

**PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AT BRYN LANE,  
WREXHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,  
WREXHAM.**

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL REPORT**  
(Report Ref: 1792.002)

for

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 TEP has been commissioned by Kingmoor Park Limited to assess the anticipated impacts on landscape character and views of the proposed development at Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate.
- 1.2 The application site is within an established area of industrial development at Wrexham and on land which is allocated within the Wrexham County Borough Unitary Development Plan for industrial use. The surrounding industrial estate covers an extensive area approximately 5.5km<sup>2</sup> and is one of the largest estates of this nature in Europe.
- 1.3 This report provides a description of the landscape in which the proposed development would be situated and a description of the nature of views to the development site. It includes a summary of published landscape assessments related to the general locality and a report of a landscape assessment specific to this development. It also includes an assessment of views and a prediction of the visual effects of the development.

## **2.0 METHOD**

- 2.1 Assessment of landscape and visual effects has been undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment, Second Edition (Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2002).
- 2.2 The assessments were undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects from TEP who are experienced in landscape and visual assessment. The assessment of landscape character included consideration of published landscape assessments, map based information and aerial photography together with a site survey. The visual assessment was primarily undertaken through site visits to identify the visual receptors and to experience the existing views. The methods of assessment for both landscape and visual assessment are described in Appendix 1.

## **3.0 LANDSCAPE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The application site falls within the administrative area of Wrexham County Borough Council. This section explores the policies which are relevant to this application from national to local level.

### **National Policy and Guidance**

- 3.2 Planning Policy Wales (PPW), published in March 2002, sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Assembly Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs). Planning Policy Wales 2002 emphasises the need for good design and states that landscape considerations are an integral part of the design process. Promoting biodiversity is also referred to, which will primarily be addressed within the ecological reports accompanying this application. There are several national planning policy documents specifically relevant to landscape which are summarised in the following sections.

*Technical Advice Note 5: Agriculture and Rural Development (2000)*

- 3.3 This document states that when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local planning authorities should consider the quality of agricultural land and other agricultural factors and seek to minimise any adverse affects on the environment. Local planning authorities should bear in mind that, once land is built on, the restoration of semi-natural and natural habitats, landscape features, archaeological and historic features is rarely possible and it is usually expensive to replace them.

*Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2002)*

- 3.4 The quality of cities, towns, villages and the urban and rural landscape are important in defining the confidence and direction of a nation and its culture. The design of development in the environment is significant to the quality of our lives and is a major factor in sustaining a positive image for Wales. Good design has the potential to assist environmental sustainability, economic growth and social inclusion. This document states the need for a landscape assessment to be carried out, particularly for larger schemes.

**Regional and Local Policy Guidance**

- 3.5 Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 - 2011 was adopted by Wrexham County Borough Council on the 14th February 2005. In parallel with the need to provide for future built development, the plan seeks to safeguard the County Borough's natural environment and particularly those landscapes, individual sites and habitats which have been identified as having specific visual or ecological importance. The County Borough contains extensive areas of high quality agricultural land. The plan recognises the importance of maintaining the productive capacity of these areas and this is taken into account in the detailed land allocations and other plan proposals. The following policies are considered relevant to landscape and the proposed development.
- 3.6 *Policy PS2 – The broad location of development:* Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
- 3.7 *Policy EC1 – Green Barrier:* Green Barrier policy designation is used to prevent existing settlements coming into close proximity and where there is a need to maintain a belt of countryside free from development. The purposes of a Green Barrier include:
- i) prevent the coalescence of urban areas and villages with other settlements;
  - ii) assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - iii) protect the setting of urban areas and villages; and
  - iv) assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 3.8 *Policy EC4 – Hedgerows, Trees and Woodlands:* Development proposals should provide for the conservation and management of hedgerows, trees, orchards, woodland, wildlife and other natural landscape and water features, and include new planting in order to enhance the character of the landscape. Development which results in the loss or significant damage to valuable trees, important hedgerows or ancient woodland sites will not be permitted.
- 3.9 *Policy EC5 – Special Landscape Areas:* Within Special Landscape Areas (SLA), priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape. Development will be required to conform to a high standard of design and landscaping, and special attention will be paid to minimising its visual impact both from nearby and distant viewpoints.
- 3.10 *Policy E3 - Large Single User Employment Site:* This is the policy under which the application site is allocated. This employment allocation is for a major single user employment project that requires a site of over 30 hectares for an employment development that cannot be accommodated on allocated employment land or employment land with planning permission. Any development on this site will need to incorporate extensive high quality landscaping in order to mitigate the visual impact of the development on the appearance of the neighbouring countryside and local landscape.

#### **Local Planning Guidance Notes**

- 3.11 Wrexham County Borough Council has approved a series of Local Planning Guidance Notes which explain development plan policy in detail. These apply to specific topics and geographic areas. Two of these are of relevance to the proposed development.
- 3.12 *Local Planning Guidance Note 7 – Landscape and Development:* This leaflet explains to developers the landscape requirements involved when submitting a planning application. Careful and early consideration of design issues and the provision of adequate landscape information can help to avoid costly delays at a later stage. In assessing the landscape implications of planning applications the site context, proposed layout, future uses and maintenance all need to be taken into account. There is a diverse landscape character and settlement pattern within the County Borough and this should be protected and conserved where possible.
- 3.13 *Local Planning Guidance Note 26 – Landscape and Industrial Development:* This leaflet refers more directly to the proposed development site as it specifically relates to industrial development. Wrexham's industrial estates, smaller industrial sites, and retail and business parks make a very noticeable contribution to the landscape of the County Borough, and this can be positive. New development in particular can provide excellent opportunities for exciting and sustainable landscape and building design, if attention is paid to the impact which such proposals might have on the surroundings.

- 3.14 The guidance note states that landscape considerations include the way the external environment is affected by the development and the way the development is perceived by the public. It also states that the landscape should be considered from the very beginning of the development process. The guidance goes on to give examples of: appropriate materials and colours; a list of design *'do's and don'ts'*; guidance as to signage, lighting, planting; and retention of existing vegetation in the landscape.

## 4.0 SITE CONTEXT

### Location

- 4.1 Wrexham Industrial Estate is outside the urban area of the town of Wrexham. It is to the east at a distance of approximately 4.5km east of the town centre (see Figure 1). The application site is on the north eastern edge of the industrial estate, east of Bryn Lane and south of Ridley Wood Road covering an area of 38.96 hectares. The area surrounding the industrial estate is predominantly rural comprising farmland, woodland, small villages and scattered farms. Other industry is present within the locality at Borrassand and gravel quarry at approximately 3km from the site to the north.
- 4.2 The application site is off Bryn Lane opposite a complex of large industrial buildings with vertical flues and tall structures occupied by Kellogg's. The adjoining site comprises large warehouse units, a complex of smaller ancillary buildings, car parking and outdoor operational/storage areas.
- 4.3 The hamlet of Isycoed is the closest settlement to the application site approximately 700m to the east.

### Application Site Boundaries

- 4.4 The application site is currently laid out as 6no fields separated by a boundary hedges and trees. A dense band of trees subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) follows the route of a watercourse and separates three fields in the northern section from three in the southern section of the site.
- 4.5 The northern boundary is marked by field boundary hedges and trees alongside Ridley Wood Road. Ridley Wood Road is a narrow country lane lined on both sides by hedgerows and trees.
- 4.6 The southern boundary adjoins the existing industrial site occupied by TDG. It is predominantly unmarked by built features although the western end is partly fenced and follows an existing hedgerow.
- 4.7 The east boundary is marked in the northern section by a field boundary hedge containing mature oak trees. In the southern section it is marked primarily by a deep ditch and hedgerow/thicket on its eastern bank.

- 4.8 The west boundary follows Bryn Lane which is used by HGVs and other traffic to access the industrial estate from a northerly direction. For the main part this boundary is denoted by a native hedgerow containing trees. Approximately 150m of the northern boundary from the junction of Bryn Lane and Ridley Wood Road is marked only by a timber post and wire fence allowing open views into this part of the site.

#### **Public Rights of Way**

- 4.9 There is a public right of way along the southern site boundary line from the B5130 in the east to Bryn Lane in the west. This was not accessible at the time of the survey. The local authority has confirmed that this path is shown on the definitive footpath map and that it has been illegally obstructed.
- 4.10 Other rights of way in the vicinity of the site lead north from Ridley Wood Road and further east from the B5130.

#### **Topography and Drainage**

- 4.11 The landform in the areas in the immediate vicinity of the application does not vary greatly and is typical of lowland floodplain associated with the River Dee which flows within a south-north orientated corridor approximately 2.5km due east of the application site. Land to the east of the application site tends to fall very gently towards the River Dee.
- 4.12 The fields within the application site are generally level although there is an overall fall from the junction of Bryn Lane and Ridley Wood Road to the south eastern corner of the site of approximately 4m. Ridley Wood Road is slightly higher than the application northern section of the site by 0.5-1.0m
- 4.13 The nature of the very gentle topography means that there are few high points or significant public vantage points in the vicinity from which the site can be openly viewed. Distant high ground at Peckforton is visible in views on the skyline in a north easterly direction. Peckforton Hills are approximately 15km from the site.
- 4.14 Wetland habitats, natural and man-made field ponds, ditches and watercourses are common features of the local landscape. Ponds are frequently distributed within the surrounding landscape and the application site contains five ponds.

#### **Vegetation**

- 4.15 The northern section of the application site is typical of the agricultural land in the surrounding area. Fields are used for grazing or grassland, are medium-sized and are generally regular in shape. Fields are bounded by mature hedges which contain a high number of mature oak trees.
- 4.16 Tree groups and small woodland blocks are important features of Wrexham Industrial Estate. A dense block of woodland runs east-west through the application site. The woodland (and other trees) is protected by a TPO. Tree cover generally is focussed around the site perimeters, field boundaries and around ponds.

- 4.17 An Arboricultural Survey of the application site has been undertaken by TEP and the findings are provided in the accompanying document TEP 1697.001 and Tree Constraints Plan D1697.002.
- 4.18 Parts of the southern section of the application site have been previously developed and comprise a mixture of former field boundary hedges; disturbed ground with species-diverse but patchy vegetation coverage; areas of scrub vegetation; areas of hard standing and piled debris/rubble.

#### **Land Use and Settlement Pattern**

- 4.19 The land use of the area surrounding the site to the north east and south is predominantly agricultural.
- 4.20 The built area of Wrexham town is west of the application site and Wrexham Industrial Estate. The intervening land between Wrexham town and the industrial estates is approximately 2km comprising open countryside interspersed with woodland.
- 4.21 There are few settlements within the area surrounding the application site. The nearest is Isycoed 700m to the east. Isycoed is a dispersed settlement, the core of the village seems to be focussed around the church, although a number of dwellings follow a linear form along the B5130, approximately 300m or more from the village core. Ridleywood to the northeast of the site is a dispersed settlement lacking a defined core. Buildings/dwellings alongside Ridley Wood Road are widely spaced apart; other properties are scattered farms.
- 4.22 The large warehouse-type buildings and tall structures are associated with Wrexham Industrial Estate. Existing development of this nature adjoins the application site immediately to the south and west. Existing large scale industrial buildings especially those within the Kellogg's site off Bryn Lane, are features in views towards the site from the surrounding area.

### **5.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.1 This assessment of effects on landscape and views is based upon the proposed layout as presented on Fletcher Architects drawings:
- PL 02 Proposed Site Plan
  - PL 06 Elevations TDG Ph 1;
  - PL 07 Elevations TDG Ph1 & 2; and also in
  - Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan D1792/001 (Figure 5).
- 5.2 The key features of the proposals are two industrial units and associated access, servicing, car parking and landscaping. A drainage strategy for the site has also been drawn up which proposes a series of new ponds which will be incorporated into the scheme and will provide additional scope for enhancing ecological/landscape benefits.
- 5.3 A detailed description of the proposed development is provided in the Planning Statement, by HOW Planning Consultants, accompanying this application. Reference is made below to the key elements related to effects on landscape and views.

