



PP18-1275

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Upon

Gamford House

Gamford Lane, Rossett, Wrexham LL12 0EW

Prepared for

Urban Developments Ltd

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*DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
GAMFORD HOUSE
GAMFORD LANE, ROSSETT, WREXHAM*

1.0 SITE CONTEXT

1.1 The Proposed Site



Fig 01: Aerial Image Gamford House, Gamford Lane, Rossett

- 1.2 The proposed application identified within Fig 01, site comprises former working Pig Farm buildings now redundant and not in use for over 12 years, having ancillary single dwelling house accommodation located on Gamford Lane situated between Darland and Trevalyn in Rossett. We are advised by Wrexham County Borough Council the development site is situated within an Area of Special Landscape and Green Barrier Designation. The buildings are not listed to be of special Architectural or Historic Interest.

- 1.3 The site is designated for agricultural use situated in the countryside within near vicinity of other established clusters of residential dwellings to the north and south sides of Gamford Lane, and also east side of Darland Lane (refer to fig.02). The property is located centrally to Rossett, a large rural village located 6.5 miles to the north of Wrexham and 7.5 miles south of Chester.



Fig 02: Aerial Image Aerial Image Gamford House Location Plan

- 1.4 The proposed development plot is relatively square shaped in plan shape having approximate dimensions 138m in length by 102m in width at its widest points, having a total area of 14,478m² (3.57acre) including residential garden areas. There is adjoining agricultural land surrounding the application site to North, East and West boundaries also owned by the Applicant as identified in Fig 03. The site is accessed directly off the public pavement and road as identified within Site Images (a,b,c) which is relatively flat with only slight gradual incline providing generally level access to the property. The site is enclosed at the south boundary with garden wall fronting dwelling house and hedgerow fronting agricultural buildings, hedgerow and tress demarks the boundary to other boundaries.



Fig 03: Site Plan Indicating Development Site and Adjoining Land

- 1.5 There are three vehicular access points onto the site from Gamford Lane, one larger entrance leading to Pig Farm outbuildings with two smaller gated entrance points accessing the dwelling house (see photo images below).



Site Image a) Pig Farm Entrance



Site Image b) Dwelling House Entrance 1



Site Image c) Dwelling House Entrance 2

- 1.6 The existing site accommodation comprises 1no. much extended 2 storey farm house and 19no. substantial agricultural buildings comprising barns, shippens and pig pens of which range in height from one to two and half storeys

Agricultural shed structures are significant, constructed with steel framework and extensive areas of brick and blockwork, corrugated sheet cladding and roof finishes with concrete floors. Outbuildings and pig pens are of solid masonry construction with traditional cut timber roofs and slate finish with concrete floors, (refer to Appendix A for existing site plan building layout).

- 1.7 The building layout characteristics are compact; the dense form does not provide any openness through the site which can be seen within Site Impact Images (d,e,f) below.



Site Image d) Visual through front to rear of Site



Site Image e) Visual through left-hand side of Site



Site Image f) Visual through rear to front of Site

1.8 Scale, size and massing of the buildings and site have been fully assessed, our summary with reference to Existing Development Site Reference Plan Drawing Appendix 'A', is provided as follows:

i) Building height taken from each corner of the site:

Southwest	-	Building 1 height 6.0m
Northwest	-	Building 9 height 8.8m
Northeast	-	Building 9 height 5.7m
Southeast	-	Building 20 height 6.8m

ii) Footprint of all existing buildings amounts to 3,525m²

iii) Volume of existing buildings amounts to 12,675m³

iv) Hardstanding areas amount to 2,460m²

v) Green space amounts to 6,760m²

vi) Residential garden area amounts to 360m²

1.9 The existing buildings are of significant size and structure, they do not have any particular architectural merit or importance of heritage. Notwithstanding all the broader principles with re-using existing buildings on the site as identified within our Planning Statement submitted in support of this application, the suitability of utilising existing buildings for conversion have been fully considered. Whilst the buildings vary in condition, it is our opinion that whilst the barns are suitable for conversion to residential usage would require significant upgrade and repair to be made habitable.

