Design A Guide for Developers and Architects when Designing Residential Developments - It is clear from this document that there is a requirement for all new residential development to meet a minimum of Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes and provide 10% of the future energy requirements of the building through renewable energy sources. The Planning Guidance Note was produced in 2009 and it is clear that Code Level 3 energy requirements are now incorporated into the Building Regulations in any case and the development will meet all further mandatory elements. Whilst the total energy demand of the development has not yet been calculated the applicant is happy to consider all viable methods to achieve the 10% target set by the Local Planning Authority such as solar thermal heating, Photovoltaics, Ground source heating/cooling (if feasible), Air/Water source heat pumps.

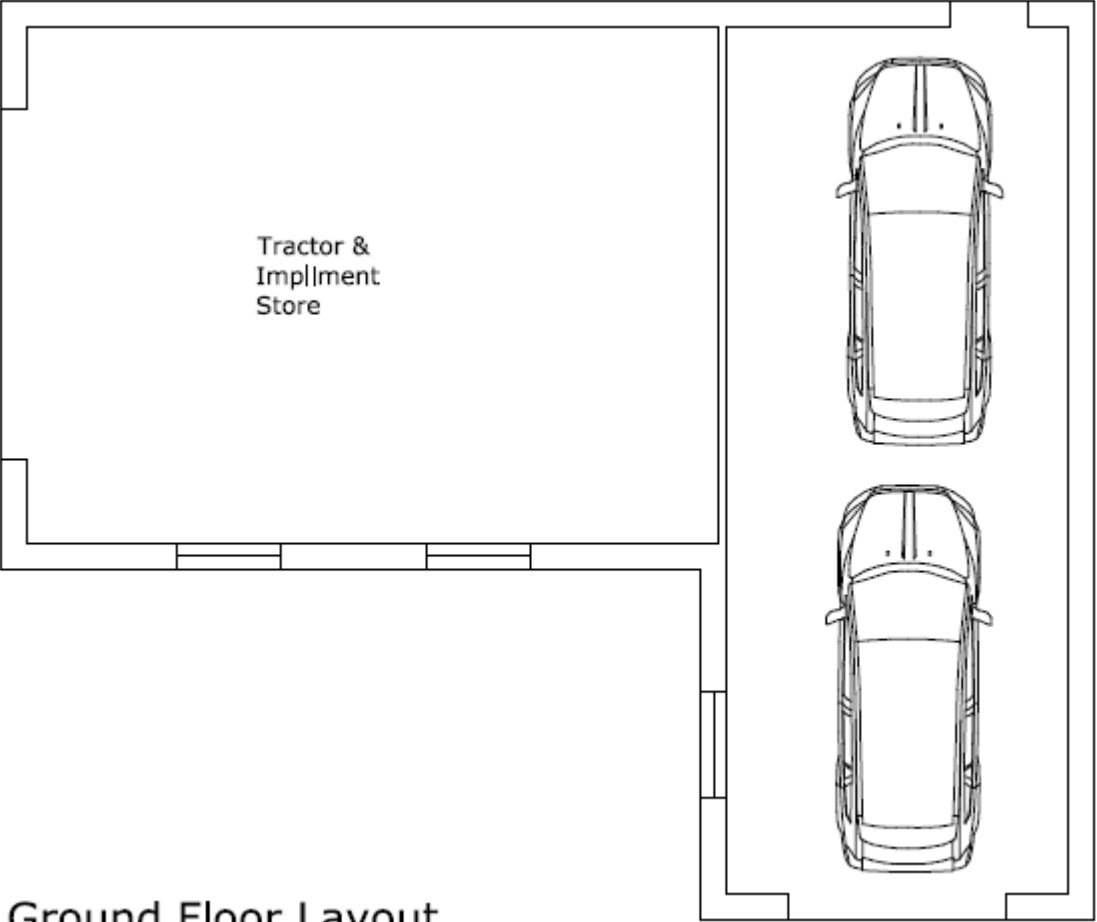
3. Access

When undertaking the design of a residential proposal, ease of access to all areas including vehicular/transport links and inclusive pedestrian links must be considered. Developments should show how everyone can use the place comfortably, safely and easily.