- 5.4 The two rectangular buildings and associated outdoor ancillary and operational spaces require large areas of land. The building dimensions are:
  - For the northern unit 250m x 150m x 18m height ; and
  - For the southern unit 350m x 130m x 18m height.
- 5.5 Each building will be clad with a composite material, in colours to the Council's approval, which is described within the accompanying Design and Access Statement. For the purpose of assessment it has been assumed that a recessive matt grey colour finish will be used. The buildings will be enclosed by hard-standing, servicing areas and security fencing to the site boundaries.
- 5.6 The value of retaining mature trees and hedgerows for screening and habitats is appreciated and the layout has been developed so that the majority of existing perimeter hedgerows and protected trees would be retained. A robust scheme of new landscaping incorporating extensive ecological mitigation would form part of the proposals and supplement existing features. Trees and hedgerows to be retained within the development would be protected following the guidance contained within BS5837 (2005) and recognised good arboricultural practice.
- 5.7 A number of existing mature trees are subject of a Tree Preservation Order. Their positions are shown within the accompanying arboricultural report. The layout has been developed having regard to the tree constraints plan and to minimise tree loss generally. It would not be necessary to remove any of these protected trees to enable the development.
- 5.8 Shrubby vegetation predominantly in the southern section of the site would need to be removed to allow construction of the new buildings and ancillaries. A small loss of this habitat is considered preferable and can be replaced more easily than great crested newt breeding ponds/terrestrial habitat and other priority habitats such as species-rich grassland. New native trees and shrubs would be planted in suitable locations throughout the development site and within a dedicated mitigation area to the eastern area of the application site.
- 5.9 The central woodland alongside a watercourse will be retained as part of the development. This is considered an important feature for both amenity and nature conservation value and would not be affected.
- 5.10 A scheme of new soft landscape and ecological mitigation is indicated on Figure 5. The landscape and ecology principles which have been adopted for this scheme are:
  - Protect and retain existing TPO trees;
  - Protect and retain existing hedgerows and mature trees around site perimeters;
  - Protect and retain mature trees, hedgerow and scrub habitat within the development site as far as practicable;
  - Replace any hedgerows removed as part of the development in suitable locations and enhance perimeter hedges by planting new trees;

- Use primarily native tree and hedgerow species within new planting mixes;
- Plant new groups of trees at key locations within the application site, where possible link with existing planting to create wildlife corridors.
- As far as possible protect and retain existing ponds and watercourses;
- Create a dedicated mitigation area which provides a range of landscape features as compensation for losses incurred within the development site and provides the required level of mitigation in relation to protected species.

5.11 The design has been informed by detailed ecological surveys and appraisal. A detailed management plan will be produced at a later stage and means of delivering appropriate maintenance regime for the landscaped ground and ecological mitigation area. The local Wildlife Trust will be approached in relation to this and it is hoped that agreement can be reached to ensure it becomes the main body responsible for future maintenance of the mitigation area.

## 6.0 BASELINE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VIEWS

### Method for Landscape and Visual Assessment

6.1 The assessment included a desk-based study and field study for both the landscape and visual assessment, undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects from TEP during August 2008. This included walking the site and its immediate locality and travelling by car and foot in the wider area from which the proposed development was likely to be visible.

6.2 Landscape assessment seeks to identify the key features of landscape character in the area and considers the effect the proposed development will have on this character. Visual assessment considers the views of and into the area and the impacts of the proposed development upon those views. There is no prescribed method for assessing the above effects. The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment have produced guidelines which have been used as a basis for establishing the method for this assessment (*Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2002*).

6.3 A description of the method used for landscape and visual assessment is provided at Appendix 1.

### Baseline Landscape Character – Desk Based Assessment

6.4 The following sections highlight the findings from the study of relevant documents on landscape character.

#### Landscape Designations

6.5 There are no national designations relating to landscape quality or value which apply to the development site. As stated above, land approximately 1km to the east falls within a Special Landscape Area under policy EC5 of the Wrexham UDP and land approximately 1.5km to the west is designated as a Green Barrier under policy EC1.

- 6.6 The River Dee due east at approximately 2.5km from the eastern edge of the application site is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest designated for its important varied river habitats and associated species and is a notable landscape feature.
- 6.7 The Council's LANDMAP SPG identifies a series of landscape character areas which identify key elements and features.

Published Landscape Character Assessments

- 6.8 Published assessments relevant to the application site are:
- Countryside Council for Wales LANDMAP national information system; and
  - Wrexham County Borough Council LANDMAP Supplementary Planning Guidance (2007).

Countryside Council for Wales LANDMAP

- 6.9 The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) operates the LANDMAP national information system. The system provides information for taking landscape into account in decision-making and allows information about landscape to be gathered, organised and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set.
- 6.10 At present the only information available through LANDMAP relating to the proposed development site at Bryn Lane is a Cultural Landscape Assessment. This assessment considers the relationship that exists between people and places; how people have given meaning to places; how the landscape has shaped their actions; and their actions have shaped the landscape.
- 6.11 The survey is relatively subjective and makes little reference to landscape character. The survey states that Wrexham Industrial Estate has its origins within World War II and preserves some wartime features. It is noted that the site at Bryn Lane is on the periphery of the estate.

Wrexham County Borough Council LANDMAP Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 6.12 Wrexham County Borough Council produced Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in 2007 following a LANDMAP study undertaken to identify the key elements and features which make up the landscape in Wrexham Borough.
- 6.13 The LANDMAP SPG places Wrexham Industrial Estate within a distinct character area. The development site lies on the periphery of the estate and consequently lies adjacent to the Wrexham Industrial Estate Character Area 11 and currently falls within the adjacent Dee Terraces Character Area 13c. The two character areas are summarised below although it should be noted that the principle of employment use on the application site has already been accepted through the UDP Proposals Plan allocation.

*Wrexham Industrial Estate Character - Area 11*

6.14 The south eastern corner of the application site falls within this character area. It is described as an area of mixed manufacturing and business uses located on the site of a World War II munitions depot. It is visible from afar with many of the buildings dwarfing the human scale. It is a major focus for employment but also contains species- rich grassland, scrub and wetland habitats.

6.15 The Landscape Character Area Guidance for Wrexham Industrial Estate describes it as an 'island' of development within the countryside due to its origins as a World War II ordnance depot.

6.16 The visual character of the area is described as:

- Urban built land, mixed industrial development;
- Massive buildings which can be seen from far distant viewpoints;
- Relatively flat with a network of small ditches, streams and ponds; and
- Set within low-lying pastoral farmland, and incorporating former hedgerow oak trees.

6.17 The Geological and Ecological Character of the area is described as:

- Located within a large area of glacial till;
- The western part of the industrial estate (adjacent to the site) is undulating, whereas the eastern part is flatter;
- The area drains south into the River Clywedog, then into the River Dee and small parts of the industrial estate are within the floodplain;
- Much made-up land, some of it contaminated;
- Small watercourses, ditches and ponds are frequent, providing good habitat;
- There are large but declining areas of species-rich neutral grassland;
- Area includes Erlas Black Wood – an area of semi-natural broadleaved woodland.

6.18 The guidance states that the estate is sensitive to development of industrial plots that do not take into account the potential loss of biodiversity and cultural heritage, or the impact on amenity and economic status of the estate. Such developments should not be permitted. It states that future management of the estate should enhance the setting of the estate and mitigate visual impact on the wider surroundings.

*Dee Terraces Character Area – 13c*

6.19 The proposed application site currently falls primarily within this character area as shown in Figure 1. It is a low-lying, flat, intensively farmed landscape where field ponds, roadside and field ditches are common. Hedgerows and hedgerow trees are abundant. Dispersed farms, hamlets and villages are often built in redbrick. The rural character is considered to be under pressure in this character area.

6.20 The Dee Terraces Character Area is an agricultural lowlands landscape type, characterised by its flatness. The key characteristics are:

- Uniformly low-lying flat open farmland with long views where hedgerows permit;
- Field pattern is medium to large scale, with fields regular and semi regular in shape;
- Dispersed pattern of attractive villages, hamlets and farms, traditionally of red brick; and
- The A483 is a physical barriers and source of noise.

6.21 The Geological and Ecological Character of the area are described as:

- The area is formed from fluvioglacial drift consisting of till and alluvial deposits;
- Soils are mainly derived from glacial till with generally a grade 3 agricultural land classification;
- The area is intensively farmed with some arable cultivation and little biodiversity interest except a green network of hedges and mature trees;
- Rivers, streams and abundant field and roadside ditches provide aquatic habitats of high value.

6.22 The guidance states that the integrity of the Dee Terraces landscape is highly vulnerable to continuing development and recreational pressures and to economic changes which threaten traditional farming. Future management of the area should aim to conserve rural character; preserve geo-diversity; manage farmland for increased biodiversity; preserve and evaluate archaeological heritage; and to maintain and support cultural character.

6.23 An assessment of the character of the application site and surrounding area is included in the following sections.

#### **Baseline Landscape Character– Site Assessment**

6.24 The field assessment of landscape character was undertaken broadly within the zone of potential visibility of the development. Existing landscape features are illustrated in Figure 3.

6.25 The application site is to the north east of the Wrexham Industrial Estate. It incorporates some areas of previously developed land and hard-standing in the southern part of the site but otherwise is predominantly farmland. The landform is generally flat across the site, although the eastern boundary is marked by a deep steep-sided ditch. The wider landscape tends to slope gently towards the River Dee which is approximately 2.5km to the east from the eastern edge of the site.

6.26 There is a corridor of dense vegetation across the site which divides the northern and southern parts of the application site. This corridor consists of a small watercourse lined by mature trees and tall shrubs and herbaceous vegetation. This forms a strong visual barrier across the site.

6.27 There are mature trees present throughout the application site, most of which are hedgerow trees. 37No individual trees in the northern section of the site are protected by TPO, the majority are oak.

- 6.28 There is a ditch running north-south along the field boundary. Vegetation along this brook is low and scrubby and includes species such as willow. There are five ponds within the site, each surrounded by scrubby vegetation.
- 6.29 The field pattern is regular and fields are medium-sized. They are bordered by mature well-managed hedgerows, often clipped to a height of around 1.5m which allows views over at eye level. Mature trees are common within the hedgerows. These are almost exclusively mature oak trees around the application site although there are smaller numbers of other species such as ash, poplar and willow.
- 6.30 Land use of the site is mainly agricultural, although the southern section presently seems neglected closest to the neighbouring industrial site. Land cover is rough grassland with areas of scrub and marshy land. The land is not intensively grazed and much of the grass is long. The southern part of the site is generally impinged by industrial use close the south east boundary and has been previously developed. Disused structures have been demolished; debris, tracks and areas of hard standing remain.
- 6.31 The site has a mixed character. It adjoins large scale industry to the south and west whilst adjoining a largely undeveloped rural landscape to the north and east. Industrial built form on neighbouring land strongly influences the character of the application site, particularly the Kellogg's complex which is a prominent feature in the background of most views from the north, east and south east. The southern section is disrupted by existing and previous development, fragmenting landscape features and giving an unkempt appearance. The northern section bears a stronger relationship to the surrounding countryside being currently in agricultural use, having intact field boundaries and frequent mature oak trees which are strong features.
- 6.32 The desk study identified that the application site falls within two character areas identified by Wrexham CBC: Wrexham Industrial Estate – Area 11; and Dee Terraces - Area 13c. The application site largely falls within the Dee Terraces landscape character area and the northern section of the application site is considered to be consistent with the characteristics identified in the SPG. The southern section of the site is partially within Wrexham Industrial Estate – Area 11 and to have characteristics consistent with this character area.
- 6.33 The character of the wider landscape is consistent with the Council's landscape character areas. To the north, east and south the landform is flat and low-lying with numerous streams and ditches running through the landscape. Dense hedgerows line the regular fields and hedgerow trees are common. Land use is predominantly agricultural. There is limited woodland cover in the wider landscape but the landscape has a wooded appearance because of the high numbers of large mature hedgerows and oak trees.
- 6.34 To the west the landscape character is dominated by the industrial estate. This comprises predictably a variety of industrial buildings, access roads and associated ancillary areas, although there are a small number of private residences amongst industrial buildings such as those at the junction of Bryn Lane and Ridley Wood Road which overlook the application site.

- 6.35 There are some large buildings which are visible within long distance views, although the overall visual impact of the industrial estate on the wider landscape is mitigated by the presence of a network of hedgerows and trees over relatively level landform. A detailed assessment of views is presented below.

### **Visual Assessments**

#### Visual Receptors

- 6.36 An analysis of the importance and sensitivity of visual receptors forms part of the baseline information for visual assessment. Visual receptors typically include:-
- Users of recreational landscapes/public footpaths and bridleways;
  - Residents
  - Users of public sports grounds and amenity open space;
  - Users of public roads, railways;
  - Workers (in their workplace).
- 6.37 Views of and from within valued landscapes are also considered to be visual receptors (*LI/IEMA, 2002*).
- 6.38 Sensitivity of visual receptors depends upon location of viewpoint, expectations and activity of the receptor and the importance of the view (its appearance in guidebooks, on tourist maps, in facilities provided for its enjoyment and references to it in literature or art).
- 6.39 In this case, visual receptors comprise primarily:
- walkers using the surrounding public footpath network
  - users of Ridley Wood Road in the north, Bryn Lane in the west and the B5130 in the east.
  - residents of neighbouring dwellings including those on Ridley Road, on the corner of Bryn Lane and Ridley Wood Road and those in the village of Isycoed.
- 6.40 Footpath users with open views of the proposed development were judged to have a high level of sensitivity, primarily as they were using the rights of way for recreation and enjoyment of the countryside. Views from residential properties are assigned a high level of sensitivity. Motorists were assigned a low level of sensitivity, as views of the development would be fleeting, and only glimpsed through gaps between roadside vegetation.

#### Importance of views

- 6.41 It is considered that the majority of views are primarily of importance to local residents, as there are no tourist facilities in the area and the public rights of way are generally only of local importance rather than forming parts of national trails or long-distance routes.
- 6.42 The extent of potential visibility of the proposed development is illustrated in Figure 2. This was determined initially through analysis of topography and features on Ordnance Survey mapping, followed by field survey to verify the extent of potential visibility and identify features which might screen views. No access to properties was sought and the assessment is based upon a best assumption from publicly accessible viewpoints.

