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Design and Access Statement

43 Bertie Road, Wrexham, LL13 8HE

Applicant: Nathan Richards

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an application for planning permission for a change of use from C3 (dwelling) to C4 (HMO) at 43 Bertie Road, Wrexham.

The proposal involves the internal reconfiguration of the existing two-bedroom dwelling to create a third bedroom at ground-floor level. The two existing first-floor bedrooms will be retained, together with the shared kitchen, living/dining and shower facilities. The property will accommodate three residents.

No significant extension, additional storey or substantial external alteration is proposed. The building envelope, elevations, roof form, rear garden and established residential appearance will remain substantially unchanged.

The assessment considers the principle of the HMO use, HMO concentration, character and appearance, residential amenity, parking, cycle provision and external amenity.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

43 Bertie Road is an established residential property within the urban area of Wrexham and forms part of an established residential street. It is currently occupied as a conventional two-bedroom dwelling.

The property has no dedicated off-road car parking. This is an existing characteristic of the site and is not created or worsened by the proposal. The existing rear garden will be retained as private external amenity space and will also accommodate secure cycle storage and refuse/recycling storage.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the existing dwelling to a small HMO accommodating three unrelated residents. The proposed accommodation comprises:

Three individual bedrooms, Shared kitchen and living/dining accommodation, Shared shower/bathroom facilities, Existing pedestrian access, Existing rear garden; and Secure cycle storage within the rear garden.

Bedroom 03 will be formed within the existing ground-floor accommodation, while the two first-floor bedrooms are retained. The proposal is therefore limited to internal alterations and will retain the existing building envelope, elevations, roof form and established residential appearance.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013–2028 was withdrawn on 18 March 2026. The current development plan position therefore comprises Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996–2011, adopted in 2005, in the relevant legal hierarchy.

The principal policies and guidance relevant to the proposal are:

Policy GDP1 – Development Objectives, Policy H4 – Subdivision of Dwellings, Policy T8 – Parking, Local Planning Guidance Note No. 5 – Houses in Multiple Occupation; and Local Planning Guidance Note No. 16 – Parking Standards.

5. PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY H4

The proposal is for a small C4 HMO accommodating three unrelated residents sharing kitchen, bathroom and living facilities. The Council's HMO guidance recognizes the role of HMOs in

providing smaller and potentially lower-cost accommodation. The proposal makes more efficient use of an established residential property without requiring additional land or a new building.

Policy H4 permits subdivision where it can be achieved without major alterations, extensions or additional buildings that significantly alter the character of the original dwelling; accords with Policy GDP1; provides adequate private open space; and does not result in an over-concentration of HMOs detrimental to the area or existing residents.

The proposal satisfies these principles. Alterations are principally internal, the existing garden is retained, and no extension or additional building is proposed.

HMO concentration has been assessed in accordance with the Council's methodology. The assessment confirms that the proposal remains within the Council's stated 10% threshold for residential buildings in HMO use within a 50-meter radius. The consideration of separation from existing HMOs has also been taken into account. The proposal is therefore not considered to result in an unacceptable concentration of HMOs within the immediate locality.

6. CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

The proposal will not materially alter the external appearance of the property. No extension, additional storey or substantial external alteration is proposed. The existing roof form, principal elevations, building line and relationship with neighboring properties will remain unchanged.

The third bedroom is created entirely within the existing building envelope and the property will continue to appear externally as a conventional residential dwelling. The established character of Bertie Road will therefore be maintained.

7. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

This section relates specifically to the effect of the proposal on neighboring residential amenity. The proposal is not considered to result in unacceptable harm to neighboring residents.

Existing: the property is a two-bedroom dwelling. Proposed: the property will remain residential in character but will accommodate three residents. The increase is limited and no commercial activity, late-night operation or other inherently incompatible use is proposed.

No extension or significant external alteration is proposed. Consequently, the development does not introduce additional built form capable of causing overlooking, loss of daylight or an overbearing relationship. The property will also be operated in accordance with applicable HMO management and licensing requirements.

8. PARKING AND HIGHWAY CONSIDERATIONS

The parking position is unchanged by the proposal. The proposal therefore does not remove, reduce or replace any existing off-road parking provision. Wrexham Local Planning Guidance Note No. 16 identifies a maximum standard of one car parking space per bedroom for HMOs of one to six bedrooms, subject to a maximum of four spaces. For the proposed three-bedroom HMO, this equates to a maximum of three spaces. The guidance does not establish a minimum parking requirement and changes of use are to be considered on their individual merits, having regard to likely demand and highway effects.

The change is from a two-bedroom dwelling with no off-road parking to a three-bedroom HMO with no off-road parking. Given the small scale of the proposal, the existing urban location and access to pedestrian, cycling and public transport opportunities, the development is not considered likely to result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

9. CYCLE PARKING AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Secure cycle parking will be provided within the rear garden. The Council's parking standards seek one secure cycle parking space per two HMO bedrooms; the proposed three-bedroom HMO can therefore accommodate at least two secure cycle spaces. This provides a practical sustainable transport option, particularly given the absence of dedicated off-road parking.

10. EXTERNAL AMENITY, REFUSE AND INTERNAL ACCOMMODATION

This section relates to the amenity available to the HMO's own residents and is separate from the assessment of neighboring residential amenity in Section 7.

Existing: the two-bedroom dwelling has one existing rear garden providing private external amenity space. Proposed: the three-bedroom HMO will retain the same rear garden, with no loss of external amenity space. The garden will serve three residents and will also provide space for secure cycle storage, drying and refuse/recycling storage.

The retained garden therefore continues to provide external amenity for the occupants without requiring additional land. Bins can be stored within the property/curtilage and presented for collection when required, avoiding the need for permanent storage on the public highway.

The proposed internal arrangement provides three bedrooms together with shared kitchen, living and shower facilities. Detailed matters relating to HMO licensing, room sizes, fire safety, heating, washing facilities and other technical standards will be addressed through the relevant Building Regulations and HMO licensing processes.

11. CONCLUSION

The proposed conversion of 43 Bertie Road from a two-bedroom dwelling to a three-bedroom HMO represents an appropriate and proportionate form of residential development. The proposal makes efficient use of an existing dwelling, provides accommodation for three residents and creates the additional bedroom entirely within the existing building envelope.

No significant extension, additional storey or additional building is proposed;

The existing external character and appearance will be retained;

The existing rear garden will be retained as external amenity space;

Secure cycle storage and refuse/recycling storage can be accommodated within the rear garden/curtilage;

Existing off-road parking is 0 spaces and proposed off-road parking remains 0 spaces, so no parking provision is lost;

The proposal remains within the relevant HMO concentration threshold;

The increase in occupation is limited to three residents; and

The proposal is considered capable of being accommodated without unacceptable harm to residential amenity, highway safety or character.

The proposal has been considered against Wrexham UDP Policies GDP1, H4 and T8, together with Local Planning Guidance Note No. 5 – Houses in Multiple Occupation and Local Planning Guidance Note No. 16 – Parking Standards.

Overall, the proposal makes effective use of an existing dwelling while maintaining its established physical character, retaining external amenity and providing a manageable scale of occupation. Planning permission is therefore respectfully requested.