
Planning Statement

Residential Development
Land off Chester Road, Lavister

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for Galliers Homes Ltd

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1. Introduction

1. Introduction

Document Aim

- 1.1. This Planning Statement is submitted in support of an outline planning application for residential development of up to 77 dwellings on the site known as 'land off Chester Road', Lavister. Its purpose is to assess the proposal against relevant local and national planning policy guidance and other material considerations, as required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 1.2. The application is submitted on behalf of Galliers Homes Ltd ('Galliers') which has been selected as the preferred developer.
- 1.3. The application is made in outline with all matters reserved except for access.

Background

- 1.4. The application is submitted at the time when Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) does not have an up to date Development Plan; the Unitary Development Plan was adopted in February 2005 and covers the plan period up until 2011. The Council has been progressing the Wrexham Local Development Plan (WLDP) which will cover the plan period up to 2028 and, at the time of writing, is due to be submitted to the Welsh Assembly and the Planning Inspectorate for Examination on 30th November 2018.
- 1.5. The application site is sustainably located on the edge of Lavister and Rossett which, together, offer a range of facilities including key services such as a primary and a secondary school (including a publically available sports hall), a GP Surgery, Dentist Practice and a number of local shops, as well as good public transport links providing access to wider employment opportunities in Wrexham and Chester. There are also several pubs / restaurants / hotels, a village hall, together with hair / beauty salons and a veterinary practice

- 1.6. The proposed development is of a size and scale that could be readily assimilated into the settlement. It will provide a range of affordable and market houses offering new and existing residents the opportunity to relocate within or move to Lavister. It will contribute to the vitality and viability of the settlement through job creation during the construction phase and, subsequently support and attract investment in existing and new services and facilities.

The Consultant Team

- 1.7. Galliers has been advised by an experienced consultant team in the development of the proposed scheme.
- 1.8. White Ridge Architects is appointed as masterplanners and has extensive knowledge of working with a range of residential schemes in both urban and rural locations. Waterman Group is appointed to advise on matters relating to drainage, flood risk and transportation. Aspect Ecology has provided advice in respect of ecology and Landscape Collective is responsible for visual impact and landscape matters. Savills Planning has provided advice in relation to all planning matters.

Consultation

- 1.9. The proposed scheme has been informed by consultation with the local community, interested parties and both statutory and non-statutory consultees. Galliers, together with the consultant team, has undertaken meetings and a public exhibition to ensure wide-ranging engagement. This consultation has been an important influence in the formation of the proposals and has informed the design development process.

Statement Structure

- 1.10. The following sections of this Statement set out the evidence and reasons for granting planning permission for the proposed development. **Section 2** provides a description of the site and its context as well as identifying any relevant planning history records. **Section 3** summarises the pre-application consultation undertaken and **Section 4** details the development proposal. **Section 5** sets out the approach to affordable housing. Planning policy and guidance that is relevant to the scheme is set out at **Section 6**, followed by environmental considerations at **Section 7**. **Section 8** details the planning considerations and **Section 9** looks at the deliverability of the proposal.

1.11. **Section 10** draws together the conclusions and, ultimately, demonstrates that there are no technical constraints that would prevent the site being developed for new housing. The site is currently within the 'Green Barrier' and this is the only current policy constraint to delivery of the site for housing. However, Rossett / Lavister is identified as a sustainable location for growth in the emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan (WLDP) and, consequently, the Green Barrier designation is being reviewed. The application site has and is being promoted through the plan process and is considered to be the most appropriate location for residential development in Rossett / Lavister. However, as it stands, an alternative site is identified for residential development in the WLDP. Previous representations have set out why Land off Chester Road is more appropriate, particularly with regard to preventing the coalescence of settlements and maintaining the integrity of the Green Barrier. The planning application has been prepared in this context.

1.12. Notwithstanding the Green Barrier designation, in carrying out the planning balance exercise, it is demonstrated that there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the considerable number of benefits that would result from the proposal. The mitigation of negative effects and the scale of the benefits means the proposals will have a positive impact. Accordingly, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and planning permission should be granted accordingly without unnecessary delay.

1.13. This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with existing and proposed drawings, as well as the following supporting documents:

- Masterplan Principle and Parameters prepared by White Ridge;
- Design and Access Statement prepared by White Ridge;
- Landscape and Visual Assessment prepared by Landscape Collective;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement prepared by Landscape Collective;
- Agricultural Land Classification Assessment prepared by Savills Rural;
- Transport Assessment prepared by Waterman Group;
- Transport Travel Plan prepared by Waterman Group;
- Flood Capability Assessment prepared by Waterman Group;
- Drainage Strategy prepared by Waterman Group;

- Ecological Assessment prepared by Aspect Ecology;
- Sustainability Statement prepared by JS Lewis Ltd;
- Draft S.106 Heads of Terms.

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

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Site Location

- 2.1. The application site is located off the Chester Road to the north-east of Lavister / Rossett. The two villages effectively operate together as one settlement which sits approximately halfway between Chester (~6.3 miles) and Wrexham (~7.1 miles).

Site Description

- 2.2. The site comprises approximately 5.5 hectares of undeveloped land which is defined by mature boundary planting including hedgerow interspersed with trees on the south-western and north-western boundaries. The Lavister Brook is also located on the north-western boundary, beyond which is existing residential development known as Roselands Court. The south-western boundary also lies adjacent to existing residential development of Rossett Park. This existing housing, together with woodland to the south-east, east and north, means the site is well contained, particularly the proposed areas of built form.
- 2.3. The site is currently accessed by vehicle via Chester Road and on foot via the footpath at the south-eastern corner.
- 2.4. There is a Public Right of Way running north-west / south-east along the northern boundary and partially incorporated within the site.