### Baseline Views

- 6.43 The application site lies at the north east corner of the Wrexham Industrial Estate. It is bordered to the south and west by existing industrial buildings, the Kellogg's building to the west being particularly large and prominent in views.
- 6.44 Views of the application site are generally not possible from a southerly and westerly direction as these views are obscured by the existing industrial buildings.
- 6.45 The application site is largely enclosed by existing trees and hedgerows on the boundaries. These features filter views to the site from Ridley Wood Road to the north and the B5130 to the east. Where there are gaps in the hedges there are views into the site.
- 6.46 Views towards the proposed site are generally filtered by hedges and trees. The topography is flat and low-lying and these features provide a barrier in the landscape which restrict longer distance views. There are some views from upper storey windows of properties in the surrounding landscape.

### Public Viewpoints

#### *Receptor A - Views from Ridley Wood Road and the north*

- 6.47 Ridley Wood Road adjoins the northern boundary of the application site. There is a mature hedgerow clipped to an approximate height of 1.5m which helps to filter views into the site although there are glimpsed views through gaps in the hedge. The densely vegetated brook corridor is visible to the south bordering the northern section of the site. Existing tall industrial buildings on Bryn Lane are a prominent feature within views generally towards the site from Ridley Wood Road.
- 6.48 Views towards the site become more distant from Francis Lane approximately 650m to the north and are generally interrupted by the network of existing hedgerows and trees. Hedgerows and numerous large hedgerow trees filter or obscure views meaning that where the northern section of the site is visible it is only glimpsed and forms a small part of the view.
- 6.49 The landform is low-lying and relatively flat. Long distance views are restricted by field boundary hedgerows and trees. Hedgerows readily form visual barriers alongside roads and footpaths. Views are typically over short distances.

#### *Receptor B - Views from the B5130 and the east*

- 6.50 The B5130 is to the east of the site running approximately parallel with the eastern application site boundary at an average distance of 350m. There are a number of houses and small farms intermittently along both sides of this road. Where buildings are absent roadside hedges with a ditch in places follow the line of the road.
- 6.51 Views towards the application site from the B5130 are typically filtered by hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees, tree groups and intermittent built form. Hedges are occasionally low and where this occurs views over into adjoining farmland are possible and towards the eastern boundary of the application site.
- 6.52 There are filtered views of the existing industrial building immediately south of the southern application site boundary. The shallow pitched roofline forms an element

of views typically from the B5130 close to Barn Farm and Marshley Farm to the east and north east respectively.

- 6.53 The mature linear group of trees which follows the brook across the centre of the site is prominent in views. It forms a visual barrier between the northern and southern sections of the application site in some views and filters views of the existing industrial buildings west of Bryn Lane.
- 6.54 The upper sections of industrial buildings on Bryn Lane, especially those within the Kellogg's complex, are visible on the skyline of most views from this direction.
- 6.55 From the southern section of the B5130 views west towards the site are restricted and often obscured by houses and farm buildings around Isycoed.
- 6.56 Further east of the B5130 views of the application site are predominantly screened by hedges and trees. There are filtered views of the taller industrial buildings on Bryn Lane appearing above the hedgerows and trees.
- 6.57 Views from other lanes and footpaths beyond the B5130 are typically obscured by hedgerows and trees. There are some distant and filtered views of the largest industrial buildings beyond the application site.
- 6.58 Long distance views towards the application site from the direction of the River Dee are generally obscured by a combination of gently sloping landform and a network of hedgerows and trees.

*Receptor C - Views from Oak Wood Road and the south*

- 6.59 This road is approximately 1km south of the site. Large industrial buildings are present in views north and obscure the majority of views towards the site. The presence of hedgerows, mature trees and groups of trees and shrubs around frequently occurring ponds add to the visual barriers preventing views of the site from this direction.

*Receptor D - Views from Bryn Lane and the west*

- 6.60 The northern section of Bryn Lane currently forms the edge of the industrial estate. Views from this road typically comprise large industrial buildings; security fences or enclosures; associated operational areas; roadside hedges and blocks of trees.
- 6.61 Views towards the application site are predominantly screened by existing development except for the northern section approximately 150m from the junction with Ridley Wood Road. From here open into the site are possible due to the absence of a field boundary hedge and trees.
- 6.62 The southern section of the site is screened by existing trees and hedges particularly the protected trees alongside an existing track leading off Bryn Lane approximately 150m south of Ridley Wood Road.

*Receptor E – Public Right of Way to the north*

- 6.63 This footpath links to Ridley Wood Road opposite the northern application site. It crosses an open field immediately north and emerges through a field boundary hedge onto Ridley Wood Road. The path crosses an open field for approximately 200m immediately north of the application site boundary however hedges filter views towards the site. Further north this path follows hedge-lines which also obscures views.
- 6.64 Views from the path north of Ridley Wood Road currently contain industrial buildings and structures as prominent elements. Short distance views are of surrounding open fields bounded by hedgerows.

*Receptor F – Public Right of Way to the east*

- 6.65 This footpath links to the eastern side of the B5130 approximately 110m north of Park Cottage. Views towards the application site in a westerly direction are filtered through field boundary hedgerows and trees. Industrial buildings within the Kellogg's complex are present in the background of views.
- 6.66 Views towards the application site from the footpath further east are often obscured by hedgerows. The path follows alongside hedges in part and for other sections crosses open fields. Landform does not vary substantially and is relatively level. Hedgerows and mature trees create effective visual barriers.

*Receptor F – Public Right of Way to the southeast*

- 6.67 This route of this footpath runs from an easterly direction through Barn Farm over the B5130 and follows a route westwards towards the site. At its closest point the path is approximately 50m from the south eastern site boundary however the path is currently obstructed and cannot be walked.
- 6.68 The following description is a best assessment of views from this footpath taken from the nearest accessible points close to the village hall playing field and from within the site close to the south eastern corner.
- 6.69 The line of the footpath would follow a route towards the site in a westerly direction from Barn Farm along a hedge and tree-lined field boundary. It is anticipated that most views from the footpath would be filtered and in part obscured by the mature trees and hedges.
- 6.70 Views into the south eastern corner of the application site may be possible where the footpath is at its closest. Views are anticipated to contain field boundary vegetation and scrub alongside the ditch on the eastern site boundary in the foreground existing industrial buildings and outdoor storage/operational areas are anticipated to be prominent.

Private Viewpoints

*Receptor 1 – Whitefield Stables on Ridley Wood Road*

- 6.71 This is a two storey farmhouse orientated with its gable facing Ridley Wood Road and front elevation west towards the northern edge of the application site. The dwelling is approximately 330m from the northern application site boundary. The main garden area is at the rear of the property and is enclosed by tall garden

plants and hedging. Views from the dwelling are anticipated to be generally open from upper storey windows and filtered from the lower storey. Views west from the garden at the rear of the property are obscured by the building and existing vegetation.

*Receptor 2 – Larkfield Lodge, junction of Ridley Wood Road and the B5230*

- 6.72 The property faces northwest and has oblique views towards the application site at a distance of approximately 350m. The dwelling is single storey and at present views from this property will comprise the junction of the B5130 and Ridley Wood Lane; field boundary hedges, individual mature trees; and neighbouring farmland. The buildings and garden vegetation at Whitefield Stables are likely to partially obscure views towards the application site. The upper sections of tall industrial building are anticipated to be a notable element in the background of views.

*Receptor 3 – Park Cottage, B5130.*

- 6.73 This is a small single storey dwelling with the front elevation facing onto the B5130 and away from the application site. The property is due east of the northern section of the application site at a distance of approximately 330m and is north of the on site central linear woodland.
- 6.74 There are a number of out-buildings to the rear of the property which partly obscure views west towards the site. The garden contains tall shrubs and trees which additionally filter views from the garden and windows.
- 6.75 The central linear woodland in the foreground restricts views of the southern part of the site.

*Receptor 4 – 1-4 Marshley and Marshley Farm, B5130*

- 6.76 The front elevations of this row of properties face a south westerly direction towards the southern section of the application site. Dwellings are at a distance of approximately 260m from the eastern site boundary.
- 6.77 Front gardens have low planting and clipped hedges which allows open views from the lower and upper storey windows. Present views are typically of farmland with the rooflines and upper parts of taller buildings such as those within the Kellogg's complex visible in the distance above hedgerows. Some views are filtered by field boundary hedges and hedgerow trees.
- 6.78 The northern section of the site is not visible from these properties nor from the B5130 at this point. This central linear woodland in the foreground restricts views of the northern part of the site.

*Receptor 5 – Barn Farm, Plum Tree Farm and adjacent properties, B5130*

- 6.79 Barn Farm is on the east side of the B5130 and has its front elevation facing west towards the application site. Plum Tree Farm and three other properties adjacent are on the west side of the B5130.
- 6.80 These properties offer the closest views from residential properties towards the site from the surrounding area (at a distance of around 250m from the eastern edge of the application site).

- 6.81 Views from Barn Farm are interrupted by built form on the opposite side of the road although the southern part of the application site is glimpsed between buildings.
- 6.82 Typical views from this collection of properties towards the southern section of the application site would be filtered or screened from ground floor windows or outdoor spaces by planting within gardens, field boundary hedges and mature trees. Views from upper storey windows would be more open.
- 6.83 Industrial elements form a substantial part of views from these properties. These elements include long shallow pitched rooflines of industrial buildings and notably taller buildings and flues within the Kellogg's site at the northern end of Bryn Lane.

*Receptor 6 – Village Hall, recreation ground and adjacent properties, B5130.*

- 6.84 The village hall and a row of five houses are on the west side of the B5130 have front elevations facing east, away from the site. Buildings are two storeys and are anticipated to give views west from rear windows towards the site.
- 6.85 Views from ground floor windows are anticipated to be largely screened by garden vegetation and field boundary hedges. Filtered views are likely from upper storey windows towards the application site between field boundary hedges and mature trees. These views contain industrial elements as prominent features.
- 6.86 The sports field/recreation area to the rear of the village hall is predominantly enclosed by tall hedges containing mature trees. This vegetation obscures views towards the site. However filtered views towards the southern section of the application site are possible from the northern edge of the sports field where the field boundary is marked by a low hedge and ditch.

*Receptor 7 – School and adjacent properties, B5130.*

- 6.87 The village school and adjacent properties are south east of the application site at approximately 470m (from the south eastern edge).
- 6.88 As from other properties in the locality, views from these towards the southern section of the application site would be filtered or screened from ground floor windows and outdoor spaces by planting within gardens, field boundary hedges, mature trees. More open views may be available from upper storey windows. Baseline views typically contain large industrial elements, often long shallow pitched rooflines and other taller structures such as chimneys. These are seen within an overlapping network of intact hedgerows, small woodland groups and mature hedgerow trees.

*Receptor 9 – 2, 4 and 6 Bryn Lane*

- 6.89 These are the closest residences to the application site. The properties are on the opposite side of Bryn Lane from the northern section of the site facing onto the junction of Ridley Wood Road. There is approximately 23m distance between the existing fence on the north western application site boundary and the front garden of the nearest dwelling.
- 6.90 These properties comprise two single storey and one two storey, the latter seems to be partly used for offices/business. The dwellings are very close to existing

large buildings in the northern part of the Kellogg's site and when seen from cars travelling along Bryn Lane seem to merge with the surrounding building mass. Rear and side elevation views are anticipated to be dominated by these industrial buildings.

- 6.91 Front elevation windows offer views towards the site but intervening tall garden trees and shrubs provides partial screening. A row of leylandii conifers has been planted within the roadside verge to the front of numbers 4 and 6 and is likely to partly obscure views towards the site from these properties.

## 7.0 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

### *Effects on Local Landscape Character*

- 7.1 The proposed development would comprise two new buildings of an industrial nature with ancillary development, which would inevitably alter the characteristics of the application site. These buildings would be of a similar scale and architectural style to those present throughout Wrexham Industrial Estate.
- 7.2 The introduction of these new features would be particularly notable in the northern section where the landscape characteristics are closely aligned with those of the Dee Terraces. The anticipated effects on the character of the southern section of the site are lower in scale because this part of the site has been previously built on, is disrupted and landscape character has been weakened.
- 7.3 The application site is within an area of transition between open countryside and an industry dominated landscape. If developed the application site would be most similar in character to the Wrexham Industrial Estate character area.
- 7.4 In response, the development seeks to accord with planning guidance by incorporating measures to achieve the management guidance aims set out in Wrexham CBC SPG for Character Area 11. This includes measures to enhance the setting and minimise visual impact by:
- the implementation of an extensive landscape scheme, using a palette of predominantly native tree and shrub species;
  - incorporation of suitable building design principles such as the use of recessive colours to elevations; and
  - appropriate siting to avoid noise and visual intrusion to sensitive receptors.
- 7.5 The abundance of mature hedgerows and oak trees is a significant attribute of the local landscape. Many of these are present within the application site and will be retained as part of the development. This will help to provide long term screening to the development, retain important habitats and a link to the characteristics of the surrounding landscape.
- 7.6 A linear woodland block (protected by a TPO) and watercourse running through the central part of application site form key landscape features. The woodland is a strong visual barrier and important wildlife corridor. Wet woodland is also regarded as of high ecological value. Occasional small woodlands are features of the surrounding landscape. The development proposes to protect this feature and to

provide further enhancement through the proposed plan of landscape and ecological mitigation.

