Clwydian Planning

Planning & Justification Statement

Replacement Dwelling at Tan y Ffordd,, Bwlchgwyn, Wrexham

Denbighshire | EHPI Group, Irish Square, St Asaph, LL17 0RN

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Introduction

This planning statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for the replacement of an existing, dilapidated dwelling at Tan y Ffordd, Ruthin Road, Bwlchgwyn, located within the area of Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC).

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a new, energy-efficient, accessible dwelling, which will also include a self-contained annexe.

This statement justifies the proposed development in line with local and national planning policy, the special personal circumstances of the applicant and his family, and the findings of the accompanying structural appraisal report by Andrew Hannett Ltd (June 2025). The statement also addresses the social, environmental, and functional necessity of the development in context.

Site Description

The application site is located at Tan y Ffordd, a long-established two-storey detached dwelling situated along Ruthin Road in Bwlchgwyn, a semi-rural settlement in the Wrexham Local Planning Authority (LPA) area.

The site includes a traditional 19th-century property constructed from squared masonry with quarry tile floors, and a single-storey extension. The surrounding context is characterised by open countryside, scattered dwellings, and strong local ties — in particular, the applicant's sister, who has severe and lifelong learning disabilities, has lived at the property for her entire life.

The Proposal

The proposed development consists of:

- The demolition of the existing dwelling at Tan y Ffordd;
- The construction of a replacement dwelling designed to modern standards of accessibility, energy efficiency, and family life;
- Inclusion of a connected annexe, accessed via the utility area, to allow for the live-in care of the applicant's sister, Rhian, and her carer;
- Improved driveway access, including widening approximately half of the existing access for emergency vehicle ingress/egress and ease of use;
- Designation of a ground floor bedroom for a second elderly relative in the principal residence, to allow for future proofing.

Applicant's Circumstances and Social Need

The planning system recognises that personal circumstances may be a material consideration in special circumstances, particularly when it involves vulnerable individuals or health-related needs.

To meet this need, the proposed replacement dwelling will include a self-contained annexe that allows to receive care while remaining close to her family. The annexe has been designed with a dedicated bedroom for carer and includes a layout that integrates with the main household through a connected utility space. This arrangement allows family members to respond swiftly in case of emergencies or during periods when professional carers are unavailable. It also offers flexibility for extended family involvement, including the applicant and his partner, who are both experienced in care needs. The design supports visits from grandchildren and other members of the extended family, all of whom form a crucial part of emotional and social support network. This blended approach, combining professional care with ongoing family involvement is essential in delivering the quality, consistency, and compassion that condition demands.

Future-Proofing for Elderly Parent

The layout includes a downstairs bedroom for the applicant's elderly mother, . While she currently lives independently, the family wishes to future-proof the home in anticipation of her increased care needs.

This is consistent with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which supports long-term, integrated thinking to meet current and future care needs.

Condition of the Existing Property

The supporting structural appraisal (Andrew Hannett Ltd, June 2025) provides a detailed assessment of the property's physical condition. The key findings are as follows:

- The dwelling is in a fair but declining structural condition
- There is severe rising and penetrative damp, causing mould, degraded plaster, and structural damage throughout
- Floors and walls are uninsulated, with excessive heat loss and poor thermal efficiency
- Mould growth is widespread, posing serious long-term health hazards
- The roof is life-expired, suffering from sagging, nail fatigue, daylight penetration and leaks
- Historic settlement of the rear portion has compromised stability
- Chimneys show significant outward lean, and invasive vegetation is present
- Renovation would significantly reduce internal space due to insulation and membrane requirements, making disability access unviable.

The report concludes;

"We consider that the existing property is beyond economic repair. We would therefore recommend that the property be demolished so that a new energy efficient dwelling can be constructed at the site."

— Andrew Hannett Ltd, June 2025

This evidence directly supports Policy H3 (Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside) of the WCBC Local Development Plan, which allows for replacement of existing dwellings where the structure is:

Unsound and Incapable of being economically retained or improved.

Planning Policy Context

Local Policy (WCBC)

Relevant planning policies from the Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) include:

- Policy H3 – Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside
- Allows replacement where the original is structurally unsound or fails to meet basic standards. Must be of similar size, scale and siting unless justified.
- Policy PS2 – Sustainable Development and Good Design
- Emphasises inclusive, adaptable design that promotes wellbeing.

Policy GDP1 – General Development Principles

Development should meet the needs of all users, minimise environmental impact, and improve access.

Policy T8 – Access and Accessibility

Requires developments to cater for the needs of disabled users and the elderly. This proposal meets these policies through;

- Functional necessity (care of a disabled person)
- Demonstrated structural inadequacy
- Sustainable and inclusive design;
- Access upgrades to benefit users and emergency services.