Designations

- 2.5. The site is located within a Green Barrier and Special Landscape Area according to the adopted UDP Proposals Map. The majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) with the access partially within Flood Zone 3.
- 2.6. The site is not affected by any other policy, landscape or environmental designations.

Planning History

- 2.7. The planning history records that exist for the site relate to its former use as a golf course.

Local Service and Accessibility

- 2.8. Lavister and Rossett are classified together, as a tier three settlement (local service centre), in planning policy terms. This means there is a good range of community services and facilities available including:
- Darland High School (secondary)
 - St Peter's Primary School
 - Darland Leisure and Activity Centre and community room (at Darland HS)
 - Alyn Family Doctors
 - Rossett Pharmacy
 - Rossett Dental Care
 - Premier Village store and Co-operative convenience store
 - "Outreach" Post Office offering limited service
 - Village Hall
 - Llyndir Hall and Rossett Hall Hotels
 - Golden Lion, The Alyn, Nags Head and The Griffin Public Houses
 - Machine House Restaurant and Sun Wah Chinese Takeaway
 - Gatehouse Veterinary clinic, BASC Offices, Rossett Business Park,
 - Various places of worship across religious denominations; including Christ Church, Christ the King Catholic Church, a Baptist church and a Presbyterian Chapel.
 - Newhaven Garage, shops, hairdressers and salons,
 - Play areas
- 2.9. The site has good accessibility for all modes of transport, with vehicular and pedestrian access off Chester Road, and a potential for an alternative access further into the site.
- 2.10. The site is also within walking distance of two bus stops on Sapphire 1 Route which offers regular services to Chester and Wrexham, every 10-15 minutes in the AM and PM peak hours and every 30 minutes outside of those times, from circa 06:00 to 23:56.
- 2.11. The Village is not currently serviced with cycling infrastructure but the road network allows for this. There are pedestrian paths all along the Chester Road, including where access to the site would be located.

Relevant Planning Background

- 2.12. The site has been actively promoted through the local plan process for the WLDP. As part of this, it was assessed under the Call for Sites process (Site RO003AS). The assessment concluded that the site *'fails Stage 1 of the Candidate Site Assessment process – constraints unlikely to be overcome (flooding, landscape, best and most versatile agricultural land quality)'*.
- 2.13. A significant level of technical work has been carried out since the above assessment, in order to demonstrate that the identified constraints can be overcome. Indeed, the site can be successfully assimilated into the existing settlement, providing a logical rounding-off to the north. It will not jeopardise the function of the Green Barrier which is to maintain separation of settlements and it will have a limited impact in landscape terms. With regard to flood risk, extensive work has been undertaken to show proposed dwellings would not be at risk of flooding, the vehicular access would remain passable during peak flood events and an alternative emergency / pedestrian access would be available in any event. Furthermore, mitigation measures that could be included in the proposed development would alleviate flood risk in the surrounding area which is a substantial benefit to the local community. The comprehensive suite of technical documents demonstrates that all matters have been assessed and considered in detail.

3. Overview of Pre-application Consultation

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- 3.1. The Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016 means that from 1 August 2016 a far greater emphasis has been placed upon pre-application consultation with key stakeholders. It places responsibility upon applicants to undertake and follow a pre-application procedure of formal consultation and engagement with key statutory consultees (e.g. NRW, DCWW, HSE, CART, etc), the Local Authority, Town/Community Councils, local Ward Councillors and local residents and neighbouring businesses.
- 3.2. The planning application submission is accompanied by a Pre-application Consultation (PAC) report which provides a detailed summary of the consultation undertaken by Galliers and the landowner. It also details the feedback received. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) explains how feedback has influenced the design of the proposed development

Approach to Consultation

- 3.3. Galliers, supported by the consultant team, has been at the forefront of all the consultation which has included discussions with WBDC officers, statutory and non-statutory consultees (including the Community Council) and a public exhibition to involve as many people, groups, organisations and their representatives as possible. This approach has ensured that feedback received has been a key influence in the formation and evolution of the development proposals.
- 3.4. Full details of consultation are included in the PAC report.

Consultation Feedback

- 3.5. A range of views have been expressed by the Community during the consultation undertaken to date. The focus of the main objections were the need for residential development at Rossett / Lavister, landscape impact and flood risk to future residents. The need for further dwellings at Rossett / Lavister is recognised through the emerging LDP and evidence is presented confirming that the proposed development will not compromise the principles of the Green Barrier. In terms of flood risk, the scheme

not only demonstrates compliance with the necessary standards but also officers the potential to mitigate an existing off-site flooding issue at the Darland lane / Gamford Lane Junction.

Pre-application Advice

- 3.6. Pre-application advice was given in 2014 (ref. ENQ/2013/0393). At the time the Council could not demonstrate a five year land supply, in line with Government policy guidance and, on this basis, it was found that the site *'could potentially make a significant contribution towards increasing housing land supply'*. The advice continued that it would be necessary to demonstrate *'that the site is free, or readily freed, from planning, physical and ownership constraints and economically feasible for development'*. The following matters were considered to be key considerations: loss of agricultural land, achieving adequate visibility at the proposed access off Chester Road, flood risk (namely the access location in FZ C2), landscape impact, and provision of affordable housing. Ultimately it was concluded that full consideration must be given to the identified site constraints before an application could be supported.