- 7.7 The character of the southern section of the application site is of land which has been disrupted and currently lacks management. The internal character of this southern section of the application site lacks coherence as there has been development which has diluted the former agricultural character. Consequently it has a low sensitivity to change. It is not possible to openly view this part of the site from nearby public vantage points due to the combination of raised landform, built form and existing hedgerows, trees and scrub.
- 7.8 The wider surroundings are a largely intact rural landscape and the appearance of the northern section of the site is consistent with this character. This landscape has a high sensitivity to change due to its undeveloped rural character.
- 7.9 The relatively flat landform is a significant feature of the surrounding landscape. As part of the ecological mitigation plan there would be localised effects on landform due to the introduction of raised mounding to provide suitable shelter/hibernaculum for great crested newts and to assist in the mitigation of close views towards the site from sensitive receptors. These changes are unlikely to be discernable beyond the immediate vicinity of the site.
- 7.10 In summary, the mature trees and hedgerows within the application site are considered to positively contribute to the character of the surrounding landscapes, both industrial and rural. Their contribution is of value at a local scale. The changes as a consequence of the proposed development are permanent and long-term. Given the size and nature of the development the magnitude of effect on the local landscape is judged on balance to be of medium scale. The scale of effect is greater in the northern part of the site than in the southern part which has been previously developed in part and is impinged by existing industrial development. The overall significance of effect on landscape character is considered moderate adverse.

#### **Visual Assessment**

- 7.11 Views of the proposed development and particularly the new buildings would be primarily from north and easterly directions. With the exception of close views from Bryn Lane, views from the west and the south are generally obscured by existing built form of the industrial estate or are viewed within the context of an industrial setting.
- 7.12 Industrial elements are a key part of views and where they are tall such as within the Kellogg's complex they are most prominent over wider areas and a component part of many views. The proposed development would introduce new buildings of dimensions similar to other buildings within the industrial estate. The heights at the eaves of the two new buildings would be 18m. This means that they would be similar in height to existing buildings to the south.
- 7.13 Key receptors of high sensitivity are judged to be the residents of properties nearest to the application site on the B5130, Ridley Wood Road and Bryn Lane.

- 7.14 Views generally from the north and east towards the site are anticipated to alter to include the upper sections of the new buildings and roofline. Many views will be filtered by the existing network of trees and hedgerows. The content of views will largely remain the same comprising abundant hedgerows and large hedgerow trees; occasional small woodlands; long shallow pitched rooflines of industrial units; and a small number of tall structures such as chimneys or flues.
- 7.15 There are few public vantage points in the vicinity of the application site from where it can be openly viewed. Open views are anticipated to be from Bryn Lane and Ridley Wood Road and only into the northern section of the site.
- 7.16 There are four rural public footpaths within the immediate locality, within approximately 500m of the application site boundaries. Two of these are within 100m of the site boundary and most likely to experience a change in views as a result of the development.
- 7.17 The anticipated effects on views are presented in Table 1. The following sections provide more detailed information regarding the changes in views and assessment of effects where the most significant impacts are likely.

#### Public Viewpoints

##### *Receptor A - Views from Ridley Wood Road and the north*

- 7.18 Users of Ridley Wood Road are predicted to experience an appreciable change in the content of views toward the site. Views into the site would alter to contain a large building mass servicing areas and new landscaping. The background of industrial buildings and central linear woodland would remain in views but be partially obscured by development.
- 7.19 Existing boundary hedges and hedgerow trees would be retained along the northern site boundary and, together with new tree planting, would filter views.
- 7.20 Motorists would experience fairly fleeting views when travelling along Ridley Wood Road, whereas pedestrians and cyclists using the road and public footpaths would experience views of the development for a greater period of time. The proposed scheme of soft landscaping once established would be effective in providing long term mitigation and screening of eye level views. Roadside hedgerows and trees would provide enclosure and established visual barriers.
- 7.21 In the long term, views of the roofline and uppermost part of the building could be visible above trees. This would be typical of views throughout the industrial estate. It would not be appropriate to plant taller tree species which could obscure views of the buildings as this would require planting non-native/indigenous trees which would be incongruous with the surrounding landscape to the north and east. Rates of survival of large trees are poor and it is generally accepted that planting closer to the receptor is most effective.
- 7.22 The effect on views from Ridley Wood Road generally is judged to be of medium magnitude given that views of open fields will fundamentally change to incorporate industrial development and that it would affect receptors of typically low sensitivity (ie motorists). A public footpath links to Ridley Wood Road close to the application site and users of this path would be assigned a higher level of

sensitivity. However, it is anticipated that in comparison to road users this footpath would be walked by relatively small numbers and the view would be consistent with other views from this path.

- 7.23 The visual effects of this development would be most notable during the early stages while in the longer term (after 5 years) effects would be mitigated by the newly-established scheme of landscape structure planting around the site. The siting of the building to allow a buffer between the road and the building and operational areas would help to mitigate visual effects and allow sufficient area for new planting. The proposed development would be considered to have an overall impact of moderate significance on views from Ridley Wood Road.

*Receptor B - Views from the B5130 and the east*

- 7.24 The central woodland within the site provides effective screening between the northern and southern sections of the application site. Views of the application site are restricted to either the northern or the southern section depending on where views are taken from the B5130. The two sections of the development would not typically be visible together, although the roofline of the buildings may be seen in some views filtered through existing trees.
- 7.25 Receptors are generally considered to be of medium level of sensitivity as in the main these would be motorists although there may be small numbers of walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- 7.26 The nature of elements contained within views generally would not alter as a result of the development because industrial buildings form a prominent part of baseline views. However, new elements would be brought closer to residences than they are at present.
- 7.27 The scale and significance of effect on views is judged to be low because the development would retain a number of existing landscape features and would introduce new features consistent with baseline conditions. Baseline views contain elements of the industrial estate landscape and this would not significantly alter as a consequence of the development.

*Receptor C - Views from Oak Wood Road and the south*

- 7.28 Views from Oak Wood Road and to the south of the application site are distant (1km or more) and are predominantly obscured by intervening industrial development.
- 7.29 A negligible effect on views from Oak Road and further south and an overall impact of low significance as a result of the development is anticipated.

*Receptor D - Views from Bryn Lane and the west*

- 7.30 The application site is not visible for a large part of this road. Views towards the application site from the southern part of Bryn Lane are not possible due to the presence of large scale built form. Views are therefore unlikely to experience any change as a consequence of the development.
- 7.31 Changes in views would be notable close to the existing TDG entrance, approximately 600m south of the junction with Ridley Wood Road, where trees

and hedges would need to be removed. Permanent changes in views would be anticipated through the erection of new industrial buildings and ancillaries.

- 7.32 Bryn Lane is a key route within Wrexham Industrial Estate and as such users/receptors are anticipated to be almost exclusively workers and visitors on business. These receptors are assigned low level of sensitivity as they would be focussed on work and would expect to see this type of development and buildings within an industrial estate.
- 7.33 The scale and overall significance of effect on views from Bryn Lane are judged to differ slightly between the northern and southern sections of the application site because of the separation provided by the on site central linear woodland and change in adjoining landscapes.
- 7.34 For the northern section the magnitude of effect is considered to be of large-medium scale primarily because of the loss of the present open rural character. The overall significance of the development on these views and on receptors of low sensitivity is judged to be moderate at worst. The effect on views as a result of development within the southern section of the application site is low within the industrial setting. The proposed development would be consistent with the surroundings and the overall significance of the development for this section of the site would be low.

*Receptor E – Public Right of Way to the north*

- 7.35 Users of this path currently experience a combination of foreground views across open fields and medium distance views containing tall industrial structures visible above and between field boundary hedges and trees. Views are often filtered by field boundary vegetation.
- 7.36 Receptors of rural footpaths are generally assigned a high level of sensitivity because they tend to use such routes to experience the countryside. However, the footpath closely links to an established industrial estate and as some existing views contain elements of this industrial landscape often seen in the foreground.
- 7.37 The proposed development would change views to contain more similar elements to those existing and would bring them closer to the line of the footpath. It would introduce elements which would be consistent with the industrial estate but uncharacteristic of the adjacent rural landscape. The application site is in a peripheral location and as noted above falls within a transition area between two contrasting landscapes.
- 7.38 The proposed development would represent a substantial and permanent change in short distance views from this footpath particularly where it joins Ridley Wood Road. The retention of natural features within the development and the enhancement of these through a robust landscape scheme would assist in mitigating the long term effect on these views. Existing industrial elements are already prominent within views although the development would increase the amount and bring them closer to receptors. A medium scale effect on views south towards the application site on receptors of high sensitivity is judged to represent an overall impact of moderate significance.

*Receptor F – Public Right of Way to the southeast*

- 7.39 This footpath could not be walked at the time of survey and so assumptions have been made based on evidence gathered from the closest accessible points.
- 7.40 Views are likely to change when relatively close to the site boundary to include the upper part of the new building. This would be viewed adjacent to the existing TDG building the south and would represent an effect of low magnitude.
- 7.41 It is difficult to assign a judgement regarding the significance of impact in relation to potential users of this footpath given that it cannot be used at present. A relatively small group of users would walk this route for leisure purposes, or to walk to work, as it leads into the core of industrial estate further west. Walkers using the path for recreation would be generally be receptors of high sensitivity however the nature of views would remain largely similar. The anticipated scale of change is likely to be low. Based on assumptions of the characteristics of the surrounding area and views available from this path the overall significance of impact would be low.

Private Viewpoints

*Receptor 1 – Whitefield Stables and Harcourt, Ridley Wood Road.*

- 7.42 As these properties are residential, occupiers are generally assigned a high level of sensitivity when viewing the site from habitable rooms and gardens. Anticipated views would be over relatively short distances but often at oblique angles and filtered by surrounding hedges and trees. Visual impact from the ground level windows and garden are likely to be low as hedges generally screen views. The development is likely to be more openly viewed from the upper storey windows of the house at Whitefield Stables.
- 7.43 Existing field boundary vegetation filters views towards the site from the direction of these properties. Industrial buildings are a prominent feature of current views. The views from these properties are anticipated to change to include a new industrial building and new substantial areas of landscaping to the site perimeters and around the landscape/ecological mitigation area on the eastern side of the development.
- 7.44 The scale of effect on views as a result of the proposed development is considered to be moderate. There will be an alteration generally to views southwest but views will contain similar elements to those existing and the proposed landscape scheme would help to mitigate residual effects. The significance of the overall impact of development on views from these properties is judged to be moderate.

*Receptor 2 – Larkfield Lodge, junction of Ridley Wood Road and the B5130*

- 7.45 Views from this single storey property towards the development are typically oblique and would be filtered by intervening field boundary vegetation. A limited change in views is anticipated as the property does not experience views directed towards the development which in turn limits visual effects.
- 7.46 There would be a relatively minor change in views and to the key elements within them. The overall significance of impact is considered to be low.

*Receptor 3 – Park Cottage, B5130, north of Isycoed*

- 7.47 This single storey property has front elevation views east, away from the development. Views west are screened by garden and field boundary vegetation. The scale of effect on views is considered low as changes would be largely screened and these would not be openly viewed from this building. As a result the overall significance of impact is also considered to be low.

*Receptor 4 – 1-4 Marshley and Marshley Farm, properties along B5130*

- 7.48 Residents of these properties experience views towards the application site from front windows. Views from ground floors will generally be screened or filtered by field boundary hedges between the B5130 and the application site. Limited change in these views would be anticipated post development.
- 7.49 More open views are likely towards the application site from upper storey windows where industrial buildings are visible in existing views above the intervening hedgerows and trees. Views are anticipated to remain largely similar in content as a result of the development and new buildings would be seen against the backdrop of existing industrial buildings.
- 7.50 Views are over distances of over 250m meaning that the application site falls within the middle distance and is not immediately prominent in views. Only the southern section of the application site forms part of views from this location.
- 7.51 The magnitude of effect on views from these properties as a consequence of the development is considered to be moderate as there will be a partial alteration to the views experienced by sensitive receptors. Given that the proposed development falls within the context of surrounding industrial buildings already present in views the overall significance is considered to be low.

*Receptor 5 – Barn Farm and adjacent properties, B5130.*

- 7.52 Current views from the front windows of Barn Farm towards the application site are partially obscured by buildings opposite. These views are anticipated to alter to include the proposed southern building and will be viewed between buildings and intervening field boundary vegetation.
- 7.53 Residents of Plum Tree Farm and two adjacent properties are anticipated to currently experience fairly open views towards the southern section of the application site particularly from upper storey windows. Intervening field boundary vegetation is present between properties and the application site although it has been fragmented by previous development.
- 7.54 Existing industrial buildings (TDG and Kellogg's sites) are typically prominent features within existing views and this would remain similar after development. Changes would incorporate the new southern building into the industrial setting.
- 7.55 The addition of new landscaping to the eastern edge of the application site has potential to enhance and improve views from Barn Farm and adjacent properties by providing increased screening and a natural visual barrier along this boundary.
- 7.56 The effect on views is judged to be moderate and overall significance moderate to low with the potential for improvement on baseline conditions.

