Conservation Officer

Web Comment Name	Conservation Officer	**Owner**	Daniel Jones
Address		**Commenter Type**	Consultee
Email		**Stance**	
Name		**Reason**	
Public	☐		

Text

We welcome the Wrexham Gateway project as an important step in regenerating a key brownfield site at the city's main transport hub. The proposals bring clear benefits, including the removal of poor quality modern buildings, the reuse of the historic goods shed as a museum and taproom, and the creation of new public spaces and transport facilities that will strengthen connections between the station, the town centre, and the football stadium. These elements will significantly enhance the setting of the Grade II listed Wrexham General Station and improve the overall sense of arrival.

The site sits adjacent to a listed building and also contains two sections of Wat's Dyke Scheduled Monument. While the main heritage risk relates to potential disturbance of buried remains, this can be managed through appropriate archaeological monitoring. We also welcome the proposed public plaza and the relocation of parking to the rear, which will remove visual clutter from key views and improve the contribution the station's setting makes to its significance.

However, we remain concerned about the design of the proposed office block. Although we support the principle of new facilities, the current design feels generic and lacks a meaningful connection to Wrexham's character. The reference to the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is so subtle that it risks being unnoticed, and despite attempts to break up the massing, the building still reads as a solid five storey block. Given the site's prominence, the relatively limited heritage constraints, and the bold architectural approach taken at the Kop Stand, there is scope to be far more ambitious. As it stands, the building risks appearing more like a business park office than a landmark gateway development.

We also support the reuse of the

Jewson's Warehouse building, but its existing generic appearance means that the success of this element will depend heavily on the quality of external detailing. Careful consideration of materials, colours, finishes, and cladding will be essential to ensure it contributes positively to the wider scheme rather than diluting its ambitions. In conclusion, while we recognise the significant benefits the Gateway project can deliver, we encourage the design team to refine the office block ahead of reserved matters. A bolder, more contextually rooted architectural approach would allow the scheme to fulfil its potential as a distinctive, high quality development that genuinely reflects Wrexham's identity and ambition.

Original Text

We welcome the Wrexham Gateway project as a positive step in regenerating a key brownfield site at the city's main transport hub. The scheme will enhance the setting of the Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station by removing poor quality modern buildings, repurposing the historic goods shed as a museum and taproom, and creating new public spaces, offices, and transport facilities that strengthen connections between the station, the town centre, and the adjacent football stadium.

While we support the overall vision and many of the proposed improvements, we encourage further refinement of the office block design to ensure it reflects Wrexham's character and ambition. With careful attention to contextual references and bolder architectural expression, this site has the potential to deliver a landmark development that both celebrates heritage and drives meaningful regeneration.

The Wrexham Gateway project represents a valuable opportunity to regenerate the station area by removing poor quality modern buildings and vacant plots, while retaining and repurposing key heritage assets such as the Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station and the historic goods shed, which is proposed for conversion into a museum and taproom. New public spaces, offices, and transport facilities will strengthen connections between the station and the town centre, while enhancing the setting of the area. The Site also lies within the context of several Listed Buildings, a Conservation Area, and two sections of Wat's Dyke Scheduled Monument, with the main heritage risk being potential disturbance to buried remains. These impacts can be managed through archaeological monitoring and mitigation, as advised by Heneb.

Overall, we consider the scheme positive, bringing new development and the re use of a brownfield site in a key location and gateway into the city centre, adjacent to the expanding football stadium. The proposed public plaza and pedestrianised area in front of the Grade II station building will significantly improve the quality of the public realm and the sense of arrival, and we welcome the relocation of parking to the rear of the site, removing it from key views which will bring an improvement to the contribution setting makes to the significance of the listed building.

Turning to the proposed office block, while we support the principle of new facilities, we remain unconvinced by the current design. The intended reference to the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct through cladding panel widths is not readily apparent in the visualisations and risks being overlooked by most users. We recommend further integration of contextual design references to strengthen its local identity. We also acknowledge the design narrative of cutting away mass and introducing articulation, but the building still reads as a solid five storey block, with the middle floors contributing most of the bulk.

That said, we do not believe the building must necessarily be recessive. Given the brownfield nature of the site, relatively limited heritage constraints, and the bold design approach seen at the Kop Stand, there is scope to be more ambitious. This is a rare opportunity to deliver a distinctive piece of contemporary architecture that reflects Wrexham's character and aspirations. As it stands, the design risks appearing generic, more akin to a business park office block than a landmark development at a strategic gateway site.

We welcome the re-use of the Jewson's Warehouse building, a similarly generic building which could be anywhere, and which is currently providing no visual interest to the area. It is understood that the exact details of the conversion are still to be considered, however, we must stress that attention to the external detail will be critical to ensure successful integration into the envisaged high quality gateway project. As such robust consideration of external finishes, colours, materials, cladding etc is needed so as not to water down and detract from the eventual sitewide ambitions.

In conclusion, we are supportive of the Wrexham Gateway project and

recognise the significant benefits it can bring in terms of regeneration, connectivity, and the celebration of local heritage. We encourage ahead of reserved matters stage, that the design team build on the strong foundations already set by refining the office block to achieve a bolder, more contextually rooted architectural expression. With these adjustments, the scheme has the potential to deliver not only much-needed facilities and public realm improvements, but also a landmark development that reflects Wrexham's identity and ambition.

In Review	☐		
Last Review Date	06/02/2026		
Reviewed By	Philip Mullineux		
Created By	Daniel Jones, 22/10/2025, 12:58	**Last Modified By**	Daniel Jones, 06/02/2026, 12:21

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