4. Proposed Development

4. Proposed Development

- 4.1 The planning application seeks outline consent with all matters reserved except highway access for the following development description

Erection of up to 77 mixed tenure dwellings, public open space and vehicular access

- 4.2 A full description of the design process undertaken to inform and influence the proposed development can be found in the supporting DAS. However, a summary of the key elements of the application is provided below.

Use and Amount

- 4.3 The proposed development is for up to 77 dwellings. It will provide a variety of housing tenures, types and sizes. This will allow for a wide demographic and a variety of new homes, including affordable housing. The amount and tenure of market and affordable housing will be agreed through reserved matters applications. Section 5 of this Statement outlines Galliers commitments in respect of the affordable provision.

Layout and Density

- 4.4 It is the intention of the proposed mix to strike an appropriate balance between local need and market demand.
- 4.5 The average residential density of the housing will be around 25dph. This is considered to be an appropriate average density that makes efficient use of the land available and respects the site's context as well as providing public open space.
- 4.6 The Illustrative Layout demonstrates how a development of 77 houses can be spatially provided on site with internal highway arrangements which can be constructed to adoptable standards, adequate car parking arrangements, generous areas of private amenity space and public open space.

Landscaping

- 4.7 Landscaping is a matter reserved for future detailed approval; however, the submitted Landscape Strategy identifies opportunities for hard and soft landscaping which will ensure the new development is seamlessly integrated into the site surroundings.

Access

- 4.8 The proposed primary site access is via the existing access from the Chester Road, which would be the subject of minor works to accommodate the proposed dwellings. The accompanying Transport Statement (TS) prepared by Waterman demonstrates that the proposed access is reasonable and would have negligible impacts on the surrounding highways. A secondary, emergency access, is provided in the south-east corner of the site.

Sustainability

- 4.9 Sustainability has been a key consideration in the formulation of the proposed scheme which is discussed further within the accompanying Sustainability Statement in full but, in summary, it seeks to achieve the following:

- Retain and enhance existing trees and landscape elements where possible and supplement with new planting;
- Improve biodiversity on site;
- Protect the development from flood risk and reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- Implement a sustainable drainage strategy utilising SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage);
- Provide good quality pedestrian and cycle links to and from the site and to public transport networks, ensuring safe access to surrounding areas;
- Provide dwellings that will incorporate features from the appropriate standards; and
- Minimise energy consumption and demand by designing the layout to maximise the benefit of solar gain in natural heating which has a significant role to play in the reduction of carbon production through the use of artificial heating systems.

5. Affordable Housing Provision

5. Affordable Housing Provision

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of planning policy and guidance relevant to the delivery of affordable housing.
- 5.2 The proposed development will provide a suitable level and mix of housing that aims to respond to local needs. In accordance with UDP Policy H7 requires an element of affordable housing to be provided on developments of 25 or more dwellings; this Policy states that the proportion will be negotiated through the course of a planning application. Affordable Housing Guidance Note 28, advises that the Council will normally expect that 25% of the total site capacity to be provided as affordable housing; thus, providing a significant contribution towards Wrexham Borough Council's affordable dwelling figures.
- 5.3 Emerging LDP Policy H2 requires developments of 10 or more units to provide affordable housing, the amount of which varies, dependant on location. In Rural East, North Wrexham and Gresford and Wrexham South Wrexham sub market areas Policy seeks 40% provision.

Tenure Mix

- 5.4 It is envisaged that the mix will consist of a range of housing types in order to address local needs. The housing topic paper of the LDP's emerging evidence base suggests a tenure split of affordable housing of 70% social rented and 30% intermediate.

Property Sizes and Types of Affordable and Market Housing

- 5.5 The proposed scheme will provide a mix of housing sizes and types but the exact mix will be determined through discussion with the Council and, ultimately, at the reserved matters stage.

Property Standards

- 5.6 The proposed scheme is small-scale but, nevertheless, a dispersal approach has been taken to the distribution of affordable properties through the site to help ensure a mix of dwelling sizes and tenure types throughout the development.
- 5.7 A mix of property sizes is proposed.

Affordability

- 5.8 It is anticipated that the Local Authority will adopt the open space / communal areas.

Addressing Local Need

- 5.9 Galliers is committed to ensuring priority for affordable housing will be given to people with a local connection to Lavister, in which the site falls.

Summary

- 5.10 The level and type of affordable housing provided on site will respond to planning policy and local need, therefore helping to create a balanced and mixed community.
- 5.11 The development will make a beneficial contribution to providing affordable housing for people in the Lavister area who cannot currently afford home ownership.

6. Planning Policy

6. Planning Policy

- 6.1 In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 regard must be had to the relevant policies of the Development Plan and other material considerations in determining the outline planning application proposed. For a proposal to be in accordance with the Development Plan, it is not necessary for it to accord with each and every policy, rather it should conform with the plan as a whole (SoS v BDW Trading Ltd 2016).
- 6.2 This section provides an overview of relevant planning policy and guidance to the proposed development.
- 6.3 The adopted Development Plan for Wrexham includes the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011 and associated proposal maps. ‘Material considerations’ include national policy guidance, which includes the Welsh Spatial Plan, Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Interim Ministerial Planning Statements and non-statutory guidance (MIPPS).

