Wrexham Gateway Eastern Zone, Wrexham

Heritage Assessment

July 2025

PREPARED FOR

Wrexham County Borough Council



CIVIC HERITAGE

Heritage Assessment

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Front Cover	Photograph of Wrexham General Train Station looking towards the east site boundary

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS 1
1. Introduction 3
1.1. Site context 3
1.2. Study area 12
2. Methodology 14
2.1. Heritage significance and impact assessment methodology 14
2.2. Research sources 14
2.3. Site visit 15
3. Planning Policy 16
3.1. Introduction 16
4. Historical background 19
4.1. Introduction 19
4.2. Prehistoric (pre-10,000 BC to AD 43) 19
4.3. Roman (AD 43 – AD 410) 19
4.4. Medieval (AD 410 – AD 1540) 20
4.5. Post-medieval (AD 1540 – *c* AD 1750) 21
4.6. Industrial (*c* AD 1750 - 1914) 21
4.7. Modern (post-1914) 22
4.8. Development of the Site 23
5. Assessment of Significance 33
5.1. Introduction 33
5.2. Heritage Assets within the Site 34
5.3. Built Heritage within the study area 37
5.4. Conservation Areas 40
5.5. Statement of Significance 41
6. Proposed Work 42
7. Historic Impact Assessment 47
7.1. Introduction 47
7.2. Potential impact of change 47
7.3. Tree cover 48
7.4. The Permanence, Longer Term or Consequential Effects of the Development 48
7.5. Predicted Visual Impact Assessment 49
8. Conclusions 50
Appendix 1 53
Appendix 2 - Figures 57

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cushman and Wakefield on behalf of Wrexham County Borough Council have commissioned Civic Heritage to undertake a Heritage Assessment of the land at Wrexham General Station, to inform an Outline Planning Application. This assessment of the built heritage in close proximity to the site, was intended to establish, as far as possible, the character of the historic built environment within the vicinity of the proposed development site and to provide a description of significance in order to understand the potential impact of the proposals, including the potential impact on the setting of any nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets.

The application site contains the Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station, the projected route of Wat's Dyke, and the former goods shed (not listed), of historic interest which survives as an earthwork and Scheduled Monument a short distance to the north and south of the site. The Listed Building will be retained within the scheme.

A review of the Historic Environment Record data recorded several designated assets within the vicinity of the site. Within a 200m study area of the site, the designated heritage assets assessed in order to consider the potential impact of the proposed works upon those assets includes:

- Wrexham General Station: Entrance Buildings, Grade II Listed Building
- Wat's Dyke, Scheduled Monument and projected route of Wat's Dyke
- The Former Mines Rescue Centre, Grade II Listed Building
- Offices and Lodge to Wrexham Brewery, Grade II Listed Building
- Adult Education Centre, University College of North Wales, Grade II Listed Building
- Former Wrexham Infirmary, Grade II Listed Building
- No.1 Grosvenor Road (NW Side), Grade II Listed Building
- Grosvenor Road Conservation Area
- The former goods shed (not listed), of historic interest

The heritage impact assessment finds that the current proposals will result in Moderate, Slight and Neutral (beneficial) impacts upon the significance of the heritage assets, except for one instance of Moderate (adverse) impact on the projected route of Wat's Dyke. The impact assessment is consistent with recognised criteria as defined within ICOMOS Guidance.

The setting of Wrexham General Station is currently negatively impacted by vacant land and modern development that is in poor condition and has no functional or physical relationship to the Listed Building. The redevelopment of land opposite the station provides an opportunity to enhance the setting through the creation of public realm, landscaping and new and appropriate street furniture. Improvements to the accessibility of the station will increase communal value but should be sensitively designed to respect the historic fabric of the station in order to protect its evidential value, architectural interest and significance.

The projected line of Wat's Dyke may be directly impacted by a potential pedestrian link bridge (proposals currently not included in the Outline Planning Application). Preservation of Wat's Dyke is recommended, although harm may be offset by archaeological monitoring and recording will be required in order to mitigate the impact of the proposals on any surviving buried remains. Should significant archaeological remains be encountered during the archaeological evaluation, further excavation may be required to offset the harm of the development to the buried archaeological resource, in line with the guidance provided by the Planning Policy Wales. Full details of the proposals will be required in order to inform the decision.

The proposed scheme will result in no change and negligible to minor visual changes within the setting of heritage assets within the study area. The high-quality design of the commercial office building and better

pedestrian links to the city centre are likely to have a positive impact on the built environment within the setting of the heritage assets and the scheme includes several public benefits.

Several recommendations for offsetting harm to the aforementioned heritage assets are presented in the final section of this document.