- 1.10 Plan and elevation drawings of the existing buildings have been prepared demonstrating formation, character and materials which are submitted with the Planning Application that would be confirmed as follows:

PP15-1275/Ext01	-	Existing Plot 1 and 2
PP15-1275/Ext02	-	Existing Plot 3
PP15-1275/Ext03	-	Existing Plot 4
PP15-1275/Ext04	-	Existing Plot 5
PP15-1275/Ext05	-	Existing Plot 6 and 7
PP15-1275/Ext06	-	Existing Plot 8

2.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application scheme proposes 8no. detached dwelling houses by retaining and converting some of the existing brick buildings and agricultural sheds, it would be proposed to demolish and replace the vacant dwelling house and remove other unwanted redundant buildings to provide openness and private gardens with off street parking suitable for modern day family living aspirations.
- 2.2 The proposed development affords opportunity to provide much enhanced housing scheme than approved under planning application P/2016/0384. Whilst assisting the Local Authority in meeting housing market objectives, aims to provide greater variety of more luxurious homes in Rossett, offering higher value houses consequently frees up availability of homes for first time buyers further down the property chain.
- 2.3 Building overlay plan Appendix 'B' identifies buildings to be removed and retained with site layout for the proposed scheme. Structures proposed to be retained and converted with basic principles for development would be outlined as follows:

Plot 1 and 2

Building 20, to be demolished and replaced with two detached houses.



Building 20 front elevation



Building 20 rear elevation

Plot 3

Building 3, framework and cladding to be replaced on same scale and footprint providing single detached dwelling house.



Building 3 front elevation



Building 3 view through structure

Plot 4

Building 5 and 6, to be retained and converted, modestly extend height of building 6 and construct single storey side extension with glazed link right-hand side building providing single detached dwelling house.



Building 6 front elevation



Building 5 & 6 side elevation

Plot 5

Building 9, structure to be retained and converted, cladding and roof finish to be replaced providing single detached dwelling house.



Building 9 front /side elevation



Building 9 view through structure

Plot 6 and 7

Building 10 to be retained and converted, modestly raise height of main roof, install pitched roof over flat roofed rectangular structure, extend single-storey right hand side of building and single storey to rear providing two link-detached dwelling houses.



Building 10 front /side elevation



Building 10 rear elevation



Building 10 front elevation

Plot 8

Building 15 and 17 to be retained and converted, modestly raise height building 17, extend single storey to front of building providing single detached dwelling house.



Building 15 & 16 front elevation



Building 15 & 17 rear elevation

- 2.4 By converting and extending existing buildings, the scheme aspires to provide the following accommodation:

Building	No. Storeys	Bedrooms	GIA (m2)
Plot 1	2.5	4	276
Plot 2	2.5	4	311
Plot 3	1.5	4	325
Plot 4	1.5	4	329
Plot 5	1.5	4	512
Plot 6	2.0	4	328
Plot 7	2.0	4	267
Plot 8	1.5	4	294
Garage Type A	1.0		39
Garage Type B	1.0		39

Fig 04: House Type Accommodation Schedule

- 2.5 Our proposed design for each dwelling has fully considered impact on openness of the countryside whilst respecting original building form; for this reason, modifications and extensions would be modest. Dwellings are retained on the existing building footprint set out with reasonable separation between the built forms whilst providing adequate interface distances to deliver positive impact on the site. Retained and replacement buildings are designed with rural agriculture formation context in keeping with the open countryside.

The accompanying proposed Site Layout Plan drawing Appendix 'C' identifies position and orientation of the development being dictated by the existing arrangement of buildings. With unsuitable buildings removed signifies greater openness between dwellings.

- 2.6 Comparables for the proposed building footprint and site arrangement in consideration to the existing buildings have been summarised as follows:

Element	Existing Site (m2)	Proposed Site (m2)	Summary +/- (m2)
Footprint	3,525	2,106	- 1,419
Hardstanding	2,460	3,976	+ 1,516
Residential Garden	360	7,764	+ 7,404
Green Space	8,133	632	- 7,902
Total	14,478	14,478	

Fig 05: Proposed Development Footprint Comparison

The above statistics identify significant reduction in building footprint by 1,419m², with increased hardstanding, combined footprint and hardstanding are comparable. Residential garden and green space provided by the proposed development are also comparable confirming no loss of softscape within the countryside.