Local Planning Policy

- 6.4 The UDP covers the plan period up to 2011 and it is, therefore, technically out of date in terms of the growth strategy. Furthermore, on the basis of TAN1 guidance (January 2015) the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and, so the delivery of housing in the County Borough must be afforded significant weight. The development management policies are, for the most part, consistent with national planning policy guidance.
- 6.5 The UDP will be replaced by the Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 - 2028, which, at the time of writing, was due to be submitted to PINS and the Welsh Assembly on 30th November 2018 for Examination; the Council anticipates adoption in Summer 2019.
- 6.6 Rossett / Lavister is a Tier 3 Local Service Centre settlement (along with Bangor, Broughton, Brymbo, Glyn Ceiriog, Holt, Overton, Penley, Penycae and Rhostyllen). Representations made through LDP process support Rossett / Lavister being a Tier 2 given the wide range of services and facilities including key community facilities such as primary and secondary schools. The Deposit Plan allocates growth in

Rossett / Lavister in the forms of an allocation for 137 dwellings. The principle of growth is supported but it's not considered that the proposed site for allocation is the most appropriate location. Indeed, significant concern has been raised through representations to the LDP about development off Rossett Road unacceptably closing the Gap between Rossett / Lavister and Trevalyn fundamentally comprising the Green Barrier at this location. This matter is considered later within the Statement.

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (Adopted Feb 2005)

- 6.7 The following policies of the UDP are considered relevant.
- 6.8 **Policy PS1 (Broad Location of Development)** seeks to direct new development within defined settlement boundaries. However, the plan has expired and insufficient land is identified to provide for new development. In the absence of a 5-year housing land supply, the next best sustainable locations must be positively considered and these are likely to be on the edge of settlements.
- 6.9 **Policy PS2 (Broad Location of Development)** requires new development to consider and demonstrate no material or detrimental harm to the countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space or the quality of the natural environment.
- 6.10 **Policy PS3 (Broad Location of Development)** states that Development should preferably use previously developed brownfield land wherever possible and where greenfield land is used that it should avoid Grade 1, 2, 3a quality and land of ecological, landscape or amenity value.
- 6.11 **Policy PS4 (Broad Location of Development)** requires new development to maintain the existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated with the existing transport network to reduce the need to travel by private car and offer alternatives.
- 6.12 **Policy PS9 (Transport)** requires new developments to provide walking and cycling routes, where feasible and appropriate, that link with existing or proposed walking and cycling routes, and integrate with the public transport system.
- 6.13 **GDP 1 (Development Objectives)** requires new development to meet the criteria contained within which relates to design, layout, safety, design techniques, access, amenity etc.

- 6.14 **GDP2 (Capacity of Infrastructure and Community Facilities)** requires new developments to assess and, where relevant, make provision towards infrastructure (highway, drainage, etc) or community facilities (education, health, open space) to ensure there is sufficient capacity. Any need to provide for additional capacity should be demonstrated by the Council and any such resulting requirements must be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed.
- 6.15 **Policy EC1 (Green Barriers)** states that development will only be granted planning permission if it is for agriculture, forestry, essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and other uses of land which maintain the openness of the Green Barrier and do not conflict with the purpose of including land within it. This policy must be considered in the context of the Green Barrier Review that has been undertaken to inform the emerging LDP. Furthermore, Rossett / Lavister is identified to accommodate growth which will involve land being released from the Green Barrier.
- 6.16 **Policy EC2 (Agricultural Land)** protects the loss of grade 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land.
- 6.17 **Policy EC4 (hedgerows, Trees and Woodland)** seeks to protect and conserve such features in order to enhance the character of the local landscape.
- 6.18 **Policy EC5 (Special Landscape Area)** serves to conserve and enhance the landscape. It should be noted that the SLA Study that informs the LDP the emerging LDP Deposit Draft and its associated evidence base has reviewed the extent of the SLA and found it should be “rolled back” and this designation will no longer apply under any adopted LDP.
- 6.19 **Policy EC6 (Biodiversity Conservation)** seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- 6.20 **Policy EC12 (Development and Flood Risk)** and **Policy EC13 (Surface Water Run-off)** seek to ensure that new development properly considers flood risk and drainage matters.
- 6.21 **Policy H1 (Housing Allocations)** states that sufficient land will be allocated for housing between 1996 and 2011. The plan period came to an end some 7 years ago and is, therefore, out of date. Whilst the LDP is emerging, as it stands, the Council are unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply.

- 6.22 **Policy H7 (Affordable Housing)** seeks a contribution to affordable housing on sites over 25 dwellings. SPG28 recommends a provision of 25% and the applicant accepts this.
- 6.23 **Policy CLF5 (Open Space)** requires new development of 10 dwellings or more to provide informal public open space within the site at a minimum level of 0.4 hectare per 50 dwellings.
- 6.24 **Policy T8 (Parking Provision)** requires new development to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby.

Local Planning Guidance Notes

- 6.25 The following local planning guidance notes are also relevant to this proposal:
- Guidance Note 7: Landscaping and Development (Nov 2003)
 - Guidance Note 10: Public Open Space in New Housing Development (Aug 2008)
 - Guidance Note 16: Parking Standards (Nov 2011)
 - Guidance Note 21: Space Around Dwellings (January 2007)
 - Guidance Note 28: Affordable Housing (Feb 2013)
 - Guidance Note 30: Design (June 2009)

Emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan 2: 2013 to 2028

- 6.26 The emerging LDP covers the plan period up to 2028 and is anticipated to be adopted in Summer 2019, subject to Examination. The emerging policies are relevant to this application are identified below.
- 6.27 **Policy SP1: Housing Provision** seeks to deliver 8,525 new homes over the plan period. It seeks new developments of housing to achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- 6.28 **Policy SP2: Location of Development** states that Rossett / Lavister is a Tier 3 settlement.
- 6.29 **Policy SP6: Planning Obligations** sets out the list of planning obligations that could be sought from developments.