1. Introduction

1.1. Site context

1.1.1. Purpose and nature of the proposal

This Heritage Assessment has been prepared in support of an Outline Planning Application for new commercial office building, creation of public realm and landscaping, conversion of existing buildings to brewery, with associated museum and taproom/restaurant, accessibility improvements including new highway infrastructure and pedestrian footbridge, including parking facilities and coach/taxi drop off, with all matters reserved except for access (identified in Section 1.2 below, herein referred to as 'the Site').

This Heritage Assessment appraises the identified features of the historic built environment within the context of the application site, providing a description of their significance in order to understand the potential impact of the proposals, both positive and negative. The Heritage Assessment includes a physical impact assessment and predicted visual assessment based on the current proposals. This will require updating once plans have been finalised.

1.1.2. Location

The proposed Site (centred on NGR 333004, 350855) lies to the north-west of Wrexham town centre and is bounded by houses on Spring Gardens to the north, houses off Gerald Street to the east, Regent Street to the south and the railway line to the west. The Site comprises Station Approach and associated hard-standing car parking. The Site also encompasses the former goods shed, Cambrian Works (former Jewsons warehouse) a vacant plot of hard-standing ground in the north, a parcel of vacant brownfield land in the east, together with two modern buildings in the south-east that are currently functioning as guide and scout huts and Wrexham General Station (a Grade II Listed Building).



Plate 1 Recent satellite image of the site, showing the red line development boundary

1.1.3. Site walkover and character

A Site walkover took place in February 2025. The Site comprises the Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station, accessed from Station Approach that leads to associated hard-standing car parking. Pedestrian footpaths border the approach to the north-west and south-west. Landscaping bordered by a stone wall is along the south-west edge of the area, separating the Site from Regent Road which sits in slightly elevated position affording access over the railway lines to the south of the Site. The land at Station Approach gradually decreases towards the south-east and towards the railway station. A bus stop and mini roundabout are also within this area.



Plate 2 Station Approach from Regent Street, with Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station in the background, facing north-west



Plate 3 View showing the northern end of Station Approach, with Wrexham General Station to the right, facing south

In total, two modern two-storey buildings are currently functioning as scout and guide huts. Foundation stones state that they were established in 1964 and 1968. The buildings are accessed from Station Approach and yield no historic interest (Plate 4). Hard-standing car parks are to the south and west of the buildings (Plate 5). An area of landscaping with trees and vegetation borders the area between the car park off Station Approach and the scout and guide huts area, showing the change in elevation. Vegetation is to the north-west of the modern buildings. Soil beds border this area to the north, with evidence of tree cutting. Red bricks indicating possible demolition material were visible within the borders. The north of this area is bordered by metal fencing that is in poor condition, with footpaths, one of which provides access to Grosvenor Gardens to the east of the Site.



Plate 4 View showing entrance from Station Approach to the guide & scout huts to the south-east, facing east



Plate 5 View showing hard-standing surface and the guide & scout huts, facing north-east

Land to the south of Cambrian Works (the former Jewson's warehouse) currently comprises a vacant plot of brownfield land, bordered by metal fencing on all sides, which was formerly the location of a saw mill and timber yard before it was redeveloped in the second half of the 20th century into a modern warehouse/factory associated with Cambrian Works (Plate 6 and Plate 7). The vacant plots consisted of demolition material, small spoil heaps and gravel likely used to level the Site (Plate 8 and Plate 9).



Plate 6 Geneal view showing the north-eastern area, taken from the entrance to the plot, facing north-east



Plate 7 Geneal view showing the north-eastern area, facing south-west



Plate 8 View showing border of the vacant plot adjacent to Wrexham General Station, facing south-west



Plate 9 View showing northern boundary of the unoccupied parcel of land, facing west

Station Approach continues between the former good's shed and Cambrian Works (the former Jewson's warehouse) and was accessed via metal gates on Station Approach (Plate 11). A small section of stone wall borders Station Approach and additional car parking spaces to the south of Cambrian Works (the former Jewson's warehouse) (Plate 10). Station Approach and the hard-standing area in the north of the Site comprise block paving (Plate 11 and Plate 12).



Plate 10 View showing stone wall bordering Station Approach and vacant land, facing east



Plate 11 View of continuation of Station Approach, showing the former Jewson's building on the right and the former goods shed on the left, facing north



Plate 12 Vacant land comprising block paving in the north of the Site, facing east

A long narrow building borders lies within the west of the Site (Plate 13 and Plate 14). The building aligns with a former goods shed shown on historic mapping (Fig 2 and Figs 4-9) and consists of a rectangular building of multiple phases, comprising a brick range, a stone single-storey range, a further brick single-storey range and a red brick two-storey range. The windows on the eastern and northern elevation of the building are boarded up and holes are evident in the roof of the single-storey ranges. Loading doors are visible throughout the west-facing elevation of the building, which directly adjoins the railway line. Several parts of the range have been filled with modern brick and breezeblocks. The building is of historic interest and may be considered to be of low (local) significance.



Plate 13 View showing the 19th-century goods shed, facing south-west