As stated within adopted policy GDP1 developments must aim to:

- Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access
- Ensure built development is located with convenient access to public transport facilities

In this case the proposal would ensure the provision of safe pedestrian and vehicular access within the curtilage with the provision of external surfaces within the curtilage, which are firm, non-slip and well laid around the site of the new dwelling with indicative detail such as use of 'riven paving'. The proposal does not propose the installation of a formal pedestrian pathway into the site in order to retain the rural character of the site as far as possible and reduce the introduction of man-made features. Furthermore the current access track into the site provides good levels of visibility and given that it serves only a dwelling this is not considered a key requirement. However, it should be noted that the accessibility of the site to public transport is convenient and provides further modes of sustainable travel options to access the amenities within the centre of Whitchurch:



Ground Floor Layout

Access and egress to the development site is already established for both pedestrians and vehicles and the proposals would result in the secure and covered provision of parking bays for two cars and also agricultural equipment storage as pictured above.

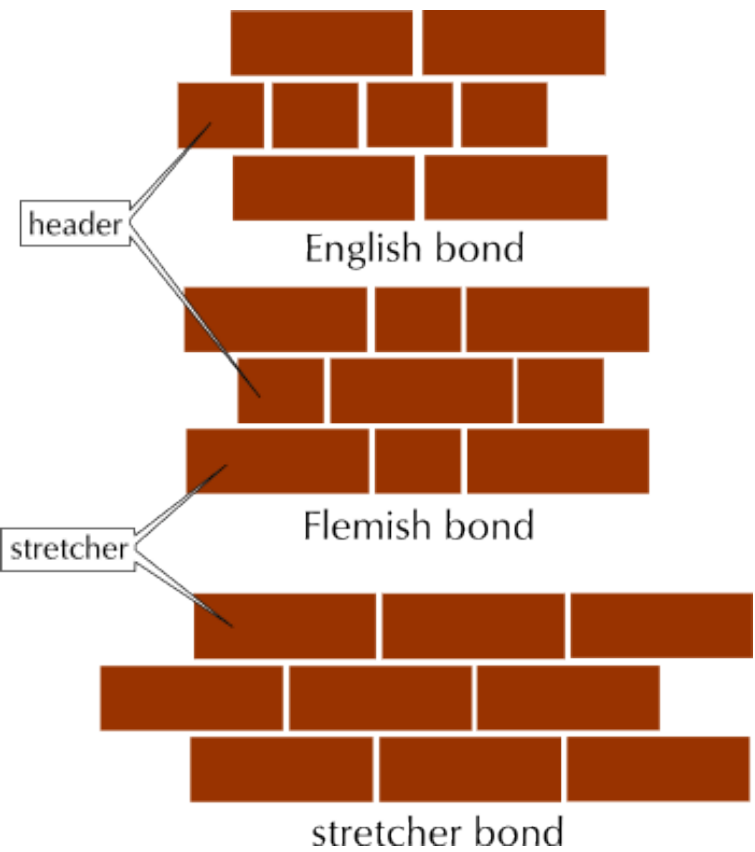
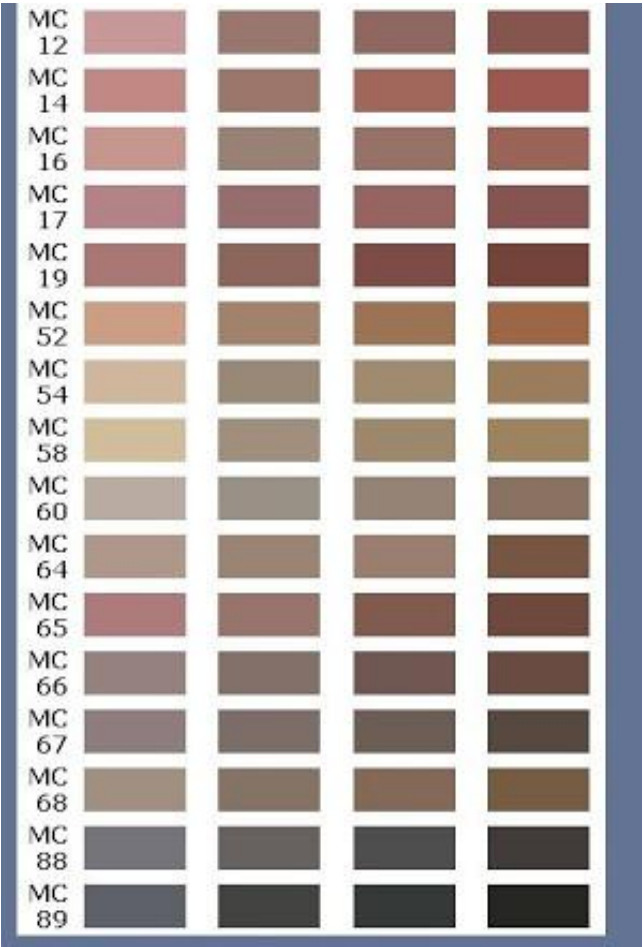
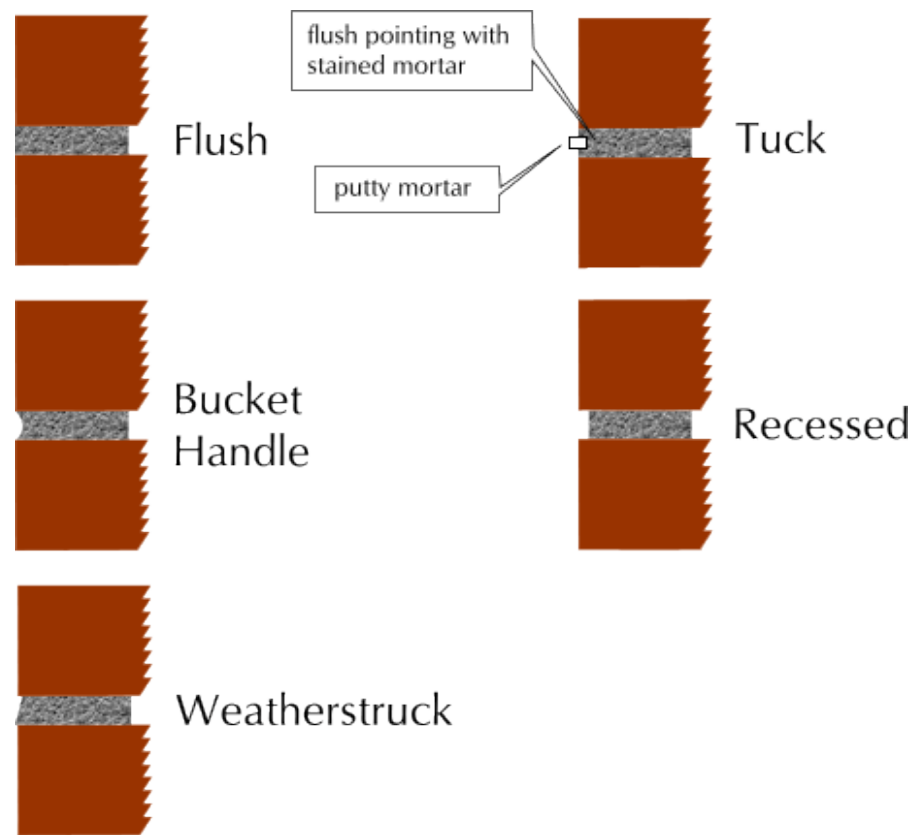
4. Character (Amount, Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping)

