



Planning Application Supporting Statement (including Design & Access)

Full Planning Application for a residential
development of 36 Affordable Dwellings

Land south of Groesfan, Penycae, Wrexham LL14 2RP

March 2022



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PROJECT

Development of 36 affordable dwellings on land south of Groesfan, Penycae

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1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 This document provides supporting information in respect of a planning application that seeks full planning consent for a residential development of 36 affordable dwellings on land to the south of Groesfan, Penycae, Wrexham.
- 1.2 The information contained in this document is supplementary to that provided on the completed planning application forms and is to be regarded as forming part of the application. The information contained in this statement is intended to assist the Planning Authority in determination of the proposals.

Background to the Development

- 1.3 The applicant, Wales & West Housing, is a housing association with over 50 years of experience in social housing in Wales and a vision to achieve strong, sustainable growth to make a difference to people's lives, homes and communities. It manages more than 12,000 high quality, affordable homes in 15 local authority areas across Wales. These include more than 3,000 dedicated properties for older people as well as innovative supported housing solutions for people with a range of particular needs.
- 1.4 Wales and West Housing are aware that there is currently significant unmet demand for affordable housing in Penycae and the surrounding area. They have therefore identified the application site as a suitable location for affordable housing to meet this identified local need.
- 1.5 Given the above, the application subject of this statement seeks planning consent for 36 affordable dwellings on the site at Penycae.

2. The Site and Proposed Development

Introduction

2.1 This section explains the nature of the application site and its immediate environment. It also sets the context for demonstrating that the site is suitable for the proposed development.

The Site and its Environs

2.2 As illustrated on the application drawings and figure 1 (below), the proposed site adjoins the settlement of Penycae and is therefore within walking and cycling distance of the settlement's services and facilities, including food and drink establishments, recreational facilities and Ysgol Penycae. The site is therefore considered to be in a sustainable location for further residential development.

2.3 The village is also in close proximity to, and linked by a regular bus service to, the regional centre of Wrexham which provides a comprehensive range of community services and facilities including a Hospital, main line rail station and significant employment premises.