- 2.7 Comparables for the proposed building volume and massing arrangement in consideration to the existing buildings have been summarised as follows:

Building Plot	Height Existing (m)	Height Proposed (m)	Volume Existing (m3)	Volume Proposed (m3)
Plot 1	8.8	8.7	incl	826
Plot 2	8.8	8.7	incl	788
Plot 3	6.5	6.8	incl	1,251
Plot 4	5.1	5.6	incl	1,329
Plot 5	5.7	5.7	incl	1,643
Plot 6	6.9	6.9	incl	951
Plot 7	5.7	6.6	incl	805
Plot 8	7.1	7.1	incl	816
Outbuildings & Garages	-	-	-	1,272
		Total	14,676	9,681

Fig 06: Proposed Development Volume & Massing Comparison

The above statistics identify significant reduction in building volume by 4,995m³, with less massing, having a positive contribution to the openness of the countryside.

- 2.8 It is clear from the enclosed images (d,e,f) above, the existing site is congested, with limited openness through the site or between buildings. We consider that density, scale and amount of accommodation proposed is appropriate for the site, the wider area and that the neighbourhood services can support the development planned.

The design team have undertaken a full Impact Assessment to establish impression of the new development on the Green Barrier and Countryside, our statistics above establish significant reduction in building mass and footprint with improved layout providing openness between buildings.

The accompanying 3D Site Massing and Overlay drawings demonstrate comparison of reduced building coverage between the existing and proposed development.

3.0 **DESIGN CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The philosophy of the proposed development is to provide 8no. individual high-quality modern family homes, to create dwellings of attractive appearance with mixed variety of shape and mass to harmonise with the rural context whilst seeking to create a smaller visible scale and mass than the existing development; we consider these challenges imposed have been met.

The site would be designed to reflect the character of the area as a whole, which is characterised by clusters of substantial dwellings, set on large plots. The dwellings are set back from the highway and boundary treatments are provided for privacy, security and to achieve better highway safety. It is proposed that the development would accord with Local Planning Guidance Note 21: Space around Dwellings.

- 3.2 There is a mixed type of dwellings in the local area and it is our consideration that generally there is no outstanding architecture to surrounding properties, and in many instances, character is relatively bland. External wall finishes are a combination of brickwork and render below pitched gable ended roofs, front dormer gables and balconies are common features to the local area.

The barns and agricultural sheds as they stand do not feature much architectural detailing, nevertheless, as many of the existing features will be retained where they contribute towards the buildings character and rural context. The proposed development would strive to enhance the local area and compliment surrounding rural buildings in the Green Barrier taking into consideration the typical characteristic materials and traditional attributes of design including pitched gable ended roofs and front gable roofs, slate roof finishes, local facing brickwork and timber clad wall finishes, large areas of glazing provide a more contemporary design with transparency reducing building massing.

- 3.3 Inspiration for appearance of the overall design ethos would take into consideration characteristics of buildings in the local and wider area as detailed below.











4.0 ACCESS RATIONALE

- 4.1 As indicated on the proposed site plan and landscape drawing, three existing access points are to be retained, Plots 1 and 2 would have their own separate access directly off the highway with remaining properties from the wider western entrance.

The existing access is to be amended and improved to suit the proposed residential use and the proposed layout, following removal of some trees and hedgerow would provide safe entrance points with adequate visibility splays of 2.4m x 56m in both directions.

- 4.2 A Gated Community is proposed, with new internal access road formed to serve 6no. dwelling houses. Each dwelling will have private garage with off road parking, sufficient off-road parking will also be available for visitors to alleviate any requirement to park on the highway. There will be sufficient turning space for delivery and waste collection vehicles.
- 4.3 The dwellings would be for private residential accommodation and are not designed for a specific user group. Access to the properties will therefore take into account the varying requirements for all potential users; this would be specifically for private visitors and local authority personnel and the like. Consultation has been focussed on guidance provided within the building regulations, British Standard BS8300 and further guidance provided by the Centre for Accessible Environments.
- 4.4 The rationale adopted in insuring access for all users to the premises would be confirmed as follows: -
1. Level site access is provided on approach to the premises, the driveway and footpath leading to the main entrance of each dwelling are wide enough to facilitate wheelchair access. Level entry shall be provided by landscaping ground levels externally and sloping floors internally to adequate falls of no greater than 1:20 gradient.