The proposal is for the demolition and construction of a single family dwelling, which would result in carbon reductions and an enhanced family dwelling, fit for modern-day living; the development also results in the removal of existing outbuildings and the construction of a new purpose-built store and parking unit. The development has been considered against strategic planning policies and the content of Planning Policy Wales and Local Planning Guidance Notes and it is considered that this proposal is in accordance with the development plan and should therefore be approved.

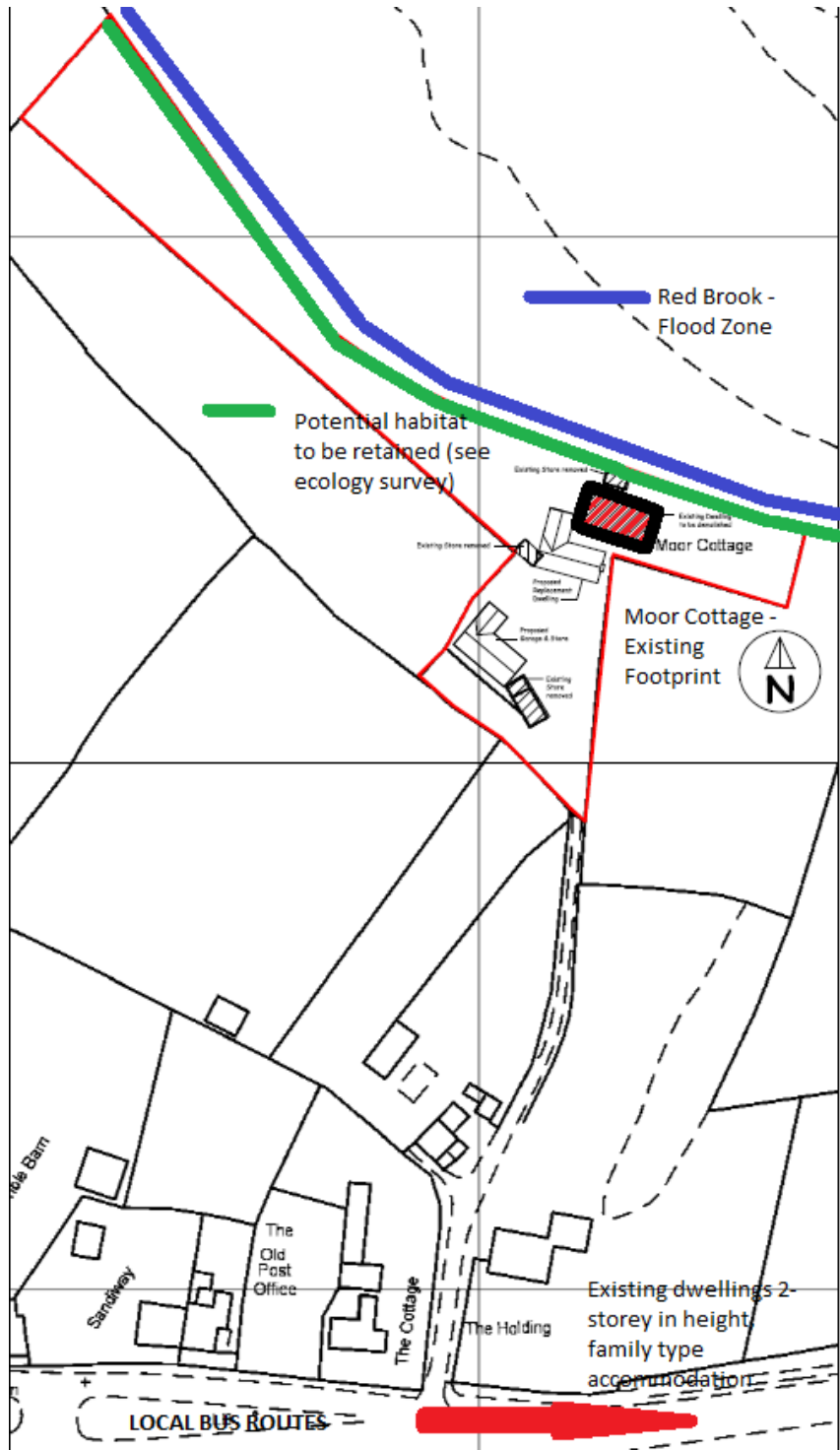
The height, scale and form of the nearest properties are predominantly two storeys and provide detached family dwellings, within an irregular built form. The scale, form and features of the existing properties have provided a clear reference point for the design of this scheme:



Features such as the brick bond pattern, mortar selection and style of pointing are details, which the applicant is happy to agree upon by way of planning condition with the Local Planning Authority and such detail is considered important to ensure the development respects the rural character of the surroundings:



The layout concept shown below illustrates the constraints and opportunities that have influenced the design of the proposed layout:



The plot is served by an existing access which leads from the A525 and cuts between two existing dwellings. The need to assimilate the structure into the surroundings has resulted in a design which maintains a principal façade to the south but provides good outlook towards the water course and associated mature vegetation with views from habitable rooms at ground floor and views from the upper floor within the Master Bedroom.

The private garden space will be defined by the existing natural boundary features and no man-made interventions are proposed; with the existing garden already far exceeding the sizes recommended within adopted policy.

The desirability of retaining the presence of mature trees and hedgerow within the site and the desirability of moving the footprint away from the water course has seen the relocation of the building further south within the plot but without significant changes to the broad location of the building, which is viewed as the logical design concept. Whilst the footprint of the proposed garage and storage building does appear to be large, it should be noted that this is purpose built to accommodate high-sided vehicles and cars associated with use of the curtilage, which will ensure the tidy appearance of the site and also result in the removal of unsightly storage containers and on balance is therefore seen as a well thought-out addition. The use of materials is subject to agreement with the Local Planning Authority but a simple palette is indicated below:



Cheshire Weathered Brick



Slate roof



Hardwood Window

It is acknowledged that landscaping forms an important part of the overall scheme design and has formed part of the detailed considerations throughout the process. The site and immediate surroundings are characterised by natural open spaces. The site has not been subject to a large degree of human intervention in respect of landscape treatment. The proposal seeks to retain the existing character whilst enhancing the biodiversity through the continued retention of all vegetation within the site and boundaries as surveyed by the consultant ecologist, which will also provide the benefit of soil stabilisation and reduction in water run-off.