*Receptor 6 – Village Hall and adjacent properties, centre of Isycoed*

- 7.57 The village hall site is predominantly enclosed by hedges which restrict views towards the application site. Users of this site are judged to be of low sensitivity as they would generally be within the building and focussed on events and activities. Users of the playing field would similarly be anticipated to be focussing on sporting and recreation activities. Views from the field are generally restricted by tall boundary vegetation.
- 7.58 The rear boundaries of neighbouring properties are enclosed by tall vegetation and mature trees. Intervening field boundary hedges also interrupt views from these properties towards the site.
- 7.59 A minimal change in current views is anticipated. An overall low level of scale and significance of impact on views is predicted. The inclusion of the proposed landscaping to the south eastern corner of the application site would add further screening within views.

*Receptor 7 – School and adjacent properties, B5130 south.*

- 7.60 Views from this part of the B5130 are typically over 450m and the potential prominence of the development in views would be reduced. In addition, views towards the application site would typically be oblique and largely screened by garden plants and hedges, intervening field boundary hedges and trees. A negligible change in current views and an overall impact of low significance is anticipated.

*Receptor 9 – 2, 4 and 6, Bryn Lane.*

- 7.61 Residents of these properties are anticipated to experience the greatest degree of change in views. This is due to their close proximity to the northern section of the application site (around 23m) and because at this distance the site would form a substantial part of foreground views. The southern section of the site would not be visible.
- 7.62 Two of the properties are single storey and all front gardens of the properties are marked by boundary hedges. These restrict opportunities for views of the development site from ground floor rooms. One property is two storey with upper floor windows just visible above garden boundary vegetation. Currently open views into the application site may be available from these windows and a large scale change in views would be seen from the development. However, garden vegetation and conifers within the roadside verge to the front of the property will filter views from these windows.
- 7.63 Baseline views from these properties towards the application site are rural in nature and do not contain the industrial elements associated with the immediately adjoining site to the rear of the dwellings. Views from the front of these properties currently overlook open countryside in sharp contrast to the side and rear windows views directly onto industrial buildings, yards and car parking.

- 7.64 The proposed development is designed to incorporate a belt of tree planting and a new roadside hedge which would enclose the boundary opposite the residential properties. Potentially noisy elements of the development would be positioned away from the boundary facing residential properties. Finished floor and yard levels are proposed to be slightly lower by approximately 1m than Bryn Lane which will provide further enclosure and screening to mitigate impacts.
- 7.65 A large-medium scale change in views from this group of dwellings is anticipated which includes the introduction of a number of new and prominent features potentially affecting receptors of high sensitivity. There will be opportunities for open views of the development from these dwellings. This is considered alongside the fact that dwellings are within an industrial setting, situated immediately adjacent to industrial buildings although at present residents currently have an open countryside aspect to the front. The overall significance of impacts on views from these properties is judged to be high.

**Table 1: Summary of Effects on Views**

|              | RECEPTORS                         | SENSITIVITY  | PRINCIPAL NATURE OF CHANGE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT | SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECT |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| PUBLIC VIEWS |                                   |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                     |                        |
| A            | Ridley Wood Road and to the north | Moderate/Low | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>View of open fields bounded by hedges and trees. Backdrop of industrial buildings on Bryn Lane. Woodland restricts views south beyond one field.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Views of the development through existing hedges and trees. New planting will provide additional screening in the future. New building visible above hedges and trees close to roadside.</p> | Medium              | Moderate               |
| B            | B5130 and to the east             | Moderate/Low | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Central woodland restricts views north and south. Views over fields filtered by hedges and trees. Views contain industrial elements on skyline.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Existing vegetation will filter views to the west. Glimpsed views of the development through existing hedges and trees. Views contain industrial elements on skyline.</p>                     | Low                 | Low                    |
| C            | Oak Road and the south            | Moderate/Low | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Distant views often obscured by built form hedges and trees.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Distant views often obscured by built form hedges and trees.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Low                 | Low                    |
| D            | Bryn Lane and the                 | Moderate/Low | <i>Existing</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Northern:           | Northern:              |

|   |                                  |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                         |                                      |
|---|----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|   | west                             |      | <p>Views only possible when relatively close to the site. Views typically contain many industrial elements visible above boundary hedges and groups of trees.</p> <p>Northern section of site: Rural views of fields bounded by hedges and trees.</p> <p>Southern section of site: Views obscured by existing development hedgerows and trees.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i></p> <p>Northern: Views contain new industrial unit and ancillary development. New soft landscaping to site perimeters filters views.</p> <p>Southern: Views contain more industrial elements visible above hedges and trees</p> | <p>High/Medium</p> <p>Southern: Low</p> | <p>Moderate</p> <p>Southern: Low</p> |
| E | Public right of way to the north | High | <p><i>Existing</i></p> <p>Views south over fields interrupted by Ridley Wood Road. Views filtered by field boundary hedges and trees. Industrial element within the background of views.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i></p> <p>Foreground views contain industrial elements. Views are filtered by existing hedges and trees. New landscaping provides additional screening.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | High/Medium                             | Moderate                             |
| F | Public right of way to the south | High | <p><i>Existing</i></p> <p>Views filtered by existing trees and hedges. Middle distance and foreground views contain industrial elements.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i></p> <p>Views filtered by existing trees and hedges. Middle distance and foreground views contain industrial elements.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Low                                     | Moderate                             |

| PRIVATE VIEWS |                                                   |               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |        |              |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| 1             | Whitefield Stables and Harcourt, Ridley Wood Road | High/Moderate | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Views of fields bounded by hedges and trees. Industrial elements within the background of views. Existing vegetation and buildings filter or obscure views from ground floors. Open views available from upper storeys (Whitefield Stables).</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Views contain more industrial elements within middle distance. Existing vegetation and buildings filter or obscure views from ground floors. Open views available from upper storeys. Creation of landscape/ecological mitigation area increases amount of trees and hedges and adds future screening.</p> | Medium | Moderate     |
| 2             | Larkfield Lodge, B5130/Ridley Wood Road           | High/Moderate | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Oblique views towards the site, partially obscured by neighbouring buildings. Road junction, hedgerows and trees in foreground views. Industrial elements in the background of views.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Oblique views towards the site, partially obscured by neighbouring buildings. Road junction, hedgerows and trees in foreground views. Industrial elements in the background of views.</p>                                                                                                                                                                         | Low    | Moderate/Low |
| 3             | Park Cottage, B5130                               | High/Moderate | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Limited available views. Views from ground floor screened by outbuildings and existing vegetation. Woodland prevents views south.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Limited available views. Views from ground floor screened by</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Low    | Low          |

|   |                                                          |               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |            |              |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
|   |                                                          |               | outbuildings and existing vegetation. Woodland prevents views south.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |            |              |
| 4 | 1-4 Marshley and Marshley Farm, B5130                    | High/Moderate | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Views from ground floors filtered and screened by existing vegetation. More open views available from upper storeys. Views north restricted by woodland. Views contain industrial elements, particularly long rooflines.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Views from ground floors filtered and screened by existing vegetation. More open views available from upper storeys. Views north restricted by woodland. Views contain additional industrial elements particularly long rooflines.</p>                                                                                                                                                                            | Medium     | Moderate/Low |
| 5 | Barn Farm, Plum Tree Farm and adjacent properties, B5130 | High/Moderate | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Views contain industrial elements. Views from ground floors filtered and screened by existing vegetation, although some open views through breaks in hedges. More open views available from upper storeys. Views north restricted by raised ground and woodland.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Middle distance views contain additional industrial elements. Views from ground floors filtered and screened by existing vegetation, although some open views through breaks in hedges. More open views available from upper storeys. Views north restricted by raised ground and woodland. New landscaping will enclose industrial site boundaries adding screening.</p> | Medium/Low | Low          |
| 6 | Village Hall and adjacent properties, B5130              | Low           | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Existing hedges and trees restrict views. Some views filtered by field boundary vegetation. Industrial elements in the background of views.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Low        | Low          |

|   |                                               |               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |      |      |
|---|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
|   |                                               |               | <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Negligible change. Existing hedges and trees restrict views. Some views filtered by field boundary vegetation. Industrial elements closer in views.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |      |      |
| 7 | Village school and adjacent properties, B5130 | High/Moderate | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Fairly distant and oblique views typically obscured by existing hedges and trees. Distant views of industrial elements.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Negligible change. Fairly distant and oblique views typically obscured by existing hedges and trees. Distant views of industrial elements.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Low  | Low  |
| 8 | 2, 4 & 6 Bryn Lane                            | High/Moderate | <p><i>Existing</i><br/>Some open views of the site. Views typically rural consisting of fields enclosed by hedges and trees. Foreground views of Bryn Lane. Woodland in middle distance and foreground restricts views south. Garden hedges and trees filter views from ground floors, more open views available from upper storeys. Long distance views of wider landscape.</p> <p><i>Proposed</i><br/>Foreground views contain industrial elements as prominent features. Development obscures long distance views. Nature of views changes from open rural to built development. New landscaping to Bryn Lane frontage filters foreground views.</p> | High | High |

## 8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed development forms an extension to the existing Wrexham Industrial Estate. The land is currently at the edge of the industrial estate and has been allocated for employment use by the local planning authority in its Unitary Development Plan. The proposed development is consistent with the intentions of the UDP.
- 8.2 On the periphery of the established industrial estate the application site forms a transition between contrasting industrial and rural landscapes. The principle of future development is established and consequently changes in its characteristics can be reasonably anticipated. Changes will particularly affect openness in the northern section.
- 8.3 It is anticipated that effects will predominantly be localised and will have a limited impact on the wider rural landscape. A moderate adverse impact on the local landscape is predicted during the initial stages of the development, reducing as the new structure planting is established.
- 8.4 The mature vegetation within the application site, particularly the central woodland and hedgerows along the boundaries are important features which contribute to the character of the surrounding rural landscape. There are differences in landscape quality between the northern and southern sections of the application which in turn affect their ability to accommodate change. The northern section has strong features reflective of the surrounding rural farmland and is more sensitive to change of the nature proposed, whereas in the southern section of the application site there is far less coherence and this part is of low sensitivity and able to accommodate the proposed change.
- 8.5 This study has identified a number of sensitive receptors and view points which would be affected by the proposed development. These would be in three key areas and receptors: immediately north west of the site, Bryn Lane and numbers 2,4 & 6; due east of the site, receptors at Plum Tree Farm and adjacent properties on the B5130; and Whitefield Stables north east of the site. In order to reduce impacts on these key points, mitigation measures are included through inherent design of the buildings and site layout and through the implementation of the proposed Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan shown at Figure 4.
- 8.6 The development would result in changes in a number of views although many changes would be short term on the few close views primarily those from Ridley Wood Road and Bryn Lane. Generally the components of views would remain similar to those existing comprising large industrial buildings and associated features; boundary hedgerows; mature trees; and a backdrop of the tallest structures and rooflines.
- 8.7 Opportunities for views of the development are relatively limited from the surrounding area due to the generally level topography (land is relatively level offering no high vantage points) and limited public access to surrounding land. In views from the wider area the features on the site such as large buildings would merge with existing built form within the existing network of trees hedgerows and woodlands.

- 8.8 The assessment has highlighted impacts of high magnitude and high significance impacts in relation to views from Ridley Wood Road, dwellings at 2, 4 and 6 Bryn Lane and from a public footpath north of Ridley Wood Road. These judgements are not considered to be so high as to weigh against the grant of planning permission for the scheme. The development of the application site is accepted in principle through the UDP land allocation meaning that a change in landscape character and in views is recognised and acceptable. It would not be possible to maintain key characteristics of openness and a rural landscape and to avoid significant impacts on some close views whilst developing the site for business and industrial land uses.
- 8.9 The development seeks to minimise impact on trees. Many mature trees on the site would be retained within the development. The existing trees are considered to be important to the character of the setting and provided valuable screening to the development site in addition to valuable habitats.
- 8.10 A number of trees would need to be removed to enable the construction of new buildings. Existing trees protected by TPO will be retained within the development. Losses of trees has been minimised as far as possible through the manipulation of the scheme design. The arboricultural survey identifies the existing tree resource and the Arboricultural Impacts Assessment shows trees to be removed and recommended protection zones for those to be retained. The proposed landscape scheme would provide replacements for those lost through development; create links with existing wildlife corridors; enhance woodland and hedgerow habitats; provide diversity in species content and age structure within the tree population to help ensure longevity of tree stock.

## **APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHOD**

## APPENDIX 1: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHOD

### Landscape Assessment Method

Desk based research and field survey were undertaken to classify the landscape in the vicinity of the site into distinct types or character areas, and to identify which landscape features or elements form key characteristics of the area.

An evaluation was made of the importance or value of elements and character, the condition or quality of the landscape and also its capacity to accommodate change without significant effects upon its character.

Landscape value assessment is concerned with the relative value that is attached to different landscapes. In a policy context the usual basis for recognising certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of local or national designations. In non-designated landscapes the aim is to reflect the value of the landscape at a specific scale, identify the receptors to which it is important, and why the landscape is important to them.