2. On approach, the main entrance door thresholds would be level with paving; door décor will be contrasting with wall and paved finishes to assist those who are visually impaired, door size width to be minimum 840mm wide to accommodate wheelchair users. Appropriate external lighting is to be provided.
 3. There is good circulation space designed within all dwellings having minimum corridor width of 1100mm; adequate facilities shall be provided for visitors at ground level, to include access to the kitchen and W.C.
 4. Within the accommodation, door openings will have a clear width of at least 750mm with adequately fitted door furniture to provide a practical access for wheelchair users.
 5. The internal décor will be colour contrasting at floor and wall junctions and wall and door openings to assist those who are visually impaired.
 6. Access for staff and visitors within the premises must take into account the requirements of the workplace regulations and other relevant health and safety legislation.
 7. The design is expected to enable occupants with disabilities to cope better with reduced mobility and enable them to stay in their homes for a longer period of time than would be the case if they lived somewhere that wasn't designed as such. The design is not necessarily expected to facilitate fully independent living for all people with disabilities.
 8. All properties are orientated towards existing street frontages or situated off newly formed accessible road and level footpaths. The site and perimeter points of access are generally level, with no significant inclines impairing accessibility. Each frontage will be well lit.
 9. Within the curtilage of the properties, pathways and hard standing will be provided to assist general access for wheelchair users, as well as general occupiers.
- 4.5 The proposals seek to improve access, community safety and movement by setting the property boundary line back. This has several benefits as well as providing better visibility into and out of the site. Redeveloping the site for 8no. dwellings will materially reduce the number of vehicular and pedestrian movements into and out of the site than its former use.
- 4.6 The existing access is amended and improved to suit the proposed residential use and the proposed layout would have greater visibility splay than existing.
- 4.7 It is proposed that the scheme complies with Policy T8 and Local Planning Guidance Note 16 in that sufficient parking spaces are provided. It is appreciated that garages do not count in this calculation. The parking layout has been designed so that the cars can enter and leave the site in a forward facing gear.

5.0 **SUMMARY**

- 5.1 We propose application for development of the site to retain, convert and extend majority of existing buildings to provide 8no. individual high-quality modern family homes, that would be no more intrusive in the countryside. It is suggested that the proposals do not materially affect the site designation of Special Landscape Area or Green Barrier, and are not materially more harmful to the area than the former buildings on site or to the approved planning application scheme.
- 5.2 It is further considered that redevelopment of this site for the intended use will meet government guidelines to control the amount of new housing in the countryside and avoid urban sprawl whilst assisting to provide a mixed use of family residential properties in the vicinity.
- the orientation and massing of the proposals would not cause an unacceptable overshadowing or overlooking of the adjoining properties and respect the scale of the surrounding development.
 - the proposals in terms of design and layout are sympathetic to the adjoining properties and character of the area, and will create a safe and secure place for the occupants and wider community.
 - the overall proposal will make a positive contribution to the local area and accord with planning policies.
 - The proposal creates an accessible, appropriate, legible, and contextual development.
- 5.3 Authenticity of the approved planning application scheme P/2016/0384, has been challenged under separate Development Cost Appraisal Report with this submission. Whilst the approved development is determined not to be financially viable for a developer, given the true extent of rebuilding works required to the Barns essentially would also appear contrary to Planning Policy H10-LPG13 Conversion of Rural Buildings.

Whilst we acknowledge this submission being similar in context to the approved scheme, we have demonstrated under separate report the proposed building conversions, modest extensions and replacement building elements provide a viable sustainable development.

It would be emphasised this applicant is the owner and local developer, who confirms the approved scheme is not financially viable to pursue. Unless substantial improvements would be permissible to the approved scheme, the land would need to remain undeveloped until which time changes in planning policy permit a sustainable scheme.

The applicant being a local developer has the financial means to develop this site using local contractors upon approval. It is also our understanding from the applicant there is significant interest from prospective local purchasers for these high-quality homes, offering up their properties to other local residents lower down the property chain.

- 5.4 In conclusion we propose that the brownfield site is suitable for proposed development, the conversion scheme conforms to Government guidance and Local Policies being in keeping with the rural character as well as representing appropriate development. We therefore propose that the application and development should be encouraged.

APPENDIX 'A'

Existing Development Site Reference Plan



APPENDIX 'B'

Proposed Building Footprint Overlay



APPENDIX 'C'

Proposed Site Layout Plan