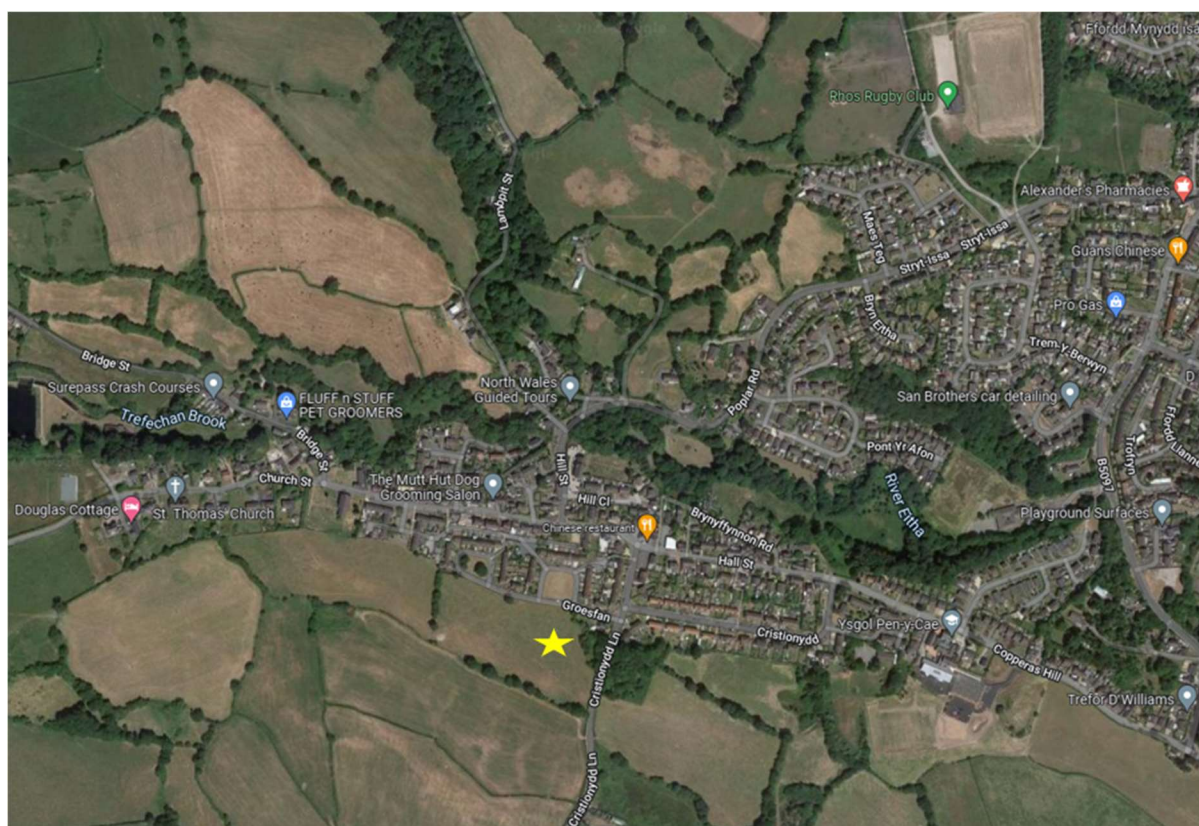


Figure 1: Google Maps Aerial Image with application site location identified

- 2.4 The site itself is bounded to the north by the existing housing development at Groesfan, whilst to the east, west and south the site is screened from surrounding agricultural land by the topography of the land and existing mature hedgerows and trees along its boundaries. Existing footpath provision along Groesfan into Penycae is proposed to be extended into the site to serve the proposed development.
- 2.5 The site is free from any development constraints, including flooding (as demonstrated by the extract of Natural Resources Wales' Development Advice Mapping, provided at figure 2). Whilst access to the application site can be achieved with ease from Groesfan. Mains utilities are also available to serve the proposed development.

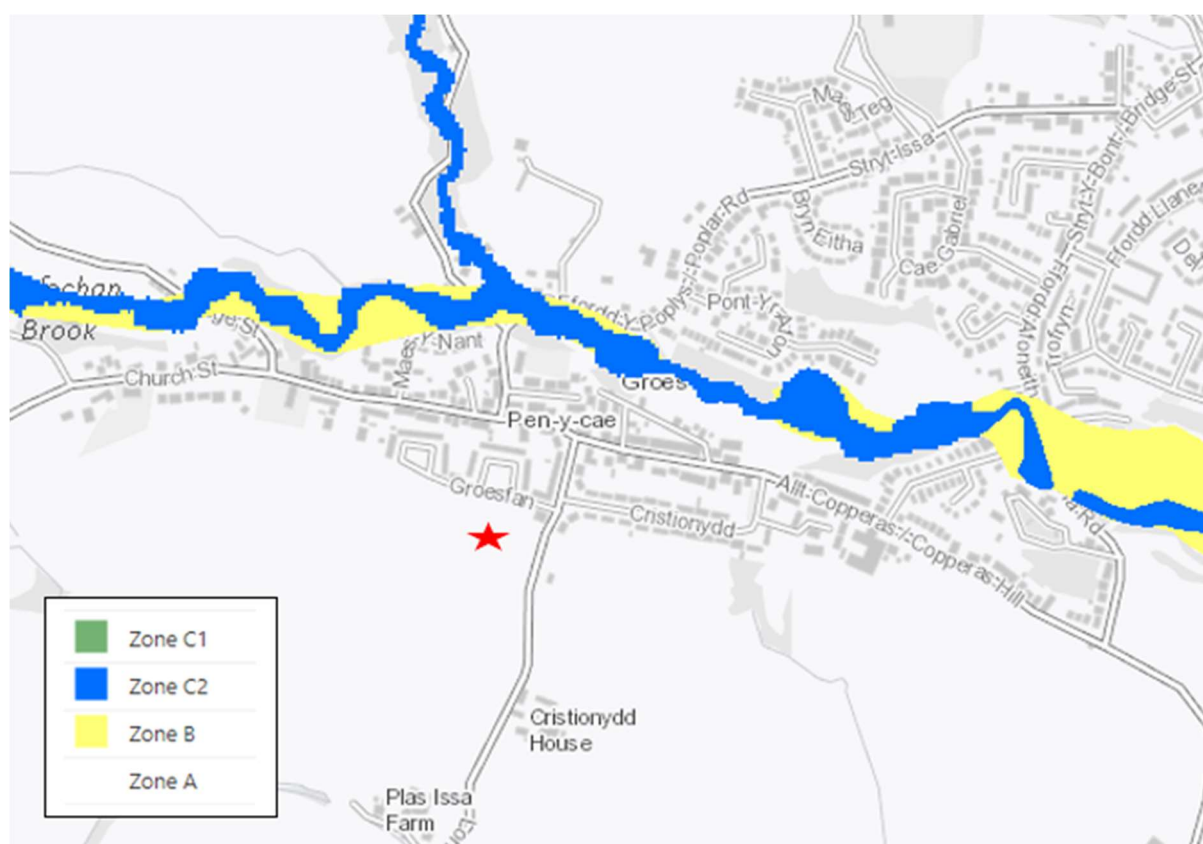


Figure 2: Extract of Natural Resources Wales Development Advice Mapping with application site location identified

- 2.6 Given the above, the application site is considered to be an appropriate location for the proposed development with no unacceptable adverse impacts anticipated to arise as a result of its development.