Landscape condition (or quality) is a factual description of the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual and functional perspectives, also with reference to ecology.

Landscape sensitivity refers to the degree to which it can accommodate change without detrimental effects on its character. This sensitivity varies with:

- Existing land use;
- The pattern and scale of the landscape;
- Visual enclosure/openness of views, and distribution of visual receptors;
- The scope for mitigation, which would be in character with the existing landscape;
- The value placed on the landscape.

### Impact assessment: magnitude of effects

Impact assessment describes the likely nature and scale of changes to landscape elements and characteristics and consequential effects on landscape character resulting from the proposed development. A distinction is made between the scale of effect (e.g. large/medium/small); its nature (adverse or beneficial; negative or positive); and its duration (short, medium, long-term/permanent or temporary). More weight is usually given to effects that are greater in scale and permanent or long-term. In assessing the duration of the effect, consideration is given to the effectiveness of mitigation, particularly where planting is proposed for screening purposes.

Table 1: Criteria for Assessment of Magnitude of Effects

| Magnitude of Effect | Typical criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| High                | Total loss of or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape or view and/or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. |

| <b>Magnitude of Effect</b> | <b>Typical criteria</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Medium</b>              | Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline landscape or view and /or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. |
| <b>Low</b>                 | Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline landscape or view and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.                                                                    |
| <b>Negligible</b>          | Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline landscape or view and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape – approximating to the 'no change' situation.                                                   |

(Source: LI/IEMA 2002, p145)

### Significance of Landscape Effects

Having identified the effects, the significance of these effects has been evaluated. Significance is not related to an absolute scale but is a judgement according to criteria defined in terms of each development and its location. The two principal considerations in determining significance are the scale or magnitude of effect and the sensitivity of the location or receptor.

The significance of landscape effects has been judged according to the criteria outlined below in Table 2:

Table 2: Guidance on Significance of Landscape Effects

| <b>Significance</b>     | <b>Definition</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Severe adverse</b>   | The proposed scheme would result in effects that:<br>Are at a complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;<br>Would permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued characteristic features, elements and/or their setting;<br>Would cause a very high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished. |
| <b>Major adverse</b>    | The proposed scheme would result in effects that:<br>Cannot be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a severe adverse effect;<br>Are at a considerable variance to the landscape degrading the integrity of the landscape;<br>Will be substantially damaging to a high quality landscape.                                                                          |
| <b>Moderate adverse</b> | The proposed scheme would:<br>Be out of scale with the landscape or at odds with the local pattern and landform;<br>Leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Minor adverse</b>    | The proposed scheme would:<br>Not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape;<br>Affect an area of recognised landscape character.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Neutral</b>          | The proposed scheme would:<br>Complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;<br>Maintain existing landscape quality.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| Significance               | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Minor beneficial</b>    | The proposed scheme has the potential to:<br>Improve the landscape quality and character;<br>Fit in with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;<br>Enable the restoration of valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses. |
| <b>Moderate beneficial</b> | The proposed scheme would have the potential to:<br>Fit very well with the landscape character;<br>Improve the quality of the landscape through removal of damage caused by existing land uses.                                                                |

*(Source: LI/IEMA 2002, p140)*

### Visual Assessment Method

The first stage in visual impact assessment is to establish the extent and nature of existing views of the site from principal representative viewpoints, and the nature and character of the visual amenity of the potentially sensitive visual receptors (or viewers). This involves defining the area of study, which is the area approximately from which it is estimated that the development will be visible. This is undertaken initially through analysis of topography, followed by field survey to verify the extent of potential visibility, identify features which might screen views, and to identify potential visual receptors.

The field survey work for the visual assessment was carried out at the same time as the landscape assessment. No access to properties was sought and the assessment is therefore based on a best assumption from publicly accessible locations outside or close to properties.

An analysis of the importance and sensitivity of visual receptors forms part of the baseline information for visual assessment.

Visual receptors include:

- Users of recreational landscapes/public footpaths and bridleways including tourists and visitors;
- Residents;
- Users of public sports grounds and amenity open space;
- Users of public roads, railways, canals;
- Workers (in their workplace).

Views of and from within valued landscapes are also considered to be visual receptors (LI/IEMA, 2002). Sensitivity of visual receptors depends upon location of viewpoint, expectations and activity of the receptor and the importance of the view (its appearance in guidebooks, on tourist maps, in facilities provided for its enjoyment and references to it in literature or art).

Guidance indicates that the most sensitive receptors may include:

- Users of all outdoor recreational facilities including public rights of way, whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape;
- Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community;
- Occupiers of residential properties with views affected by the development.

In this process, lower storey views from residential properties are generally more sensitive than upper storey views, as these are the rooms in which residents spend more time experiencing the view. (This is not universally the case as some residences have living rooms on upper storeys.)

Most land use planning regimes consider that public views are of greater value than views from private property.

Assessment of impact involves identification of the nature of the change in view, in terms of:

- Extent of view
- Proportion of development visible
- Distance
- Whether views are transient or one of a sequence of views.

The analysis should also define the scale or magnitude of visual effects by considering:

- Scale of change of view (proportion occupied by development)
- Degree of contrast or integration
- Duration/nature
- Angle of view
- Distance
- Extent of area over which changes are visible.

Magnitude of effect has been evaluated using the same criteria for assessment presented in Table 1.

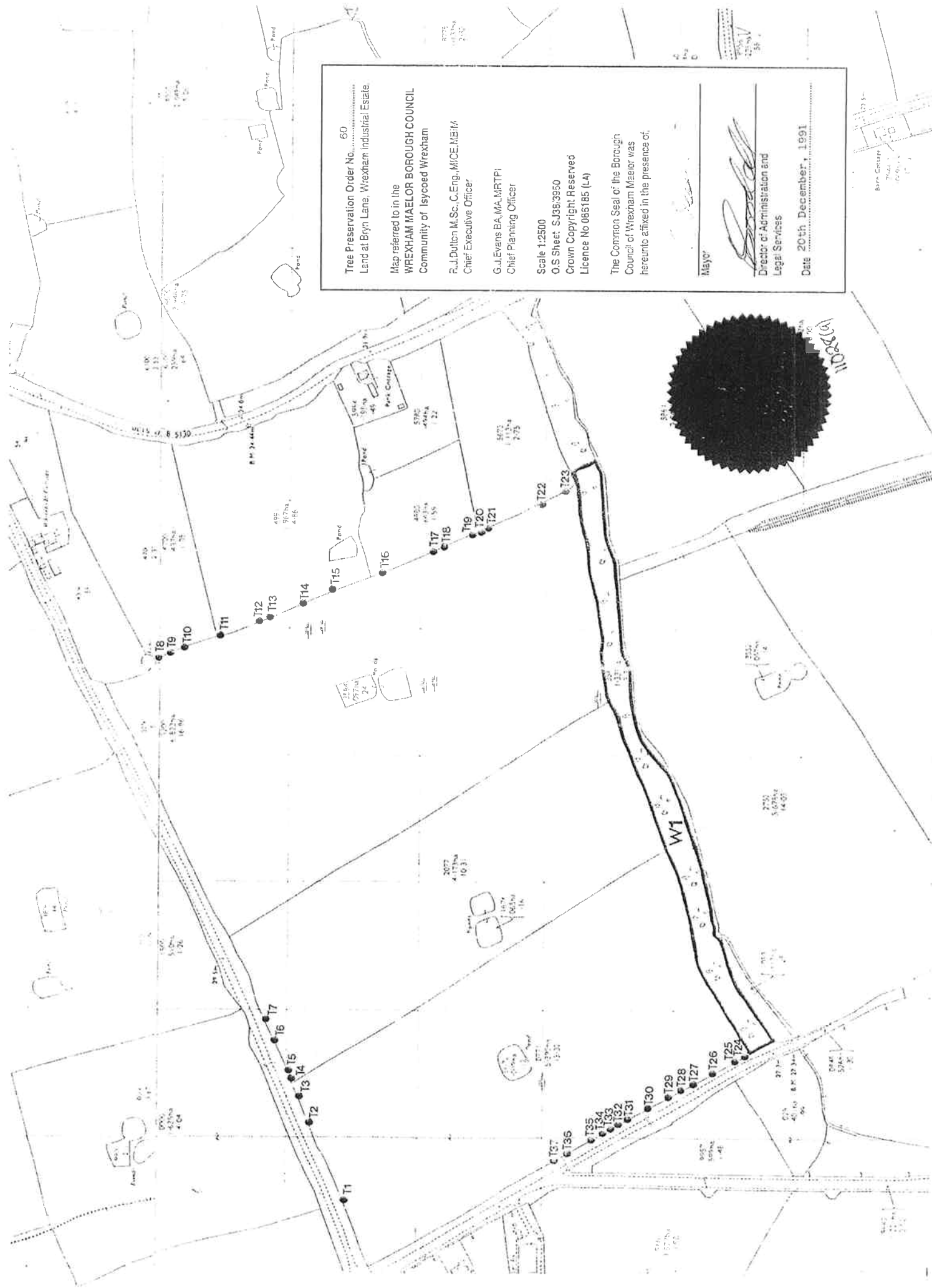
The significance of visual impacts is a function of the nature, scale/magnitude of effect and the sensitivity of the receptor. In establishing a judgement, general guidance given in *LI/IEMA 2002* has been adopted as follows:

- Large-scale changes which introduce new, discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present in the view.
- Changes in views from recognised and important viewpoints or amenity routes are likely to be more significant than changes affecting other less important paths and roads.
- Changes affecting large numbers of people are generally more significant than those affecting a relatively small group of users. However, in wilderness landscapes the sensitivity of the people who use these areas may be very high and this will be reflected in the significance of the change.

Significance of impacts has been considered in the the following comparative scale:

- An impact of high significance is generally recorded where a large magnitude of change occurs to a sensitive receptor. In this instance, this would be where the new development would appear clearly in a view which at present has the open land as a large part of its view.
- An impact of moderate significance is generally recorded where a medium magnitude of change is experienced by a receptor of high or moderate sensitivity. In this instance, this would be where parts of the development would be visible in a view but the new development would not comprise a large part of the view.
- An impact of low significance generally relates to a low magnitude of effect and often relates to a change in a distant view or one which is already screened to a large extent.

**APPENDIX 2– WCBC TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO 60**



Tree Preservation Order No. 60  
Land at Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate.

Map referred to in the  
WREXHAM MAELOR BOROUGH COUNCIL  
Community of Isycoed Wrexham

R.J.Dutton M.Sc. C.Eng. MICE MBIM  
Chief Executive Officer

G.J.Evans BA, MA, MRTPI  
Chief Planning Officer

Scale 1:2500  
O.S. Sheet SJ36/3950  
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The Common Seal of the Borough  
Council of Wrexham Maelor was  
hereunto affixed in the presence of,

Mayor

  
Director of Administration and  
Legal Services

Date 20th December, 1991



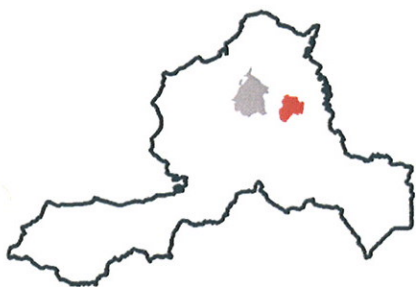
| No. on Map | Description                 | Situation                      |
|------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| T13        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339412 - North - 350910 |
| T14        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339420 - North - 350887 |
| T15        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339432 - North - 350862 |
| T16        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339444 - North - 350828 |
| T17        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339460 - North - 350782 |
| T18        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339465 - North - 350777 |
| T19        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339474 - North - 350755 |
| T20        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339478 - North - 350750 |
| T21        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339481 - North - 350745 |
| T22        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339501 - North - 350704 |
| T23        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339510 - North - 350683 |
| T24        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339062 - North - 350545 |
| T25        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339057 - North - 350548 |
| T26        | Willow (Salix)              | East - 339050 - North - 350565 |
| T27        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339043 - North - 350576 |
| T28        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339038 - North - 350588 |
| T29        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339032 - North - 350600 |
| T30        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339023 - North - 350620 |
| T31        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339018 - North - 350628 |
| T32        | Ash (Fraxinus<br>Excelsior) | East - 339014 - North - 350634 |
| T33        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339010 - North - 350646 |
| T34        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 339009 - North - 350650 |
| T35        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 338999 - North - 350655 |
| T36        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 338990 - North - 350677 |
| T37        | Oak (Quercus)               | East - 338984 - North - 350687 |

**APPENDIX 3 – PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTES**  
**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 11: WREXHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**  
**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 13c: DEE TERRACES**

# Wrexham Industrial Estate

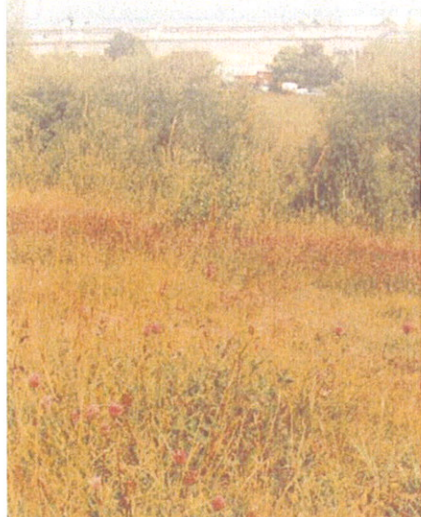
11

This is one of a series of Local Planning Guidance Notes based on Wrexham LANDMAP (adopted November 2004), setting out recommendations for each Landscape Character area



