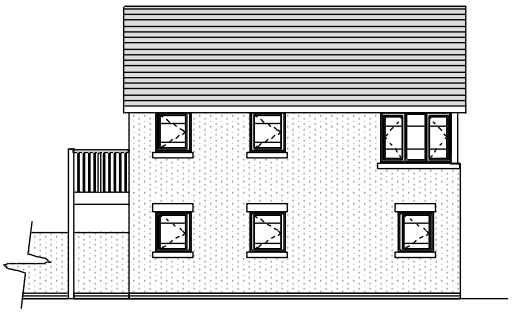
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Heritage Impact Statement



Front Elevation 1:100



Side Elevation 1:100



Side Elevation 1:100 (facing Road)



Rear Elevation 1:100

Statement required for:

Proposed new dwelling on land to the rear of Oakdale, Minshalls Croft, Cefn Mawr, Wrexham LL14 3RB.

Explaining Objectives

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the erection of a detached dwelling on land located off High Street, Cefn Mawr, Wrexham.

The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the principles contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12), Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24 – The Historic Environment, together with Cadw's guidance documents *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales* and *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales*. The proposal has also been informed by the Cefn Mawr Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan, adopted by Wrexham County Borough Council, which identifies the special architectural and historic interest that should be preserved and enhanced.

The objective of the proposal is to provide a high-quality dwelling that responds positively to the established character of High Street and the wider historic settlement of Cefn Mawr. The design has evolved from a detailed analysis of the site's topography, surrounding built form and its contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Rather than maximising the building's scale, the proposal adopts a landscape-led design approach. The dwelling is positioned to follow the natural fall of the land, allowing it to present as a modest single-storey dwelling when viewed from High Street. The lower accommodation is accommodated within the slope, significantly reducing the apparent height, visual mass and prominence of the building from the public realm. This design approach reflects one of the defining characteristics of Cefn Mawr, where buildings frequently respond to steep changes in level and present varying storey heights depending upon the viewing direction.

The proposal therefore seeks not only to minimise its impact on the historic environment but to reinforce the established pattern of development through a carefully considered and contextually responsive design.

Understanding Significance

Cefn Mawr is recognised as an historic industrial settlement whose significance derives from its eighteenth and nineteenth-century development associated with ironworking, coal mining, quarrying and the nearby Pontcysyllte Canal. The Conservation Area encompasses the historic core of the village, which occupies a dramatic sandstone ridge overlooking the Dee Valley. The settlement developed organically around former industrial activity and is characterised by a layered townscape that responds directly to the steep hillside, creating a distinctive sequence of terraces, detached dwellings, boundary walls and enclosed spaces.

The significance of the Conservation Area is derived from several interrelated characteristics, including the historic street pattern centred on High Street, the varied architectural styles reflecting different phases of development, the consistent domestic scale of buildings, the use of traditional materials and the strong visual relationship between the built environment

and the surrounding landscape. The Character Assessment identifies the importance of preserving these qualities whilst accommodating sympathetic new development that respects the area's historic evolution rather than replicating historic architecture.

The application site occupies an undeveloped parcel of land enclosed by existing residential development. Whilst it forms part of the established urban grain, it does not contain any historic structures, archaeological remains or landscape features that contribute positively to the significance of the Conservation Area. The site therefore offers an opportunity for sensitive infill development that reinforces the continuity of the settlement without resulting in the loss of historic fabric.

Any contribution the site makes to heritage significance is primarily through its spatial relationship with surrounding development and the experience of High Street as part of the historic settlement. Consequently, the principal consideration is whether the proposed dwelling preserves the established scale, rhythm and character of the streetscape and whether it affects the setting of nearby heritage assets.

Identifying Proposed Changes, Assessing the Impact and Reasoning

The proposal comprises the construction of a detached dwelling with associated access, parking and landscaping.

From the outset, the design has been informed by the need to preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding historic environment. The site's steep topography has been utilised as the principal design driver, allowing the building to be partially embedded within the slope. This approach substantially reduces the perceived scale of the development and avoids the introduction of a visually dominant building within the streetscape.

When viewed from High Street, only a single-storey elevation will be visible. The ridge height has been carefully controlled to ensure that the dwelling sits comfortably within the surrounding roofscape and does not interrupt important views along the street or across the settlement. The lower level is accommodated beneath highway level and is experienced only from within the site itself. Consequently, the proposal avoids the excessive bulk that would otherwise arise from a conventional two-storey dwelling constructed on existing ground levels.

The siting of the building respects the established pattern of development along High Street by maintaining appropriate separation distances, preserving the openness between neighbouring dwellings and reinforcing the existing urban grain. The proposal does not project prominently into public views, nor does it compete with neighbouring buildings in terms of height or massing.

The architectural approach adopts simple, well-proportioned forms that reflect the domestic character of the locality without resorting to pastiche. The restrained roof form, balanced elevations and carefully selected external materials are intended to complement the varied architectural character of Cefn Mawr while remaining clearly representative of contemporary

design. This accords with Cadw guidance, which recognises that successful new development should be of its time while respecting the significance of its historic context.

Existing and proposed landscaping will further soften the development and integrate it into the surrounding environment. Boundary treatments and planting have been designed to reinforce the established green character of the area and reduce the visual impact of built form when viewed from the public realm.

The proposal has also been assessed in relation to the setting of nearby heritage assets. The development will neither obscure nor dominate these assets and will not interrupt the visual or historic relationships that contribute to their significance. Given the modest scale of the proposal, its careful positioning and the use of the site's natural topography, there will be no adverse effect on the appreciation, understanding or setting of nearby heritage assets.

Having considered the significance of the Conservation Area and the wider historic environment, it is concluded that the proposal will preserve those elements that contribute to their significance. The development will not result in harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and satisfies the statutory duty placed upon the Local Planning Authority under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

The proposed design includes the use of timber casement windows conservation style rooflight to respect the conservation area setting. Included within the design is a timber balcony with simple timber balustrade to make use of the far reaching views available from the plot. When viewed from the Highway this will have a minimal impact to the visual appearance of the dwelling having been set in lower ground.

Conclusion

The proposed dwelling has been designed following a comprehensive assessment of the site's heritage context and the significance of the surrounding historic environment.

The proposal responds directly to the defining characteristics of Cefn Mawr by respecting the natural topography, maintaining the established domestic scale of development and reinforcing the historic pattern of settlement. The decision to embed the dwelling within the slope, resulting in a single-storey appearance from High Street, represents the principal mitigation measure and significantly reduces the visual impact of the development within the streetscape.

The proposal neither removes historic fabric nor adversely affects the setting or significance of nearby heritage assets. It preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its restrained scale, sympathetic siting and high-quality design. The development represents an appropriate form of sustainable infill development that complements the continuing evolution of the settlement without detracting from its special architectural and historic interest.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal fully accords with the objectives of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Planning Policy Wales, TAN 24, Cadw's heritage guidance and Wrexham County Borough Council's adopted Conservation Area Management objectives. The proposal will preserve the significance of the historic environment and there are no heritage-related grounds upon which planning permission should be withheld.

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