The Proposed Development

2.7 *Design*

2.7.1 The proposed development on the application site is fully illustrated on the submitted drawings. These drawings identify that the development will comprise of 36 dwellings (6no. 1bed/2person bungalows, 19No. 2bed/4person houses, 4No. 3bed/5person houses, 1No. 4bed/7person house and 6No. 1bed/2person apartments).

2.7.2 The drawings submitted with the application include:
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-090000-P1: Location Plan
PYC-LAW-X-X-RP-A-000010-P01: SWOT Analysis
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-090001-P10: Proposed Site Plan
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-091002 P02: Proposed Site Solar Study
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-091003 P02: Proposed Sections
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-091001-P05: Proposed Street Views
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-061001-P01: Proposed House Type 1B2P
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-061002-P01: Proposed House Type 2B4P
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-061003-P01: Proposed House Type 3B5P
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-061004-P01: Proposed Apartments
CLP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-061005-P01: Proposed House Type 4B7P

2.7.3 The proposed development of 36 residential units benefits from a low density layout which allows for orientation of the dwellings to accommodate photovoltaic panels on South and West facing roof slopes.

2.7.4 The overall design approach for the dwellings is traditional. The height, density, type and form of the properties are designed to fit into the immediate surrounding environment. The dwellings will be constructed from the same palette of high-quality materials to provide a harmonious development that has regard to local building materials and contributes to a sense of place. The two storey dwellings will be mainly of facing brick outer leaf under a profiled tile roof and will include feature brickwork detailing. The bungalows will have a through coloured render finish to the walls which is continued to the upper storey of the apartments block.

2.7.5 All dwellings are designed to Welsh Government Development Quality Requirements and will be designed to be accessible and low maintenance.

2.7.6 *Environmental Sustainability*

- **Efficient Use and Protection of Natural Resources**
The development site itself is free from development constraints. As previously detailed the low density of buildings on the site ensures that the properties will be able to take advantage of passive solar heating and solar energy installations.

- **Landscaping & Biodiversity**

Native landscape planting will be included within the scheme to enhance the ecological value of the site and further assist in integrating the development into its landscape setting.

2.7.7 *Movement*

The proposed development is on the edge of Penycae, a settlement that benefits from a good range of services and facilities. The site will be linked back to the settlement by footpath links constructed as part of the development.

2.7.4 *Community Safety*

The proposed development will enhance community safety in this location through an increase in natural surveillance in the area.

2.8 *Utilities and Drainage*

2.8.1 A Level 2 Utility Survey has been undertaken for the proposed development (UCML, June 2021). This survey has investigated and appraised existing utility infrastructure located in the vicinity of the development site and its findings include that:

Electricity - Scottish Power Energy Networks has confirmed that connection is feasible.

Gas - Wales & West Utilities has confirmed that the existing infrastructure has sufficient capacity to service the proposed development.

Water - Hafren Dyfrdwy (water) and Welsh Water (sewerage) have confirmed that the existing infrastructure has sufficient capacity to service the proposed development.

The site can therefore be served by mains electricity, gas, water and foul drainage.

2.8.2 A drainage strategy (Coopers consulting engineers, October 2021) accompanies the application submission and illustrates a sustainable drainage system for the disposal of surface water to meet Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) requirements.

2.9 *Access*

2.9.1 As detailed in the accompanying Transport Statement (Focus Transport Planning, February 2022), the site is located adjacent to a mature residential area and offers the potential to encourage access by alternative sustainable travel modes to the private car for some day-to-day journeys. The proposals incorporate a suitable level of car and cycle parking, and appropriate servicing arrangements are available for refuse collection and delivery vehicles. Increases in traffic as a result of the development would be of a strictly limited scale and would not require the provision of specific network capacity improvements.

3. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy

3.1 National planning policy in Wales is provided in a number of documents, including, most significantly, Planning Policy Wales (PPW).

3.2 *Planning Policy Wales*

3.2.1 PPW Edition 11 was adopted in February 2021 and is the key national land use planning policy document for Wales. PPW sets out the Welsh Government's land use planning policies with the aim to translate the Government's commitment to sustainable development within the planning system. This is highlighted in the Introduction at paragraph 1.2, which details that the "*primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales*", this should be considered during plan-making and decision-taking.

3.2.2 PPW provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (paragraph 1.18). In this regard, it details that Local Planning Authorities should ensure that the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits of a proposed development are considered in the decision-making process, recognising that, in doing so, there may be occasions when one benefit of a development proposal outweighs others. Key factors in the Local Planning Authority's assessment process include:

- **Economic Considerations**

Economic considerations include the contribution the proposed development makes to job creation, the growth and regeneration of the local area and the achievement of a more prosperous, low carbon, innovative and resource efficient Wales.