- 6.30 **Policy SP7 Green Wedge** seeks to prevent unacceptable development within the Green Wedge, the primary aim of which is to maintain a strategic gap between Rossett / Lavister and surrounding settlements.
- 6.31 **Policy SP14: Health and Wellbeing** requires new development to ensure access to and, where necessary, make provision towards healthcare facilities.
- 6.32 **Policy NE6: Waste Water Treatment and River Water Quality** requires new developments to include satisfactory foul and surface water drainage solutions.
- 6.33 **Policy H2: Affordable Housing** requires affordable housing to be provided in new developments, the amount of which varies depending on location. The site falls within Rural East, North Wrexham and Gresford and Wrexham, South Wrexham sub market areas for which the Policy seeks 40% provision.
- 6.34 **Policy T1: Managing Transport Impacts** requires new development to facilitate increased journeys by more sustainable modes of travel first by walking and cycling, then by public transport and finally by private motor vehicle.
- 6.35 **Policy CF2: Provision of New Open Space** requires new development to provide 2.2ha of multifunctional open space per 1000 population (which equates to 0.25ha per 50 dwellings or 50 sqm per dwelling).
- 6.36 **Policy RE1: Development and Renewable Energy/Low Carbon Technology** requires new developments to maximise the potential for renewable energy.

National Planning Policy

- 6.37 The overarching policy framework in Wales comprises the **Wales Spatial Plan (July 2008)** (WSP) which provides the operational strategic framework for planning policy in the Principality, but is not spatially specific. Its 5 core aims and objectives are to:
- Build sustainable communities
 - Promote a sustainable economy

- Value the environment
- Achieve sustainable accessibility
- Respect distinctiveness

6.38 **Planning Policy Wales Edition 9** (November 2016) (PPW) provides more detailed strategic guidance on planning policy and sets out land use policy, which is supplemented by the TANs and by draft MIPPS.

6.39 **Chapter 4** acknowledges that the planning system provides for a presumption in favour of sustainable development and it sets out the objectives for sustainability on that basis. **Paragraph 4.1.1** sets out the ‘well-being goals’ which is underpinned by the definition of sustainable development in Wales which means ‘*the process of improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being*’.

6.40 **Chapter 7** deals with Economic Development and is accompanied by TAN 23 which explores matters in more detail. **Paragraph 7.2.2** states that ‘*Local planning authorities are required to ensure that the economic benefits associated with a proposed development are understood and that these are given equal consideration with social and environmental issues in the decision-making process, and should recognise that there will be occasions when the economic benefits will outweigh social and environmental considerations*’.

6.41 **Chapter 8** is concerned with transport, promoting extended choice in transport and accessibility, in a way that supports sustainable development.

6.42 **Chapter 9** of Planning Policy Wales sets out the framework for housing in the country and the key aim is to provide more housing, of the right type, and offer more choice. The aspiration is for energy efficiency of new and existing homes; and improve housing-related services and support, particularly for vulnerable people and people from minority groups.

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

6.43 There are 21 topic-based TANs, which cover a variety of planning related topics, including affordable housing, nature conservation and transport, which all play an important role in Welsh Planning Policy. The following are of relevance to this application:

- TAN1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (2015)
- TAN 2: Planning & Affordable Housing (2006)
- TAN 5: Nature Conservation & Planning (2009)
- TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)
- TAN 12: Design (2016)
- TAN 15: Development & Floodrisk (2004)
- TAN 18: Transport (2007)
- TAN 22: Sustainable Buildings (2010)
- TAN 23: Economic Development (2014)

7. Environmental Considerations

7. Environmental Considerations

7.1 The suite of technical assessments that accompany the planning application submission (see paragraph 1.13) cover the following matters in detail:

- Agricultural Land Quality
- Biodiversity
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Landscape and Visual

7.2 A summary of the report findings, conclusions and recommendations is provided, in turn, below.

Agricultural Land Quality

7.3 The majority of land at Rossett / Lavister has been identified by the post 1998 ALC (Wales) survey map and Predictive ALC (Wales) Map to have the potential to be 'Best and Most Versatile' (BMV) Land.

7.4 The submitted Agricultural Land Classification Assessment (May 2018) indicates that the site is a mix of Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural land and it, therefore, constitutes BMV land.

7.5 It is relevant to consider this matter in the context of the land surrounding Rossett and Lavister, in that it all constitutes BMV land. Therefore, it is important to understand the merits of releasing this land as opposed to any other alternatives. In this case, the site was part of a former golf course, which was landscaped by dense, mature, planting and there is presence of significant tree roots which impact on the potential agricultural use of the site.

Biodiversity

7.6 The application is accompanied by an Ecological Appraisal (November 2018) which is informed by previous surveys from 2015 and 2016, as well as updated survey work undertaken in June 2018.

7.7 The site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory ecological designations. The nearest statutory designation to the site is Marford Quarry SSSI, which is located approximately 2.4 km north-west of the site. The nearest non-statutory designation is Darlands Wood Local Wildlife Site, which is located adjacent

to the site boundary. All ecological designations in the surrounding area are physically well separated from the site and are therefore unlikely to be adversely affected by the proposals.

7.8 The site itself is dominated by species-poor developing grassland, resulting from the previous removal of golf course areas and reversion to agricultural land. Features of existing raised ecological value include ponds, watercourses, hedgerows and, several mature trees. The majority of these features will be retained under the proposals and incorporated into a comprehensive green infrastructure provision and will be protected during construction. The remaining habitats within the site are not considered to form important ecological features and their loss to the proposals is of minor significance.

