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# Planning Statement

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Proposed residential development  
of up to 19 dwellings and  
associated works

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Land at The Wallers  
Trewern  
Welshpool  
Powys  
SY21 8SZ

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# Mid Wales Property Ltd

Proposed residential development of up to  
19 dwellings and associated works

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Planning Statement

July 2022

## Site address

Land East of The Wallers  
Trewern  
Welshpool  
Powys  
SY21 8SZ

## Planning Authority

Powys County Council  
Neuadd Maldwyn  
Welshpool  
SY21 7AS

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Planning Statement is prepared and submitted in connection with the pre-application for up to 19 dwellings and associated works at land to the land adjacent to The Wallers in Trewern, near Welshpool.
- 1.2. Outline planning has already been approved on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 [18/0471/OUT] for 5 houses with new access on a portion of the proposed site. Therefore, the principle for the development is already in place. The applicant is however looking to extend the site to propose a new residential development and make use of available land.
- 1.3. The site is currently vacant and comprises a large area of poor agricultural land of approx. 0.48 hectares. The site sits in the context of existing residential developments adjoining and opposite, and is predominantly located within the bounds of the development boundary of the Powys Local Development Plan. A portion of the proposed development site extends beyond this designated area, however, it is considered that under H5 (Affordable Housing Exception Sites) it offers a logical 'rounding off' of the development boundary within the constraints of the 'Low risk' line shown in the Flood Risk Assessment Map.
- 1.4. The applicant has identified a local need for a mix of 1- 4 bed quality affordable housing. MWP therefore wishes to develop the site to provide a mix of housing types, including short terraces and semi-detached properties over 2 storeys, to provide a development total of 19 dwellings and associated parking and landscaping.
- 1.5. Barcud (Housing Association) have confirmed they are interested in taking over the whole housing development, and their letter confirms this.
- 1.6. The proposal represents a change of use from agricultural land (operating under Sui Generis use class) to C3 Dwellinghouses. It is considered that this would complement the surrounding setting of residential development, and align with the Powys Local Development Plan which identifies the village of Trewern as a key settlement and an appropriate location for housing development, with good connectivity to Welshpool and Shrewsbury.
- 1.7. The proposal includes the provision of a new access road to the development, providing a visibility splay of 120m in both directions, suitable for a well-lit road. The proposal seeks to offer a positive enhancement of the village of Trewern. It aims to achieve a high standard of design, with careful consideration given to detailing and materiality in keeping with the character of the

local area, whilst making every effort to ensure high standards of energy efficiency and low carbon consumption.

## 2. SITE AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS

### Site Location and Context

- 2.1 The land at The Wallers is located in Cefn, Buttington (Tal-y-bont), which forms part of the village of Trewern in Mid Wales. The site sits directly adjacent to the A458, the main carriageway that connects Welshpool to Shrewsbury.



- 2.2 The community of Trewern is described in the Powys Local Development Plan as a 'Large village' and it includes the villages of Buttington and Middletown. The community has a population of 1430 (Census, 2011). The development site is situated 5km northeast of Welshpool, 22km west of Shrewsbury and 2km west of the Wales-England border.
- 2.3 A dominant local landscape feature is the Breidden hills, the closest and tallest peak being Moel y Gofa (1,322 ft) rising just 1.5km to the north east. The Afon Pwll Trewern passes directly to the north of the site. This watercourse connects to the River Sever which follows a course 1.5km to the west.
- 2.4 The site benefits from a prominent road-side position in close vicinity to Buttington Trewern County Primary School and regular bus transport links.