- **Social Considerations**

Social considerations include the contribution the proposed development makes to meeting society's needs (including housing), how people access employment and how they interact on a daily basis.

- **Cultural Considerations**

Cultural considerations can include how far the proposal supports the provision of jobs and economic activity and how the area's distinctive offer, including the Welsh language and landscape, is protected and promoted.

- **Environmental Considerations**

Environmental considerations include how important features of the natural and built environment are protected and enhanced, how environmental risks are prevented or appropriately managed and how efficient and most

appropriate use of materials is made (e.g. by maximising energy efficiency, the efficient use of land and sustainable movement).

3.2.3 PPW specifically identifies the importance of providing affordable housing to meet the needs of communities and details that “a community’s need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which must be taken into account in ... determining relevant planning applications”. In this regard, PPW further states that the “provision of affordable housing exception sites must be considered to help meet identified requirements and ensure the viability of the local community” and that “affordable housing provided on exception sites should meet the needs of local people in perpetuity” (paragraph 4.2.34).

3.3 *Technical Advice Note 2: PLANNING AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING*

3.3.1 Technical Advice Note 2 provides the following definition of Affordable Housing (in its Glossary), as follows:

“Housing provided to those whose needs are not met by the open market. Affordable housing should:

- meet the needs of eligible households, including availability at low enough cost for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices; and
- include provision for the home to remain affordable for future eligible households, or if a home ceases to be affordable or staircasing to full ownership takes place, any subsidy should generally be recycled to provide replacement affordable housing.

This breaks down into two sub-categories:

- social rented housing - provided by local authorities and registered social landlords where rent levels have regard to the Assembly Government’s guideline rents and benchmark rents; and
- intermediate housing - where prices or rents are above those of social rented housing but below market housing prices or rents. This can include equity sharing schemes (for example Homebuy). Intermediate housing differs from low cost market housing, which the Assembly Government does not consider to be affordable housing for the purpose of the land use planning system”.

3.3.2 TAN2 (paragraph 6.3) also identifies the important role Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) play in the provision of affordable housing highlighting their good understanding of, and different perspective on, local housing markets and their ability to provide the resources necessary to provide affordable housing and their importance in the construction and management of affordable housing.

Local Planning Policy

3.4 Unitary Development Plan

3.4.1 Wrexham's adopted Development Plan is the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). UDP policies and proposals of most specific relevance to the proposed development are considered to be the following:

- **Policy H5: Housing in the Countryside**

This policy identifies that housing outside of defined settlement limits will only be permitted in certain circumstances including where proposals accord with Policies H3, H4 and H8.

- **Policy H8: Affordable Housing**

Policy H8 details that "in exceptional circumstances" consideration will be given to affordable housing proposals on sites that form logical extensions to a settlement and reflect the surrounding townscape and landscape. However, the policy also provides an indicative capacity for such sites of "no more than 5 dwellings".

- **Policy EC1: Green Barriers**

The site lies within a Green Barrier designation where policy EC1 seeks to restrict development to that which maintains the openness of the Green Barrier. The supporting text to the policy highlights that green barriers "possess the same characteristics and purposes of formal green belts, except in their long-term permanency".

3.5 Local Development Plan

3.5.1 Whilst the UDP is the adopted Development Plan, it is time expired and based on outdated information (e.g. the Wrexham Housing Needs Survey 1999).

3.5.2 The UDP's replacement, the Local Development Plan (LDP) is at an advanced stage in its preparation, with the examination currently on-going, and is based on a more up to date evidence base. Consideration must also be given to those policies and proposals, contained within the composite version of the LDP, of relevance to the development proposal, as follows:

- **Policy H3: Affordable Housing Exception Sites**

The policy enables the provision of affordable housing exception sites outside but immediately adjoining settlement limits subject to certain criteria including that there is an identified need for affordable housing in the area and that the site forms a logical extension to the settlement limit.

Whilst the policy restricts the capacity of exception sites to no more than 5 dwellings in those settlements identified as tier 4 and 5 settlements, Pen-y-Cae is a tier 3 settlement and therefore capable of accommodating larger affordable housing schemes.

- Policy SP7: Green Wedge

The Green Barrier designations contained within the UDP have been reappraised and Green Wedges are now proposed that, as detailed in the supporting text to the policy, “have been identified, through the Strategic Green Wedge Review (2016)” and are designated “only on those parts of the countryside that are considered to act as buffers between settlements to prevent settlement coalescence in areas under pressure for development. The boundaries have been carefully set to ensure that only those areas that require extra protection to prevent settlement coalescence are included.”.

4. Planning Assessment

4.1 The main planning issues concern the following:

- Principle of Development
- Sustainable Development
- Impact on the Welsh Language
- Landscape Impact
- Ecological Impact
- Transport Impact
- Arboricultural Impact

Principle of Development

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan, unless there are material circumstances which 'indicate otherwise'. As the adopted Unitary Development Plan in Wrexham is time expired and its replacement the Local Development Plan is nearing adoption, consideration has been given to the policies and proposals contained within both the UDP and those in the emerging LDP.