7.9 In terms of habitats, the site and adjacent areas provide suitable opportunities for a number of faunal species including Great Crested Newt, Water Vole and nesting birds. Appropriate measures are therefore recommended (including within a suitable detailed mitigation strategy in regard to Great Crested Newt) to safeguard faunal species where appropriate, subject to which the proposals are unlikely to result in any significant adverse effects on faunal species at the site.

7.10 The proposed development presents the opportunity to secure a number of ecological enhancement measures, including new native landscape planting and additional faunal opportunities. In summary, the proposals have sought to minimise impacts on biodiversity and subject to the implementation of appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will result in significant harm.

Flood Risk and Drainage

7.11 The site is largely located within Flood Zone 1, with only the access road in the north of the site located in Flood Zone 2 and 3. Hydraulic modelling has been undertaken for the existing and proposed development scenarios to assess the risk of fluvial flooding to the site and has been approved in principle by Natural Resources Wales.

7.12 Model results show that the site is flood free for the 100 year event. The residential development is flood free for all simulated events, i.e. the 100 year, 100 year plus 20% climate change, 100 year plus 40% climate change, and 1,000 year event.

- 7.13 The hydraulic model confirms that there would be a local increase in flood depth where road levels are proposed to be reduced to achieve an acceptable vertical highway alignment, however there would be no change to the flood extents or depths off site. The risk of flooding to the site from other sources (pluvial, sewer, artificial and groundwater) has been assessed and found to be low.
- 7.14 Management of flood risk has been considered in the context of Technical Advice Note 15 (TAN 15), and regard has been had to risks associated with flooding from the River Dee, Pulford Brook and Lavister Brook. To inform this process, extensive surveys of the Pulford Brook and Lavister Brook have been undertaken, with accompanying hydraulic modelling, and this information has been the subject of analysis by National Resources Wales (NRW).
- 7.15 The survey/modelling work confirms that the full extent of the proposed residential properties lie outside the 1 in 1000 year flood extent, and safe emergency access will be available.
- 7.16 In addition to the assessment of the site itself, the development can also facilitate the delivery of a drainage solution proposed by Wrexham Council to address an existing off-site surface water flooding problem at the junction of Darland Lane and Gamford Lane (to the south of the 'land off Chester Road' site). This would be a significant benefit for the existing residents at that location who are currently effected by flooding.
- 7.17 The proposed Drainage Strategy seeks to restrict runoff to greenfield (Qbar) runoff rates (3.9 l/s/ha) and discharge surface water runoff from the development plots into the ditch located to the east of the site, in line with the existing drainage regime. However, the limited depths of these watercourses and the flat topography of the site means that the discharge of runoff from the residential development cannot be achieved via gravity. In the absence of any suitable alternatives, a surface water pumping station designed to adoptable standards is proposed. Runoff from the proposed access road would discharge into Lavister Brook by gravity.
- 7.18 With regard to foul drainage, flows from the development would be discharged into the existing Welsh Water combined sewer, which runs across the site to the north of the proposed development plots. Proposed foul flows from the residential dwellings have been estimated at 3.6 l/s.

7.19 Overall, it is demonstrated that the site can be developed safely, without exposing the new development to an unacceptable degree of flood risk and ensuring no increase in flood risk off-site. Furthermore, the scheme has the ability to deliver betterment in respect of existing residential properties in Lavister. The proposals for surface water and foul drainage are in accordance with policy and provide acceptable solutions for the site.

Landscape and Visual

7.20 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) that accompanies this application submission identifies that the site is located within a Green Barrier and Special Landscape Area. The primary purpose of the Green Barrier is to prevent the coalescence of settlements.

7.21 The site, itself, forms part of an agricultural field which extends to the north beyond the site boundary. The south-western boundary is defined by the rear gardens to residential properties in Lavister Walks, Rossett Park and Pippin Lane. The western boundary is defined by the Lavister Brook and is contained by the rear garden boundary treatments of residential properties in Roseland Court, Oakland Court and The Millyard. Vegetation, in the form of a number of mature trees and lower growing shrubs extend along sections of the site's south-western boundary as far as Darland Lane. Within the site, there are a number of individual trees and a line of early mature and mature trees extends along the site's eastern boundary.

7.22 The LVA concludes that the proposals would not materially change the key landscape characteristics and the most prominent existing elements and features have been incorporated and enhanced within the proposals. The topography of the site is such that the development will be subject to only localised changes; large scale earth works are not required. The existing vegetation enclosing the site would help maintain visual enclosure to the proposals.

7.23 The wider landscape accommodates a wide variety of human influences including infrastructure and modern housing. The site is enclosed to the west and south by modern housing, which is a prominent feature and key characteristic of the immediate area. The proposed development is modest in scale and extent and has been informed by the finding of this report as well as other technical considerations.

- 7.24 The proposals maintain areas of open space and vegetation which help contain the development extent whilst maintaining an element of rural openness within the site, and how it is perceived. The mature landscape framework that encloses the site to the north and east will continue to provide a visual separation from the wider landscape.
- 7.25 Overall, the physical characteristics of the surrounding wider landscape, beyond the site and its predominantly rural nature would be materially unchanged with the proposals in place. In this context, the existing pattern and land cover of the local landscape, which helps determine the character of the landscape, and its perception as a generally rural landscape, would continue to prevail with the proposals in place.
- 7.26 The LVA demonstrates that views of the proposals within the wider landscape area heavily restricted through a combination of topography and existing vegetation in the intervening landscape between the visual receptor (person/people) and the application site boundary. The proposals would have the greatest effect visually within close proximity of the site and from only several limited locations.