## Wrexham Industrial Estate summary:

- Extensive area of mixed manufacturing and business uses
- Located on site of WWII munitions depot, formerly farmland
- Visible from afar, many of the buildings dwarfing the human scale
- Very valuable species-rich grassland, scrub and wetland habitats
- Major focus for employment, separate from Wrexham town



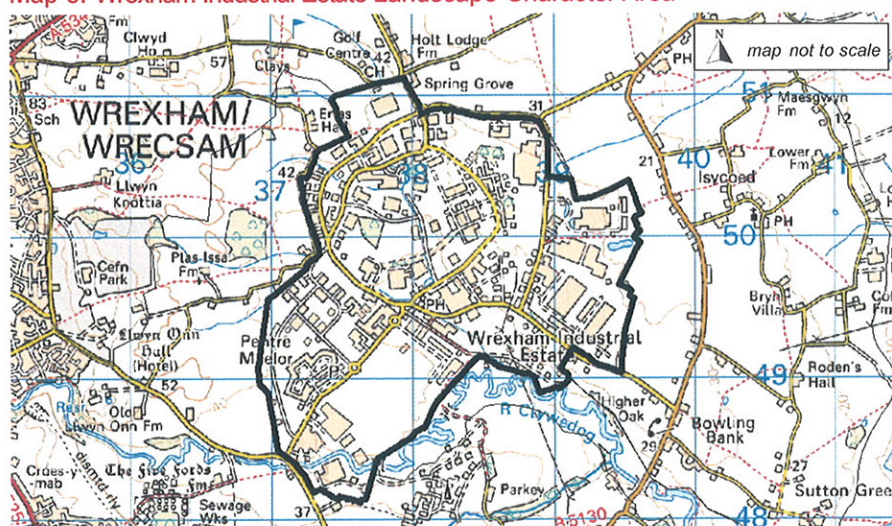
Wrexham industrial estate, separate from Wrexham town because of its origin as a World War II ordnance depot, forms a large 'island' of development within the countryside, its light-reflecting buildings visible from the hills.

## Landscape context

The industrial development dominates the landscape, with the underlying physical landscape covered over or altered to a significant extent.

The estate puts Wrexham on the national and international map. Its separate location allows the town of Wrexham to be relatively free of unneighbourly industrial land uses but creates access problems.

## Map of Wrexham Industrial Estate Landscape Character Area



Character Area boundaries should be considered transitional rather than precise  
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## Key characteristics

### Visual character:

- Urban built land, mixed industrial development
- Some massive buildings which can be seen from far distant viewpoints
- Relatively flat with a network of small streams, ditches and ponds
- Set within lowlying pastoral farmland, and incorporating former hedgerow oak trees

### Geological character:

- Located within a large area of deep glacial till which extends south and east of Wrexham
- The eastern part of the industrial

estate is within the flat landscape of the Dee Terraces but the western part is more undulating, with a greater resemblance to the Welsh Maelor topography

- The character area drains in a south easterly direction via the River Clywedog to the River Dee, and small parts of the industrial estate are within the floodplain
- Much made-up land, some contaminated; original soils are heavy and seasonally waterlogged

### Ecological character:

- Small watercourses, ditches, and ponds are frequent, providing good habitats for water voles, great crested newts and other aquatic species. Wetland with rushes and

reed mace swamp are found, important in filtering polluted runoff from the estate

- The River Clywedog is an important aquatic habitat but its quality is compromised by runoff from industrial areas
- Large but declining areas of species rich neutral grassland of high biodiversity value on unused land
- Includes area of semi-natural broadleaved woodland (Erlas Black Wood)

### Historical character:

- 20th century military features from WWII ordnance depot (buildings, bunkers, disused railway lines, ditches, roads) which largely obliterated the original land use pattern
- A few prewar buildings and field boundaries survive amongst recent industrial infrastructure

### Cultural character:

- Since WWII, a major focus for employment, in production, processing, and distribution, plus business and retail
- Evidence of rapid 20th century changes from agriculture to depot to industry within living memory
- Attractive post-war planned residential estate at Pentre Maelor, within industrial area

### Landscape sensitivity:

The estate is sensitive to development of industrial plots which does not take into account the potential loss of biodiversity and cultural heritage, or the impact on amenity and economic status of the estate

### Overall management strategy:

Sustainable development and enhancement

### Management guidance

| Aims                                                                       | Guidelines                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Enhance setting of estate and mitigate visual impact on wider surroundings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop as industrial estate in semi-natural setting</li> <li>● Refer to latest Landscape and Environmental Study (April 2005) of estate for guidance on improvement of visual and environmental coherence</li> <li>● Retain or provide landscape buffer between estate and farmland</li> <li>● Retain or provide landscape buffer between industry and residential buildings</li> <li>● Encourage high standard of design of new buildings, and use of recessive colours to reduce visual impact</li> <li>● Refer to WCBC Landscape &amp; Industrial Development Local Planning Guidance Note No. 26</li> <li>● Refer to Green Network Strategy due March 2007</li> </ul> |
| Minimise impact of development on natural landforms and drainage           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain integrity of fluvial and glacial landforms and assess new exposures</li> <li>● Conserve or restore natural watercourses and landforms where possible</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Minimise impact of development on areas of high biodiversity value         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Refer to Derelict and Industrial Land Habitat Action Plan (part of Wrexham Biodiversity Action Plan) and maintain biodiversity interest in areas of unused or derelict land</li> <li>● Develop green network strategy to retain and link areas of valuable open space</li> <li>● Plant native trees and maintain mature and veteran trees, carry out management of Erlas Black Wood</li> <li>● Protect species: grizzled skipper, newts, bats and birds</li> <li>● Manage road verges and grasslands as hay meadows subject to highway restrictions</li> </ul>                                                                                                             |
| Preserve archaeological heritage                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preserve WW2 munitions factory remains in setting</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Conserve cultural heritage                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote historical research and an oral history of the estate from WW2 onwards</li> <li>● Retain and re-use remaining ordnance buildings</li> <li>● Consider conservation area designation for Pentre Maelor</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

### For further information contact:

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# Dee Terraces 13c

This is one of a series of Local Planning Guidance Notes based on Wrexham LANDMAP (adopted November 2004), setting out recommendations for each Landscape Character area.



## Dee Terraces summary

- Low-lying, flat, intensively farmed landscape
- Field ponds, roadside and field ditches common
- Abundant hedges and hedgerow trees
- Dispersed farms, hamlets and villages, often built in red brick
- Holt is built at an ancient crossing point on the Dee
- Horticultural and intensive farming uses surround Holt on grade 1 farmland
- Rural character under pressure
- Loss of tranquillity near A483

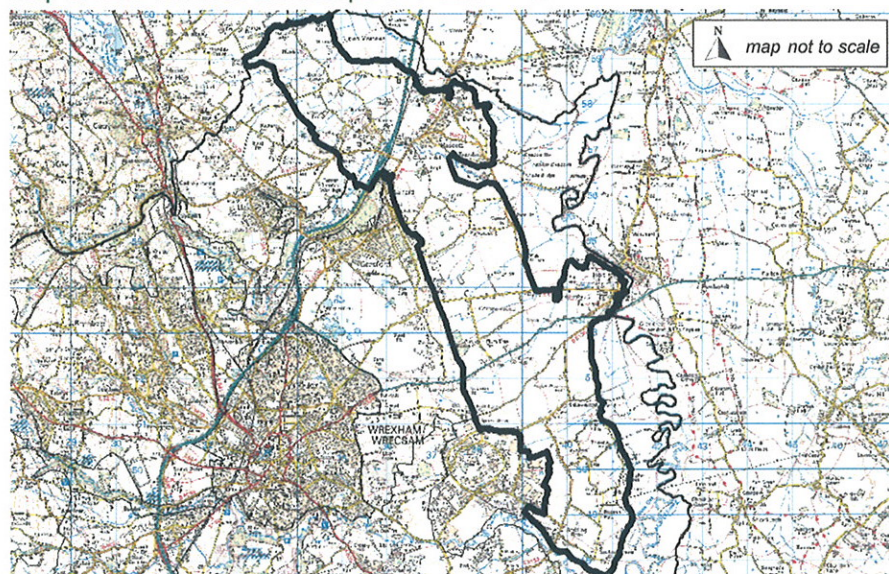


Extensive flat rural lowland, with scattered farmsteadings and expanding villages, above the level of the Dee floodplain

## Landscape context

This area, within the agricultural lowlands landscape type, is similar in many ways to the Cheshire and North Shropshire Plain beyond the Wrexham boundary but is characterised by its flatness, although it lies above the River Dee floodplain. The other areas within this landscape type are the English Maelor to the east of the River Dee and the Welsh Maelor to the west

### Map of Dee Terraces Landscape Character Area



Character Area boundaries should be considered transitional rather than precise  
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## Key characteristics

### Visual character:

- Uniformly low-lying flat open farmland with long views where hedgerows permit
- Field pattern is medium to large scale, with fields regular and semi regular in shape
- Dispersed pattern of attractive villages, hamlets and farms, traditionally of red brick
- Rural villages - Rossett and Holt, both under development pressure weakening character
- A483 is a physical barrier and source of noise

### Geological character:

- The Dee terraces have been formed from fluvioglacial drift consisting of till (boulder clay) and alluvial deposits. The eastern edge of the terrace is defined by a low scarp
- At Holt the River Dee cuts through the Chester Pebble Beds (red sandstone), which has been quarried for local building stone. South of Holt Castle, two river terraces can be seen. The Castle, castle quarry site, and terraces are designated or potential Regionally Important Geological sites
- Soils are mainly derived from glacial till, with general grade 3 agricultural land classification

- Rossett, Burton and Holt are built on better drained areas with grade 2 sandy and coarse loamy soils
- Around Holt the agricultural land is the best in Wrexham, classified as grade 1

### Ecological character:

- Much of area is agriculturally improved grassland, intensively farmed with some arable cultivation, of little biodiversity interest apart from green network of hedges and mature hedgerow trees
- Abundant ponds, formerly marl pits, are of high value
- Small areas of woodland including mixed sycamore, ash and oak woodland, and wet woodland of high value. Some plantations
- Remaining areas of lowland pasture are of high value, with a distinctive area of small strip fields at Common Wood characterised by damson blossom in spring
- Rivers, streams and abundant field and roadside ditches providing aquatic habitats of high value

### Historical character:

- Part of Wrexham lowlands characterised by relict medieval open field systems with ridge and furrow
- Important designed gardens at Trevalyn Hall and Trevalyn Hospital
- 17th century water mill at Rossett plus the later Marford Mill are prominent buildings
- Planned settlement with medieval origins at Holt, above ancient river crossing point
- Pre-19th century dense scattered settlement at Isycoed
- Rossett, Trevalyn, Burton - mainly 19th/20th century settlements, with planned settlement at Greenfields

### Overall management strategy:

Conservation and sustainable rural development

### Management guidance

| Aims                                          | Guidelines                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Conserve rural character                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The character of barns and farmsteads are particularly sensitive to residential conversion - resist</li> <li>● Areas for Horticulture are to conserve traditional field boundaries and avoid the proliferation of fences, structures and buildings within the countryside, where this would erode character</li> </ul>                                  |
| Preserve geodiversity                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain integrity of landform and assess new exposures</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Manage farmland for increased biodiversity    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain and enhance ponds</li> <li>● Maintain and enhance hedgerows - allow development of new hedgerow trees</li> <li>● Protect species associated with farms eg bats, barn owls, swallows and swifts</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                      |
| Preserve and evaluate archaeological heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage preservation of surviving landscape features</li> <li>● Carry out field and desk study of ridge and furrow, mills, leats, communications and wider landscape</li> <li>● Assess villages - Holt, Isycoed, in wider context i.e. field systems, lanes</li> <li>● Preserve town structure of Holt, evaluate in advance of development</li> </ul> |
| Maintain and support cultural character       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain existing character of Rossett, consider Conservation Area status</li> <li>● Support existing local community initiatives</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

### Cultural character:

- Attractive rural villages of Rossett and Holt, popular with commuters
- Part of wider Welsh Maelor cultural area, with declining role of traditional agricultural land uses and increasing commuter influence
- Easily accessible area strongly affected by transport routes

### Landscape sensitivity:

The integrity of the Dee Terraces landscape is highly vulnerable to continuing development and recreational pressures, and to economic changes which threaten traditional farming