4.3 The proposed development is the provision of affordable housing on an exception site at Pen-y-Cae. Pen-y-Cae is identified as a sustainable location for additional housing development in both the UDP and LDP. Although it is recognised that the site lies outside of the development boundary of the settlement in both the UDP and LDP.

4.4 Nonetheless, policies contained within the UDP and LDP enable the provision of affordable housing schemes on sites adjoining but outside of a settlement's development boundary. Whilst both the UDP and LDP policies restrict such provision to no more than 5 dwellings, this restriction only applies to smaller settlements than Pen-y-Cae in the LDP policy.

Pen-y-Cae is identified in as a 'Local Service Centre' in the LDP's settlement hierarchy and therefore a location where affordable housing exception sites will be permitted on land outside but immediately adjoining settlement limits provided that there is an identified need for affordable housing in the area which is unlikely to be met by any development opportunities within the existing settlement limits and the units are retained for affordable housing in perpetuity.

In addition, both national and local policy seek to ensure that identified need for affordable housing is met.

Appendix 1 of this statement provides a Housing Need Statement prepared by the applicants (Wales and West Housing Association) which details the need for affordable housing provision in the local area and that the units will be retained for affordable housing in perpetuity.

4.5 Whilst the site is identified as lying within an area designated as a Green Barrier within the UDP, the Green Barrier designation has been re-appraised

in the preparation of the LDP and replaced by Green Wedge designations. Significantly, the application site is not included within the Green Wedge designation that affects parts of the land surrounding Pen-y-Cae. The exception site does not, therefore, require any additional level of protection from development and an affordable housing 'exception site' development is potentially acceptable.

- 4.6 Given the above, it is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable.

Sustainable Development

- 4.7 As previously detailed, Planning Policy Wales states that the planning system provides for a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- 4.8 There are different dimensions to "sustainable" development: economic, social, cultural and environmental and it is considered that this development will contribute to all of these, as set out below:

- Economic

The proposal will provide local employment during the construction phase and benefits the local economy through the use of local suppliers and services.

The provision of dwellings will also accommodate additional residents in the community, within walking and cycling distance of the services and facilities provided in Penycae. Residents will therefore support local businesses and services such as the local public houses, retail facilities, places of worship and the local Primary School.

- Social

The development will make a significant contribution to Wrexham' housing requirements including, most significantly, the stock of affordable housing. Such provision will provide people with an appropriate level of residential accommodation to meet their needs and will therefore positively affect their health, well-being, quality of life and the opportunities open to them.

In enabling local people to meet their housing needs within the area, the proposals will also ensure that occupants continue to live within, and contribute to the vitality of, their local community.

- Cultural

As previously detailed, cultural considerations include the provision of jobs and economic activity and how the Welsh language and landscape, is protected and promoted.

The proposed development therefore provides cultural benefits through the creation of jobs during the construction phase of the scheme and will enable occupants of the proposed dwellings to support local community services and facilities and play an active role in community life. Pen-y-Cae is also identified as a Welsh Language stronghold in the Local Development Plan and it is significant, therefore, that the proposed dwellings will enable local

people to remain within their community (further detail on this consideration is provided in the following section of this statement).

The proposal is not considered to result in any unacceptable adverse landscape impact as the site lies on the edge of the settlement, outside of the Green Wedge designation, in a location that is well screened by surrounding built development, landform and vegetation.

- **Environmental**

The site is unaffected by any environmental constraints, unlike other areas of land surrounding the settlement of Pen-y-Cae. No unacceptable adverse environmental impacts are therefore likely to arise as a result of the proposed development.

4.9 It is evident from the above information that the proposed development constitutes a sustainable form of development and should be considered and determined in the context of Planning Policy Wales' 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

• **Impact on the Welsh Language**

4.10 Penycae is identified within the Wrexham LDP as a local community where Welsh language is sensitive or important (i.e. where Welsh speaking ranges from 18.3% to 47%). Policy WL1 of the emerging LDP details that windfall development proposals of 15 or more units in Penycae will be subject to a Welsh Language Impact Assessment by the Council and, where the Impact Assessment demonstrates that the development may have an adverse impact, proposals must be accompanied by a Welsh Language Action Plan setting out the measures to be taken to protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language and culture.

4.11 Additional consideration of the impact of this development proposal on the Welsh Language and local Welsh Community is therefore provided at Appendix 2 of this statement. As detailed in Appendix 2 it is concluded that, as the proposal will assist in meeting the needs of the local community for affordable housing and will therefore enable local residents (a large percentage of which are Welsh speakers) to remain living within the community, the proposal will have a positive impact upon the Welsh Language.