8. Planning Considerations

8. Planning Considerations

- 8.1 As highlighted previously, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that where an adopted Development Plan contains relevant policies, an application for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.2 Section 6 has set out the relevant policies contained within the statutory Development Plan, as well as identifying relevant national planning policy guidance which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This Section assesses the proposed development against the policies of the Statutory Development Plan and other material considerations under the following headings:
- Principle of Development
 - Sustainability
 - Economic Considerations
 - Transport and Accessibility
 - Design and Sustainability Considerations

Principle of Development

- 8.3 As above, the starting point for decision-making is the Development Plan and local planning authorities (LPAs) should ensure their Development Plan is up-to-date and takes account of national planning policy guidance for Wales. For a proposal to be in accordance with the Development Plan, it is not necessary for it to accord with each and every policy, rather it should conform to the plan as a whole.
- 8.4 The Council's UDP is out of date and in this circumstance TAN 1 supports the early release of appropriate sites to address the policy vacuum.

8.5 Whether a site is considered appropriate for Rossett is dependent on its degree of compliance with sustainable development principles and the need for the release in advance of an emerging plan being adopted. In this instance, the emerging LDP has confirmed the need for allocations at Rossett / Lavister in response to the sustainable credentials of the settlement. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the potential of the application site and the proposals to determine whether planning permission should be granted in this instance.

Sustainability

8.6 If the proposed development is to benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development and be granted planning permission it is necessary to establish whether it is, indeed, sustainable. PPW is clear that development should provide a net gain having regard to the sustainable development principles and objectives. These matters have been grouped into economic, social and environmental matters and are assessed below.

8.7 This is considered in full later within this section but, in summary, the development will achieve this objective and is sustainable. **Economically** it will act as an employment generator in the short-term (construction phase), as well as providing investment for existing and new infrastructure such as schools and community green spaces.

8.8 The scheme will contribute to **social and cultural well-being** by supporting and building a strong, vibrant and healthy community by helping to deliver housing in an area that greatly needs it and, indeed, is a location identified for growth in the emerging LDP. The development will provide useable open space that is available to the public and will complement the existing offer in Lavister / Rossett.

8.9 **Environmentally**, the proposals have been developed to ensure that there are opportunities to enhance the natural and built environment. Whilst the development will result in the loss of some fauna habitats, suitable mitigation measures are proposed that will result in an increased biodiversity value of the site. Furthermore, the accessible location of the site, together with range of travel modes (including footpaths and cyclable roads) available, means dependence on private vehicle use will reduce and, in turn, so will emissions.

Economic Considerations

- 8.10 Chapter 7 of PPW supports development that contributes to building a strong responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time to support growth.
- 8.11 Local Service Centres are recognised as being suitable locations for new homes which will address local housing needs and support services and community facilities.
- 8.12 New housing is an important component of sustainable economic growth. The proposed development has the ability to deliver market and affordable homes within the next five years. The resultant increase in residents within the local community will bring new and support existing businesses and services within Lavister and Rossett, helping it to become more self-contained in a local sense. Importantly, it will also benefit the surrounding settlements and the wider County Borough.
- 8.13 The permission of a development of this size will also generate considerable employment opportunities over a number of years throughout a range of trades in the construction sector. Research by the Home Builders Federation has found that the construction of 1 home per annum generates on average 2.4 direct and indirect jobs. The construction of up to 77 dwellings could create up to 184 job years of full time employment.

Transport and Accessibility Considerations

- 8.14 A Transport Assessment forms part of the application submission. It demonstrates that the proposed development is in a sustainable location where future residents can make use of the existing walking, cycling and public transport networks. In addition, the predicted development trips will not significantly affect the operation of the local road network. It is, therefore, concluded the proposed development is consistent with planning policy and the proposed location should be supported from a transportation perspective.
- 8.15 The Public Right of Way (Footpath Allington 16) traverses part of the northern part of the site and the Concept Masterplan shows how it will be incorporated into the development to provide a more direct route across the site. The topography of the immediate surrounding area is relatively flat, which encourages cycling.

- 8.16 Lavister and Rossett benefit from regular bus services to Wrexham and Chester. The nearest bus stops to the development site are located on the Chester Road which is in easy walking distance of the development site access.
- 8.17 The site is located on the northern side of Lavister. The site benefits from good accessibility for all modes of transport and has amenities within a reasonable walking distance, which can also be accessed via the very regular bus route which has stops at Chester Road, adjacent to the site and, also, at key nodes within Rossett / Lavister. The site is accessed from Chester Road and necessary infrastructure can be provided to bring forward development.
- 8.18 The proposal is compliant with UDP policies PS8, T8 and T9 and emerging LDP Policy SP12.

Design and Sustainability Considerations

- 8.19 The location of the site provides the opportunity for enhancing linkages and permeability between residential areas and existing and new public open spaces as required by the UDP.
- 8.20 The Applicant has given careful consideration of the Government's objectives for the design of the built environment as conveyed by PPW. The design approach taken is outlined in the accompanying DAS and reflects the direction provided by PPW (section 4.11), which states that '*design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, environmental and economic aspects of the development*'. It demonstrates the considered design approach and establishes key urban design principles for the detailed design of the proposed development as part of subsequent reserved matters application.
- 8.21 Sustainable design and construction will be used throughout the development to ensure high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability. The DAS and Energy and Sustainability Strategy consider this in more detail and make the following design commitments:
- use architecture and orientation to optimise solar gain, promote good levels of natural daylight and reduce opportunities for overshadowing;
 - retain and reinforce existing natural features on site such as mature trees and hedgerows;
 - create new ecological habitats to enhance the local biodiversity;
 - locate affordable housing throughout the site to encourage social inclusion; and

- Provide new housing to the required quality, energy efficiency standards.