- 2.5 The vicinity is dominated by residential use with the exception of the school, and many incidences of in-fill development have occurred as packages of land have been sold for development in response to local need. A development of 40 dwellings on a parcel of land adjacent to the school has recently received outline planning approval (21/0577/OUT.)
- 2.6 The principal boundary follows the A458 in a north-east direction and is defined by a thick hedge and a raised bank up to a grass verge at the road edge. Electricity poles and overhead cables follow this edge.
- 2.7 The site is currently accessed through a gate within a timber post and rail fence along the south west boundary with The Wallers. The north-west boundary is defined by a steep bank down to a natural watercourse tributary to Afon Pwll Trewern and similarly the north boundary follows the natural topography of the meandering Pwll Trewern itself until it meets the A458 at Trewern Bridge. The edges of the site that follow the watercourses are steeply banked with dense scrub vegetation.
- 2.8 The site is roughly rectangular but splays out towards the north, following the natural boundary provided by the watercourse. Ground levels slope gently downwards towards the north, with a short bank up at the edge of the trunk road. The land is predominately grassy paddock with a few isolated trees along the natural north west and north east edges.
- 2.9 The site benefits from panoramic views of the open country side in all directions, with the most dramatic aspect facing north-east towards Moel y Golfa and the Breidden hills.
- 2.10 At present, the thick hedge that runs the length of the south-east boundary provides a visual barrier to the busy and noisy A458 which has a steady flow of heavy goods vehicles throughout the day.

### 3. AMOUNT

- 3.1 It is anticipated that the development would be up to 19 dwellings, with a mix of 1 - 4 bedroom homes with a priority for 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings. This mixture will ensure that the site would meet a wide range of needs within the locality.
- 3.2 The proposal includes a new improved access onto the Trunk road. The development therefore will ensure that a safe means of highway access will be developed, which will benefit the prospective residents.

- 3.3 The site will extend to approximately 0.48ha, which will provide a density of 38 units per hectare, which is higher to the advice given within the LDP documentation, which states large villages will expect a density of 25 + units per hectare.
- 3.4 This high density has been proposed, in light of Parc Caradog's (West of school) relative high density, together with making use of the site.

## 4. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 4.1 **Landscape setting** – The existing site is agricultural land of a generally poor and unkempt quality. The Trunk road and school are to the South of the site and agricultural fields to the North East and North.
- 4.2 **Energy efficiency** – Energy efficiency measures will be implemented as part of the development, such as rainwater harvesting, solar collectors, recycling storage and collection points and thermally efficient heating systems.
- 4.3 **Sustainable materials** – As a pre-application, it is difficult to confirm the type of materials proposed for the development but its envisaged to be brick and timber cladding. The applicant will look to utilise materials locally, and introduce recycled materials where possible.
- 4.4 In terms of foul treatment disposal, the site is in close proximity to the main sewer system, of which is considered to be adequate to facilitate the extra residential development, but discussions are being held with Hafren Dyfrdwy during this process.
- 4.5 Surface water drainage has been considered and assessed in a separate document, in which a system will be put in place, to ensure no surface water issues arise from the development and a SAB pre-app has been submitted.

## 5. MOVEMENT & ACCESS

- 5.1 The application submitted includes a new and improved access onto the trunk road (A458), which will serve the new residential development.
- 5.2 The proposed access will be located within a 40mph speed limit and therefore the visibility standards as set out in Volume 6 of DMRB will be applicable.
- 5.3 The proposals seek to provide a new suitable bellmouth junction using 6m radii and 5.5m wide access road, that will be roughly centred on the principle frontage. This placement, maintaining the placement described in the extant placement is considered to provide a suitable distance from existing highway features including private driveways and the school entrance. The maximum visibility splays have been indicated on the proposed junction plan TP- AA-800 Access Arrangement.

- 5.4 The existing site has no current provision for pedestrians to enter the site nor navigate along the road edge site frontage. The proposal seeks to ensure adequate pedestrian facilities are provided with pedestrian footpaths provided on both sides of the access point within the site and crossing points providing access to the existing public footpath to the south road edge.
- 5.5 The road pattern internally to the site will follow the basic principles of a traditional estate road and will be provided with a suitable turning head to allow all vehicles using the site to enter and leave in a forward gear. Suitable pedestrian facilities will be provided throughout the development.
- 5.6 Trewern is defined in the adopted LDP as a large village, which has a strategic role in providing a range of services and number of housing. Its designation as a large village is due to its good connectivity in between Welshpool and Shrewsbury on the Trunk road A458.
- 5.7 Its good connectivity to other large towns makes Trewern a vital commuting village with a prosperous primary school.
- 5.8 There are regular public bus services through Trewern which take residents to Welshpool and Shrewsbury respectively. Together with local taxi services that are able to provide transport for residents.
- 5.9 The proposed residential development is proposed at the centre of the village. The village has a good network of footpaths, along the A458 which enables prospective occupiers to easily walk the short distances to the relevant bus stops.
- 5.10 The internal road layout will provide pedestrian footpaths throughout, which will directly connect with the existing footpaths within the settlement. Disabled crossing facilities will be provided at appropriate locations within the site.
- 5.11 The provisions included within the development will be level access around the exterior of each dwelling, level threshold access to each entrance door, W.C facility at ground floor level and sockets and light switches at appropriate heights.