• **Landscape Impact**

4.12 The development proposal has been informed by the input of Above Zero landscape architects who have inputted into the design process through analysis of the site and its surrounds, and identification of the site's constraints and opportunities. The planning application is therefore accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (Above Zero Landscape Architecture, February 2022) that assesses the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

4.13 The overall conclusion of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal is that, whilst the development would form an adverse change and extend residential development beyond the existing village edge, the nature of the landform in the countryside along with boundary vegetation ensures that the development would form only a small change to landscape character. No unacceptable adverse landscape and visual impacts are therefore likely to arise as a result of the proposed development.

- **Ecological Impact**

4.14 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Anthony Nickson Ecology Ltd, October 2021) has been undertaken and accompanies the application. The appraisal was undertaken to establish the ecological value of the application site, assess the potential impact of the development on protected species or sites and identify whether any further survey work may be required.

4.15 The Appraisal provides a number of recommendations to ensure that the proposed development does not give rise to any unacceptable adverse ecological impacts but rather results in ecological enhancements. Such recommendations include:

- retaining, protecting and enhancing boundary trees and shrubs, hedgerow and wooded mound areas;
- providing a buffer zone of at least 2m from the southern, western and eastern site boundaries for wildlife;
- undertaking site work outside the peak bird breeding season.

- **Transport Impact**

4.16 As previously detailed in section 2.9.1 of this statement, a Transport Statement (Focus Transport Planning, February 2022) has been prepared to consider the highways and transport issues associated with the proposed development.

4.17 The statement includes an assessment of the level of traffic demand anticipated to be generated by the application scheme and sets out the design & nature of the proposed site access arrangements. The statement also considers the anticipated traffic operational effects of the application scheme over the immediate local highway network.

4.18 The Transport Statement's findings include that the proposed development will encourage alternative sustainable travel modes, incorporates a suitable level of car and cycle parking, appropriate servicing arrangements are available for refuse collection and delivery vehicles and any increase in traffic arising as a result of the development would be limited and would not require the provision of any specific network improvements. The statement therefore concludes that the proposed development is appropriate and sustainable when considered in highways and transport terms.

- **Arboricultural Impact**

4.19 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Tree Solutions, February 2022) has been undertaken in order to assess the development proposal's impact upon trees. This assessment considers all significant trees within influencing distance to the development proposal both on and adjoining the site.

4.20 This assessment includes a phase 1 preliminary tree survey in order to inform the layout and design of the proposed development. The proposed development has subsequently been designed to respect the constraints posed to development of the site by high or moderate quality trees whilst considering current and future tree requirements. Considering the above, the assessment concludes that there is "no valid arboricultural grounds for refusal of the planning application".

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 In summary, this statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for a development of 36 affordable dwellings on land at Pen-y-Cae, Wrexham.
- 5.2 It is considered that the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs on the site accords with the aims and objectives of both national and local planning policy. No unacceptable adverse impacts have been identified as arising from the proposed development.
- 5.3 As demonstrated elsewhere in this statement, the proposal directly accords with the different dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social, cultural and environmental, and it should therefore be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development provided in Planning Policy Wales.
- 5.4 In view of the above, we believe that the application should be supported as the development accords with the aims and objectives of local planning policies and Planning Policy Wales, including its presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Appendix 1: Housing Need Statement

**ERECTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS COMPRISING 30 DWELLINGS
AND 6 FLATS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT LAND OFF CRISTIONYDD LANE,
PEN Y CAE.**

**STATEMENT BY WALES AND WEST HOUSING RELATING TO THE NEED FOR
AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION**

1. INTRODUCTION

Planning permission is sought for 'Erection of affordable housing comprising 30 dwellings and 6 flats and associated works' at land at Cristionydd Lane. This statement provides information to demonstrate affordable housing need in the locality and the wider Wrexham County Borough Council area. The whole development site is being constructed for Wales and West Housing (WWHA) who are a registered social landlord. The site will therefore provide 36 units for social rent. The units would be rented out at social rent rates in accordance with the rates agreed with Welsh Government. These are reviewed annually with Welsh Government.

Within Pen Y Cae housing stock has dated and there isn't any new social housing. These new houses are proposed to be high quality and energy efficient and will be designed to meet Welsh Design Quality requirements (WDQR), Secured by Design (Gold) and Lifetime Home standards.

The use of bungalows, houses and flats gives a diverse mix suitable for all age groups including an aging population. The proposal will seek to make the best use of the site in the context of the setting while creating the most flexible, accessible and inclusive living environment for residents.