5. Community Safety

The key objectives of community safety as stated within TAN 12:Design are as follows:

- Ensuring attractive, safe public spaces
- Security through natural surveillance

In this case the development relates to the re-development of single residential curtilage, however the issues relating to safety and security are still of relevance to the applicant, particularly given the lack of natural surveillance within the rural setting. In this case the applicant has designed a scheme, which would ensure a large degree of natural surveillance by positioning the footprint of the new dwelling within the sightline of the primary vehicular and pedestrian access, which reduces the attractiveness of the site to criminals. The layout internally would also ensure views from habitable rooms at ground floor to both the northern and southern boundaries.

The natural position of the main property is a considerable distance from the single access into the site, thus further deterring criminal activity given the desire to get close to a target with vehicles. Gates within the site can also be treated with temporary obstructions when not in use to again reduce the ease of access.

Whilst the applicant is mindful of not wishing to add security features, which detract from the character of the proposed dwelling and the rural character of the surroundings it would be possible to install IR camera systems within carefully positioned bird box structures to provide security and also the positioning of sensor controlled ‘dusk to dawn’ security lighting.

In terms of ensuring continued protection for the home the construction will specify the following key features to deter crime:

- Key operated locks to all ground floor accessible windows to current British Standards (BS)
- BS 5 lever mortice locks to all outer doors or multi-locking systems with three or more deadlocks
- Intruder alarm system to relevant BS



6. Environmental Sustainability

The key objectives in terms of ensuring environmental sustainability are understood as follows:

- Achieve efficient use and protection of natural resources
- Enhance biodiversity
- Design for Change (Mitigation and Adaptation)

Table 1.4: Total Credits Available, Weighting Factors and Points			
Categories of Environmental Impact	Total Credits in each Category	Weighting Factor (% points contribution)	Approximate Weighted Value of each Credit
Category 1 Energy and CO ₂ Emissions	31	36.4%	1.17
Category 2 Water	6	9.0%	1.50
Category 3 Materials	24	7.2%	0.30
Category 4 Surface Water Run-off	4	2.2%	0.55
Category 5 Waste	8	6.4%	0.80
Category 6 Pollution	4	2.8%	0.70
Category 7 Health and Well-being	12	14.0%	1.17
Category 8 Management	9	10.0%	1.11
Category 9 Ecology	9	12.0%	1.33
Total	—	100.0%	—

It is understood that the inherent requirements of code for sustainable homes level 3 in respect of the energy category are incorporated within building regulations. In respect of water conservation the property can be fitted with low-flow systems in terms of shower-head fittings and taps and water efficient appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines; these savings will contribute to lower energy bills and carbon dioxide reductions.

Materials for construction are to be sourced in relation to the BRE ‘Green Guide’ seeking to use A+ rated materials where possible, subject to agreement in detail of external materials as reserved by planning condition.

Surface water run-off is not to be increased with any additional impermeable surfaces within the curtilage and the use of water harvesting devices throughout the development, which will be utilised for washing vehicles and irrigating planting/lawns in dry conditions.

Waste in construction is to be minimised and materials recycled where possible during construction and throughout the life of the dwelling, with typical storage and sorting of household and recyclable waste to be facilitated within the site based upon maximum collection frequency as operated by the local authority with the potential to set up composting facilities for household waste within the

large gardens but away from the Red Brook to prevent water pollution.

As already stated within this document and as supported by the ecology survey the proposed development would not result in the loss of trees or habitat for protected species, instead retaining existing features within the boundaries of the site. This will ensure continued opportunities for species to inhabit the area and also ensure continued soil stabilisation for the site and adjoining water course banks.

In this case the provision of a basement level within the design is considered to provide an adaptable space that can accommodate the changing needs of the applicant with the option of home study space, leisure space and reduced need for travel associated with these uses. Subterranean spaces also benefit from the insulating properties of the surrounding ground, improving their energy efficiency. As a consequence, the amount of insulation needed to reduce heat loss through a basement wall is less than that required on upper floor levels.

7. Movement to, from and within the development

The key objective of the development plan and Welsh Planning Policy is to promote sustainable means of travel.

In this case the application site is extremely well-linked to the highway network with easy connections to commercial centres via A525. It is also apparent that there are bus services within walking distance of the site, which provide services into Whitchurch in a journey time of 6 minutes. Whilst there are no dedicated cycle routes into the centre, there are cycle routes within close proximity of the site to the west for recreational purposes this promoting healthy lifestyles.

Parking for both vehicles and cycles will be provided for within a secure and covered environment, within the purpose built garage and store building.