## 6. CHARACTER

- 6.1 The properties within the settlement of Trewern are predominantly finished with facing brickwork, with an element of white painted render. It is thought that the proposed development will seek to integrate well within the settlement in its appearance, and complement the existing designs and materials currently used within the settlement.
- 6.2 An understanding of the distinctive character of the site setting, both in built form and broader landscape has played a key role in the development of proposals, which look to achieve a high standard of design



and enduring quality, whilst seeking to avoid the pitfalls of creating a poor quality anonymous place or pastiche. The village is dominated by the through road with existing and proposed development sprawling along the road edge with little definition and inter-relationship. Modern developments have created a number of neighbourhoods, typically inward looking, dominated by hard landscaping and often lacking a reflection of its location. The village setting lacks a focus and centre of activity or community. The result is a general sense of anonymity and the village as a place to pass through.

- 6.3 Grasping a distinct character of the area and being able to translate this through a development of this scale is equally challenging. But there is a clear aspiration to create a sense of place and identity, coherent as a neighbourhood in its own right whilst starting to build on and inform the expanding village as a place of distinction set within a wonderful rural landscape. Via a consideration of an expanded area of the rural context, absorbing places such as Leighton Home Farm Estate and a variety of farmsteads sitting alongside the network of major local roads, the proposed new buildings take cues from local rural and agricultural architecture.

### **Form and Layout**

- 6.4 The layout has been carefully considered to balance a confident urban density whilst remaining rural in scale and character. Taking cues from local farmsteads, the layout and arrangement embraces a hierarchy of building types arranged around a sequence of courtyard spaces. Spaces are informal, envisaged as a series of farm and barn yard type spaces punctuated by soft landscaping incorporating sustainable drainage measures. Building forms reinforce this approach capturing –
- A principal entrance building marking the site and referencing the formality and grandeur of the typical 'farmhouse',
  - Larger proportioned barn-like terraces with simple, efficient and robust forms and materials, and generously proportioned openings.
  - Worker cottages or outbuildings taking on a subservient form to the grander buildings on the site.
- 6.5 Of particular consideration is the site profile experienced from the road. The resultant arrangement provides a generous green buffer space to the road edge, retaining the existing hedgerow but presents a variety of gables and eaves profiles. This ensures the principal frontage is not dominated by a fence line or long continuous frontage that would add to the corridor effect of the existing road.
- 6.6 The site is considered at two storey throughout but with a variety of eaves levels generated from natural existing site levels and the hierarchy of building forms. The reveal of the principle dwelling at the site access point acts as a marker for the development which is otherwise bedded into the site, with low roof profiles just revealed above the existing hedgerow. Breaks in the development ensure key views through to open countryside and the distant key landscape features are retained. The development is considered a natural extension to the village, rounding off the existing and proposed village and acting to incorporate the otherwise outlying primary school.

6.7 The site is already well screened with mature hedgerows and vegetation surrounding the field. Some minor removal of hedgerows will need to take place to facilitate the new roadway. They'll be an opportunity to provide additional areas of landscaping, to negate against any biodiversity loss.

## 7. COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 In proposing a residential development, consideration must be given to ensuring an attractive but safe place is created. Site security is a key element in any development, and one element of ensuring this is developing a site that has natural surveillance.

7.2 Given the nature of the application and indicative nature of the layout, it is difficult to outline the mitigation measures that will take place to ensure site security. However, the general element would be to orientate dwellings in a way that they oversee their gardens and estate well. Also the development would include appropriate street lighting to ensure no used public areas are unlit, which would increase the chance of crime.