2. DEFINITION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING TAN12

In Annex B of TAN12 the definition of affordable housing is;

Affordable Housing - housing provided to those whose needs are not met by the open market. Affordable housing should:

- meet the needs of eligible households, including availability at low enough cost for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices; and
- include provision for the home to remain affordable for future eligible households, or if a home ceases to be affordable or staircasing to full ownership takes place, any subsidy should generally be recycled to provide replacement affordable housing.

This breaks down into two sub-categories:

- **social rented housing** - provided by local authorities and *registered social landlords* where rent levels have regard to the Assembly Government's *guideline rents* and *benchmark rents*; and
- **intermediate housing** - where prices or rents are above those of social rented housing but below market housing prices or rents. This can include equity sharing schemes (for example *Homebuy*). Intermediate housing differs

from low cost market housing, which the Assembly Government does not consider to be affordable housing for the purpose of the land use planning system

3. Housing need

Within Wrexham there is a clear identified need for affordable housing within the county. This is set out within the Wrexham CBC Local Authority Prospectus. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is indicated as a priority.

Wrexham is broken into five areas within the Local Housing Market Assessment. This proposal site would fall within Western Border area. The LHMA report has demonstrated that there is an annual shortfall of 157 affordable dwellings across the Borough over a 5 year period.

The housing need for general needs housing within the Western Border area can be seen in the table below.

Local housing market area	Property type	Annual demand (no account of turnover and planned build)	Annual Demand (account of turnover and planned build)
WESTERN BORDER	OVERALL	198	179
	1 BED	73	71
	2 BED	52	50
	3 BED	31	29
	4 BED	8	8

As evidenced within the table, there is a clear need for general needs housing within the area of the proposed development. Moreover, there is a clear identified need for a mix of dwelling types, with one and two bed housing the most needed. This development would principally cater for this need as the majority of dwellings would be one and two bed accommodation.

Whilst demand within the Pen Y Cae sub-area totals 31 dwellings, there is demand within all adjoining sub-areas, with a clear acute need for affordable housing within Rhosllanchgrugog (108 people on the housing register) and Johnstown (66). By providing new, high quality, affordable housing within Pen Y Cae this proposal would alleviate pressure on all other areas, including the Western Border Area and Wrexham CBC as a whole.

CONCLUSION

This development provides 100% affordable, high quality and energy efficient housing at social rent managed by WWHA a registered social landlord in an area and Borough where there is a clear identified need for such housing as evidenced above.

Appendix 2: Welsh Language & Communities Impact Assessment

A2.1 The proposed development comprises of 36 dwelling units within Penycae, identified as a Welsh language Sensitive ward in the Wrexham UDP. The following section therefore assesses the proposed development’s impact upon the Welsh language and community in accordance with the methodology contained in the Council’s Local Planning Guidance Note No.31: The Welsh Language and Welsh Communities.

The assessment therefore considers how the development may impact on:

- Population and Housing;
- Economics;
- Education;
- Infrastructure; and
- Other general considerations.

A2.2 Data provided is sourced from the 2011 Census.

A2.3 *Context*

The site is located within the Penycae ward of Wrexham County Borough. 2011 Census data reveals that 12.9% of the Borough’s population were able to speak Welsh in 2011 but that this figure has declined from 14.4% in 2001. The Penycae ward is one of the Borough ward’s with the highest proportion of Welsh speakers in 2011, at 19.6% of the population able to speak Welsh.

The ability to speak Welsh in the Borough differs greatly with age, as demonstrated by the table below:

Age Group	% of Welsh Speakers	
	2001 Census	2011 Census
3-4 yrs	11.3	15.4
5-9 yrs	30.5	29.5
10-14 yrs	33.9	33.2
15-19 yrs	21.2	21.6
20-24 yrs	11.9	12.0
25-29 yrs	9.2	10.3
30-34 yrs	8.5	8.6
35-39 yrs	8.4	7.7
40-44 yrs	9.1	7.6
45-49 yrs	9.0	7.6
50-54 yrs	10.4	7.8
55-59 yrs	11.2	7.8
60-64 yrs	11.6	8.9
65-69 yrs	14.2	9.5
70-74 yrs	15.2	10.6
75-79 yrs	16.9	12.3
80+ yrs	18.7	14.8
ALL OVER 3 YRS	14.6	12.9

The table illustrates that there has been a decline since 2001 in Welsh speakers across nearly all age groups and whilst Welsh speaking is noticeably most common in the 3-19 age range, there has been a small drop in Welsh speakers in the 5-14 age groups.

It is particularly notable that in 2001 33.9% of the 10-14 age-group were able to speak Welsh but this has declined to 12% of the 20-24 age-group in 2011. This drop can be attributed to a significant decline in the opportunities for this age group to use the Welsh Language in the community or workplace when compared to the opportunities afforded to them whilst they were in education.