### For further information contact:

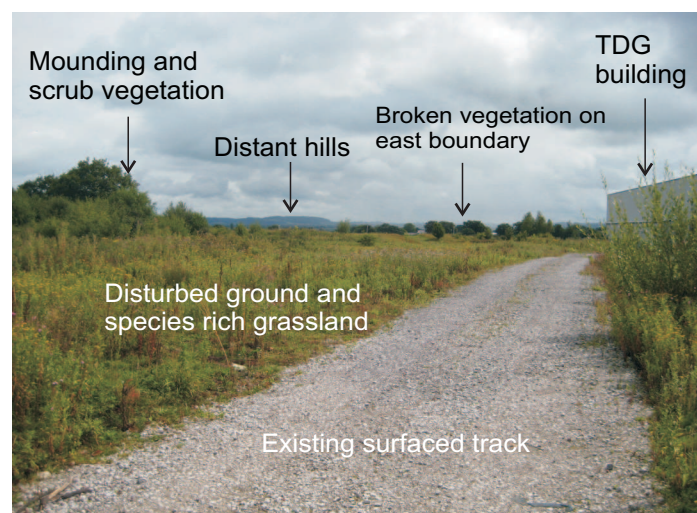
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**FIGURE 1 – WIDER LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**  
**FIGURE 2 – LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT OF THE SITE**  
**FIGURE 3 – VISUAL ASSESSMENT**

**FIGURE 4 - PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS**



**Viewpoint 1** - View looking east from within the site



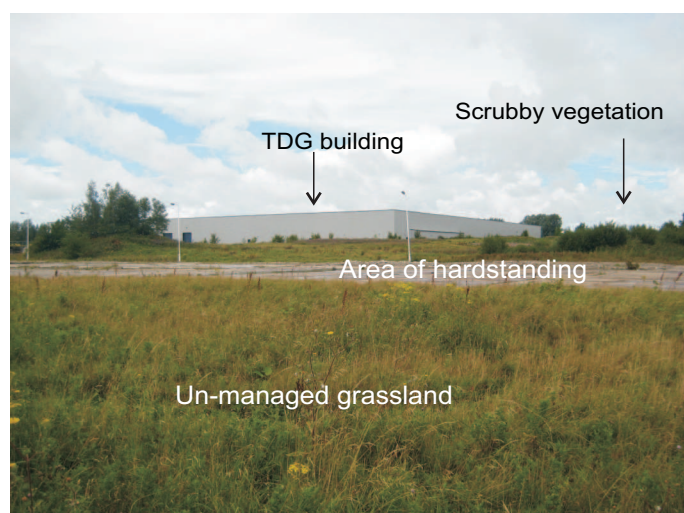
**Viewpoint 3** - View looking north from the southern section of site



**Viewpoint 2** - View of existing pond in southern section of the site



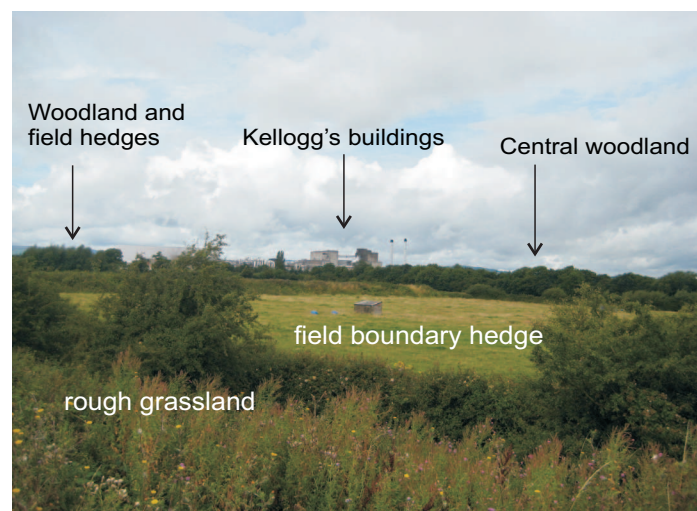
**Viewpoint 4** - View looking northeast from the southern section of the site adjacent to TDG.



**Viewpoint 5** - View looking west from the south east application site boundary



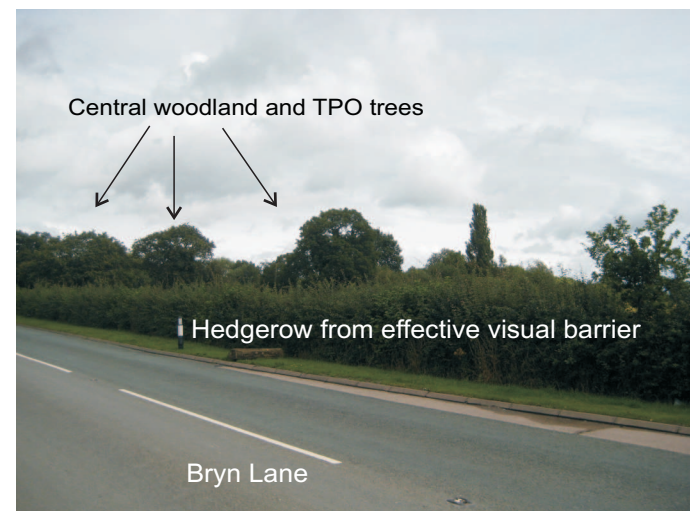
**Viewpoint 6** - View looking south along eastern ditch



**Viewpoint 7** -View looking north west from raised mound in southern section of the site



**Viewpoint** Looking west towards Bryn lane from site entrance road



**Viewpoint 8** - View looking east towards the site from Bryn Lane

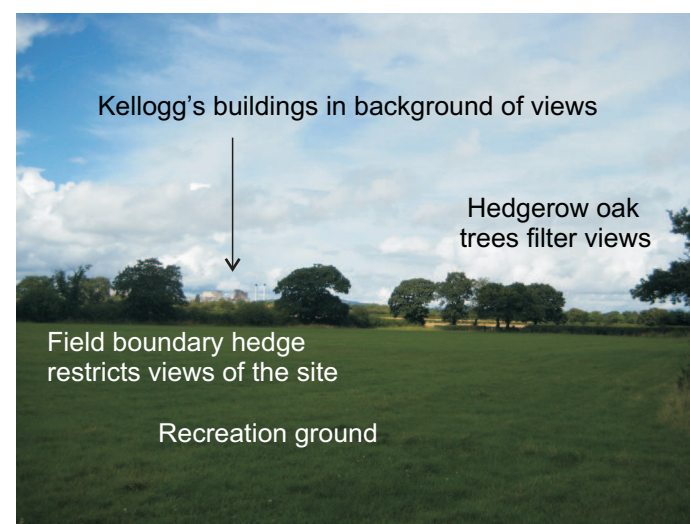
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|  <p>Genesis Centre<br/>Birchwood Science Park Warrington<br/>WA3 7BH<br/>Tel 01925 844004<br/>Fax 01925 844002<br/>e-mail tep@tep.uk.com</p> |                                                             |
| Project:                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Wrexham Industrial Estate:<br>Landscape & Visual Assessment |
| Figure No:                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 4                                                           |
| Drawing Title:                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Photograph Sheet 1                                          |
| Scale:                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Not to scale                                                |



**Viewpoint 10** - View looking north east into the site from adjacent to numbers 2, 4 and 6 Bryn Lane.



**Viewpoint 11** - View looking north along B5130 adjacent to village hall



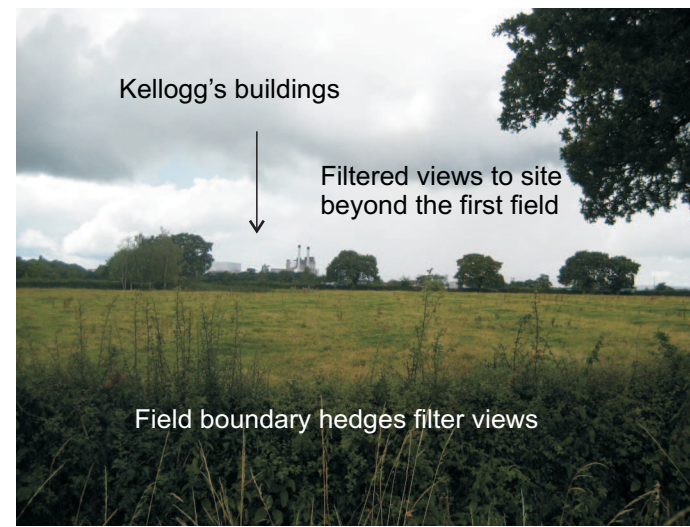
**Viewpoint 12** - View looking north west from the village hall recreation ground.



**Viewpoint 15** - View looking south west from B5130 at approximately 300m east of the site adjacent to Marshley Farm.



**Viewpoint 14** - View looking west from B5130 adjacent to Plum Farm and neighbouring properties



**Viewpoint 16** - View looking southwest from B5130 at a distance of approximately 200m from the site.



**Viewpoint 17** - View to site from B5130 north of village. Views over low hedge to site beyond the first field and thick field boundary.



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Project:

**Wrexham Industrial Estate:  
Landscape & Visual Assessment**

Figure No:

5

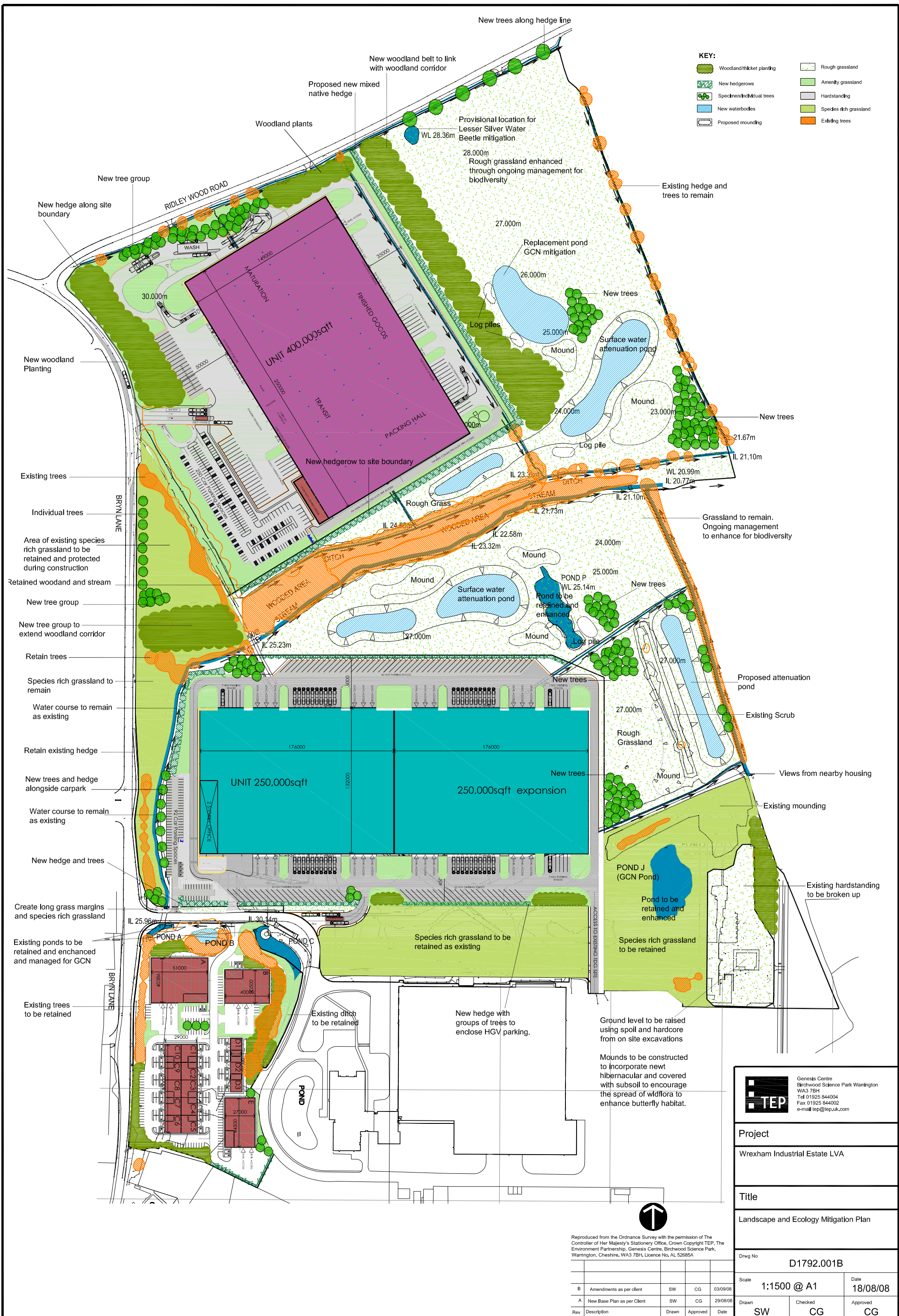
Drawing Title:

Photograph Sheet 2

Scale:

Not to scale

**FIGURE 5 - LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY MITIGATION PLAN**



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|     |                             |       |          |            |
|-----|-----------------------------|-------|----------|------------|
|     |                             |       |          |            |
| B   | Amendments as per client    | SW    | CG       | 03/09/2017 |
| A   | New Base Plan as per Client | SW    | CG       | 29/08/2017 |
| Rev | Description                 | Drawn | Approved | Date       |



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Project

Wrexham Industrial Estate LVA

Title

Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan

Drwg No

D1792.001B

Scale 1:1500 @ A1

Date  
18/08/08

Drawn

CC

Approved  
CC