8.22 In addition, the location of the development promotes the use of sustainable transport solutions, as required by national and local policy. The location of the site is within an easy cycling distance to surrounding villages and is located within close walking distance to bus stops.

8.23 In light of the above, the proposal is based on sound design principles and Galliers is committed to minimising carbon emissions and providing a sustainable development in accordance with UDP Policy GDP1 and emerging LDP policies SP13, RE1 and RE2.

9. Deliverability

9. Deliverability

9.1 In line with Chapter 9 of PPW, and given the current housing land deficit within the County, it is important to demonstrate that the proposed development is deliverable and will come forward in the short-term; thus assisting with the identified housing needs. This section provides details with regard to the deliverability of the proposed scheme.

Available

9.2 The Applicant has a legally binding Option Agreement with the landowner which ensures that if planning permission is granted the land will be sold to Galliers Homes Ltd.

9.3 The technical reports that accompany the planning application submission demonstrate that the site has no significant constraints which would delay development commencing.

Suitable

9.4 As set out in this statement and the accompanying technical reports the application site has no significant development constraints. In addition, the site is suitably located for development with good accessibility to local services and employment opportunities by sustainable modes of travel.

Achievable

9.5 The application scheme represents a viable development which can be delivered quickly. Should outline planning permission be granted, it is anticipated that delivery of the proposed development would occur in phases, in accordance with the following schedule:

- Submission of Outline Planning Application – Spring / Summer 2019 (to tie in with LDP adoption)
- Reserved Matters for Phase 1 – Winter 2019/20
- Start on site – Summer 2020
- Completion of access road – Autumn 2020
- Reserved Matters for Phase 2 – Winter 2020/21
- Completion/occupation of first dwellings of Phase 1 – Winter 2020/21
- Completion of final dwelling – Winter 2022/23

10. Summary and Conclusions

10. Summary and Conclusions

- 10.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in respect of the outline planning application submitted by Savills on behalf of Galliers Homes Ltd. For the erection of up to 77 dwellings, public open space and associated vehicle parking on land off Chester Road, Lavister. All other matters are reserved with the exception of access.
- 10.2 The primary purpose of the statement is to assess the proposed development against the relevant planning policy context in order to justify why, in this case, it should be granted planning permission. In addition, together with the accompanying technical and design reports, it demonstrates that an informed approach has been taken to the proposed development. The design responds to the opportunities and constraints at the site and has evolved through discussions with WCBC, stakeholders, statutory and non-statutory consultees and local residents.
- 10.3 In relation to planning considerations, this statement has demonstrated that Wrexham Council's housing supply policies are out-of-date. In such situations, PPW supports the grant of planning permission for sustainable development unless it should be restricted or it would result in significant and demonstrable adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits.
- 10.4 The development is sustainable; it meets the sustainability principles and objectives in the following ways:

Economic role: the development will generate employment opportunities in the short-term (construction phase) as well as providing investment for existing and new infrastructure such as schools and community green spaces. Furthermore, new residents will utilise and support local services and facilities which will benefit from an increase in population.

Social and Cultural roles: the new dwellings will supply a range of sizes and tenures to ensure a mixed community is created, providing homes for all including existing and new residents. The development will enable investment into key infrastructure and services and facilities and the

development will provide useable open space that is available to the public and will complement the existing offer in the Village.

Environmental role: the proposals have been developed to ensure that there are opportunities to enhance the natural and built environment and the biodiversity of the area. The biodiversity value of the site will be enhanced through inclusion of existing assets and the creation of improved areas of wildlife habitat. The development also facilitates the delivery of off-site flood risk mitigation to benefit existing residents of Darland Lane. The level of accessibility proposed as part of the overall scheme will provide significant opportunities for people to use sustainable modes of transport and reduce dependence on private car use.

10.5 In carrying out the planning balance exercise, the suite of technical reports that accompany the submission, together with this Statement, demonstrated that there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the considerable number of benefits that would result from the proposal. The mitigation of negative effects against the beneficial effects of development at the application site mean the proposals will have a positive impact. In summary, the scheme is appropriate for the following reasons:

- The delivery of the development would provide housing for the local community in a location close to the existing settlement of Lavister / Rossett.
- The site represents a logical extension that serves to round-off the existing extent of the villages, respecting the principles of the Green Barrier designation.
- The development would incorporate affordable housing which would be available to meet the needs of local households who could not afford to buy or rent on the open market.
- The site is in a sustainable location, in close proximity to a range of services and facilities, including readily available public transport links (bus) to Wrexham, Chester and other nearby centres.
- The site is not subject to any environmental or technical constraints to delivery and therefore is available for development.

- The application proposal is consistent with the Government's objective to boost housing delivery and support economic growth. It is also in line with the policies and objectives of the PPW in relation to housing delivery.
- The proposal has been informed by pre-application consultation with the local community and key stakeholders.

10.6 Overall, this Statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is consistent with the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan and in line with the growth vision of the emerging LDP, as well as national planning policy. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that the Council supports this application and grants planning permission without delay.