Another factor which may be responsible for the decline of the language in the Borough is the failure to transmit the language in the home. In this regard, it is significant that only 9.6% of the 20-40 age range (primarily the age-group raising families) are able to speak Welsh and transfer the Welsh language onto their children.

A2.4 *Population and Housing*

The development will provide 36 affordable dwelling units that are proposed to meet an identified local need for housing arising from the area. Given the scale and tenure of the proposed development it is considered likely that the development will have a positive impact upon the local community and Welsh language.

The proposed dwellings will address an existing need for housing in a Welsh language stronghold in the Borough. The development comprises of smaller 'starter' dwellings and family homes, as such the development will ensure that younger people and young families are provided with opportunities to stay within the local area to live and work.

Given that approximately 20% of the population in the Penycae ward speak Welsh it is reasonable to assume that a significantly percentage of the proposed dwellings will be occupied by Welsh speakers, ensuring that they do not migrate out of the area to meet their housing needs.

It is significant that the site is in a sustainable location with access to a number of services and facilities. Residents of the new development, a significant proportion of whom will be Welsh speakers, will therefore support local businesses and services such as local pubs, shops and the Primary School.

Given the above, it is concluded that the proposed development will make a positive contribution to the community and Welsh language. In particular, it is likely that the development will assist in enhancing opportunities for younger people and young families to:

- continue using the Welsh Language, post education, in the local community or workplace; and
- transmit the language in the home.

A2.5 *Economics*

The proposed development will result in an increase in dwellings units in the area. As previously detailed, the additional residents in the community will be within walking and cycling distance of the services and facilities provided in Penycae and will therefore support local businesses and services. Whilst the increase in residents will also provide an increase in the available workforce in the area to the benefit of local employers.

The development will also provide local employment, and benefit the local economy through the use of local suppliers and services, during the construction phase of the scheme.

The proposed development will increase the opportunities for young local people and local families, a significant proportion of which are Welsh speakers, to meet their housing needs in the area. The proposed development will therefore retain and enhance the provision of Welsh speakers in the workforce.

A2.6 *Education*

Increasing opportunities for Welsh speakers to continue living in the local community will retain and potentially increase the number of Welsh speaking students at local schools. There are a number of Welsh Medium childcare facilities and schools in the area and the proposed development may increase demand for places in these.

Nonetheless, the local primary school is Penycae CP School. The Council's "Parents' Guide to education services in Wrexham 2022/23" provides information on local school rolls. This document identifies that Penycae CP School had a school roll of 199 students at April 2021 and a capacity of 210 students.

The closest secondary school is Ysgol Rhiwabon which is identified as having a school roll of 483 students at April 2021 and a capacity of 655 students.

Given the above, and the scale of the proposed development, it is considered evident that the proposal will not increase student numbers such as to give rise to adverse impacts on the capacity of local schools. Any increase in student numbers will reinforce and support educational facilities in the area.

A2.7 *Infrastructure*

As detailed elsewhere in this statement, the proposed development site lies adjacent to the built form of Penycae in a sustainable location as it is within walking and cycling distance of the settlement's services and facilities,

including food and drink establishments, recreational facilities and Ysgol Penycae. The site is also in close proximity, and linked by a regular bus service, to the regional centre of Wrexham which provides a comprehensive range of community services and facilities including a Hospital, main line rail station and significant employment premises.

The proposed development will result in an increase in demand for, and therefore increase the viability of, existing services and facilities including public transport. This increase in demand may also assist in securing the provision of new services and facilities for the benefit of both existing and new residents.

Improving the viability and provision of services and facilities within walking and cycling distance of the site will also provide health related improvements and reinforce and enhance the use of the Welsh language in the community given the nature of the development proposed.

A2.8 General Considerations

In addition to the positive benefits detailed elsewhere in this statement, the development may also provide other significant benefits to the Welsh language and community including:

- The provision of open space;
- The promotion of the Welsh language and community through appropriate bi-lingual street names and signage;

No adverse impacts upon the Welsh language and community are anticipated to arise as a result of the development.

A2.9 Conclusion

The proposed development will provide 36 dwelling units that will help to meet a local need for affordable housing within Penycae, a Welsh language sensitive ward. The proposal will therefore provide the local Welsh community with opportunities to meet their housing needs, and therefore to remain resident within, the area.

The proposed dwelling units are smaller 'starter' dwellings and family homes, and as such the development will specifically provide opportunities for younger people and young families to stay within the local area to live and work. It is likely that the proposed development will therefore help to address existing concerns over the use of the Welsh language post education (in the local community and workplace) and the transmission of the language in the home. The increase in housing in the community will also give rise to significant economic benefits including supporting the provision of local services and facilities, providing job opportunities during the construction phase and the retention of Welsh speakers in the local workforce.

Given the above, it is concluded that the proposal may have an overall positive impact upon the Welsh language and Welsh community.