## 8. NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

8.1 National planning policies in Wales are defined within Edition 11 (2021) of Planning Policy Wales and 24 Technical Advice Notes which cover different elements of the planning process. The National policies provide a general and overarching view on what the Welsh Government believes should be the primary objectives of development in Wales. Generally new housing developments.

8.2 Chapter 4 of Planning Policy Wales specifies that new housing development shall be well designed and make a significant contribution to promoting community regeneration and improving quality of life. Chapter 4 outlines that in rural areas (such as Powys), that new development shall be located in key settlements which have relatively good accessibility by non car modes.

8.3 Trewern is defined in the adopted LDP as a large village, which has a strategic role in providing a range of services and number of housing. Its designation as a key settlement is due to its good connectivity in between Welshpool and Shrewsbury on the Trunk road A458.

8.4 The development site is partly within the development boundary and partly outside. 5 dwellings have been approved within the development boundary, but in light of this 100% affordable housing proposal, the exception site policy (H5) allows for this development. In light of this, the principle of housing development on this site has been accepted by the Local Planning Authority, subject to its adherence with other local planning policy factors.

8.5 Local Development Plan policies (2018) - Local planning policies are derived and drafted on the basis of National policies, which the current adopted Powys County Council Local Development Plan is no

different. In light of this, although material consideration must be given to the strategic objectives as set out by Welsh Government policies, the main considerations must be taken from Powys' adopted Unitary Development Plan

#### 8.6 H1 – Housing Development Proposals

- In Large Villages, development will be permitted on suitable sites within the development boundary and on sites forming logical extensions outside development boundaries for affordable housing in accordance with Policy H6.

#### 8.7 H6 – Affordable Housing Exception Sites

- Proposals for development of affordable housing will be permitted where they are a size and tenure commensurate to the defined need and the site is solely for affordable housing, and there are adequate arrangements to ensure the benefits of affordable housing are secured.

#### 8.8 DM2 – The Natural Environment

- The development proposals cannot unacceptably effect any sensitive sites

#### 8.9 DM4 – Landscape

- New development shall not have an unacceptable effect on a valued landscape.

#### 8.10 DM13 – Design & Resources

- The proposal needs to be designed to complement the character of the area.
- Does not have an impact on tourism assets.
- Creates safe places and community safety is paramount.
- Full provision for people with disabilities.
- Landscaping is provided.
- Minimise the impacts on the transport network
- Shall not create noise, dust, air pollution, litter or overlooking issues.

#### 8.11 T1 – Travel & Traffic

- Proposals should create a safe and efficient flow of traffic for all transport users.
- Manage any impacts of the network to an acceptable level.

All the above local policies, together with the overarching national planning policies have been considered in designing this proposal. We feel that the development accords with all policies, and therefore should be considered principally acceptable.

## 9. CONTEXT

- 12.1 **Economic context** – The proposed scheme will inevitably boost the local economy, in providing additional housing in the village, providing work during construction to local businesses and labourers.
- 12.2 **Social context** – Socially, the development will provide more children for the primary school adjacent to the site. Smaller schools within Powys are currently struggling to remain open and this development will assist in ensuring Buttington, Trewern school remains necessary and open.
- 12.3 **Physical context** – The physical context of the site as existing is an agricultural field. The site is considered to be a natural extension of the village, which was confirmed by the acceptance of it as an allocated housing site in the forthcoming Local Development Plan. The site will not be seen as sporadic development in the open countryside, and will integrate well within the immediate and surrounding landscape.

## 10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The proposed development is for the erection of up to 19 affordable dwellings in the settlement of Trewern.
- 10.2 A portion of the proposed development site extends beyond this designated area, however, it is considered that under H5 (Affordable Housing Exception Sites) it offers a logical 'rounding off' of the development boundary within the constraints of the 'Low risk' line shown in the Flood Risk Assessment Map.
- 10.3 The scheme will have a significant positive impact on the existing school, in providing a number of family orientated properties, which will ensure the pupil numbers of the school remains healthy.
- 10.4 In light of all the information provided to you, and the relevant planning policy context that is currently in place, we consider that the proposed scheme should be viewed positively and recommended for approval.