National Policy (Welsh Government)

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2021)

Supports inclusive design, social sustainability, and care integration in homes.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities Supports replacement dwellings where there is clear need and the existing property is substandard.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Supports long-term health, community cohesion, and social equity.

TAN 12: Design

Requires design to be responsive to user needs, especially accessibility and inclusivity.

Accessibility and Inclusive Design

The replacement dwelling is being designed from first principles to accommodate;

- Full wheelchair access
- Ground floor accommodation for and her carer
- Facilities designed around manual handling, accessible bathrooms, hoists, etc
- Integrated layout allowing interaction with family and privacy when needed
- Downstairs accommodation for elderly family members
- Improved driveway layout for ambulance access.

This is aligned with;

- Equality Act 2010 duty to consider reasonable adjustments
- Building Regulations Part M (Access to and use of buildings)
- WCBC's goal of inclusive communities

Social Sustainability and Community Impact

The proposed development makes a significant contribution to social sustainability by creating a secure and stable long-term care environment , , will benefit enormously from being able to remain in her lifelong home, surrounded by familiar people and routines. The proposed replacement dwelling, with its dedicated annexe and integrated care arrangements, ensures that her complex needs can be met in a dignified, consistent, and supportive setting.

By enabling care to be delivered within the family home, the development helps to reduce pressure on institutional care services and avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, which are not only costly to the public sector but often distressing and disruptive for individuals with complex needs. Supporting care in a domestic setting is aligned with both national policy objectives and local social care strategies, promoting wellbeing and independence wherever possible.

In addition, the proposal encourages intergenerational living, strengthening family support networks and increasing local community resilience. The presence of adult children, grandchildren, and extended family members fosters a cohesive and responsive household that can adapt to changing needs over time, including future provision for an elderly parent. This model of living is increasingly recognised for its social, emotional, and practical benefits.

Finally, the development reduces the need for long-distance travel, as the family already live and work locally, reinforcing community ties and contributing to the sustainability of rural life. In this way, the proposal not only meets an urgent personal need but also contributes positively to wider social planning goals by promoting inclusion, care integration, and long-term community stability.

Environmental Sustainability

The proposed replacement dwelling has been carefully designed to ensure a high standard of environmental sustainability and energy performance. It will meet, and potentially exceed, the standards set out under Part L of the Building Regulations, ensuring a thermally efficient building fabric that reduces energy consumption and lowers long-term heating costs. In addition to this, the development will incorporate renewable energy systems, such as an air source heat pump, to further reduce reliance on fossil fuels and minimise the dwelling's carbon footprint.

To manage surface water and promote responsible water use, the proposal will include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), which help prevent localised flooding and improve environmental resilience. Visually, the new dwelling will present a significant aesthetic improvement over the existing building, which is in a state of disrepair and suffering from damp and structural decay. The proposed design is sensitive to the rural setting, contributing positively to the character of the area.

Moreover, the new dwelling will be constructed to Lifetime Homes standards or a comparable benchmark, ensuring that it remains accessible and adaptable as the needs of its occupants change over time. This long-term approach to design and functionality reduces the likelihood of future costly adaptations and supports aging in place. In contrast to attempting a retrofit of the existing inefficient structure — which would not only be economically unfeasible but would also fail to meet modern health and environmental standards — a new dwelling offers a sustainable, future-proof solution that addresses both energy and care needs comprehensively.

Highway Safety and Access

As part of the proposed development, the existing driveway will be widened to improve both functionality and safety. This modification will significantly enhance access for emergency services, including ambulances and fire vehicles, which is a critical consideration given the complex medical needs of the applicant's sister and the potential for emergency interventions.

In addition to accommodating larger vehicles, the widened driveway will support step-free and level access to the dwelling. This is essential for residents and visitors with mobility impairments and ensures compliance with inclusive design principles. The improved layout will also increase turning space, allowing vehicles to enter and exit the property more safely and efficiently, particularly during winter months or in poor weather conditions.

By facilitating off-road parking, the proposal will help to reduce pressure on surrounding roads, enhancing overall highway safety and convenience for neighbouring properties. These improvements are consistent with Policy GDP1(d) and Policy T8 of the Wrexham Local Development Plan, which prioritise safe and inclusive access in all new developments.

Conclusion

This planning application is based on a clear and compelling case wholly reliant on 24/7 support, the structural inadequacy of the existing dwelling, and the holistic benefits a new accessible, sustainable home will bring to the family and wider care system.

The proposal complies with local and national planning policy, and the structural report unambiguously demonstrates that repair and retention is economically unviable. The new dwelling will improve health outcomes, social cohesion, environmental performance, and provide a secure home for the applicant's sister and extended family.

The application should be supported in the spirit of the Welsh Government's well-being goals, the Equality Act, and WCBC's own commitment to inclusive, sustainable development.

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