

Wrexham Town's Character Areas

19

Available in alternative formats

This guidance amplifies existing development plan guidance in respect of urban landscape design (buildings and the spaces between them) within the settlement area of Wrexham. The guidance forms a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications which could affect the form and appearance of the landscape and townscape in Wrexham town.

The aim of the guidance is:

- a) to give developers and local residents a better understanding of the aspects that make Wrexham distinctive;
- b) to make it easier for development proposals to be prepared and assessed on a consistent basis;
- c) to provide guidance to help to ensure that changes will be positive and appropriate for the locality, leading to the enhancement of the urban landscape.

The town has been divided into a series of character areas, which share similar characteristics in terms of age, form, concept, or use. These are shown on the urban landscape character area map of Wrexham which should be read in conjunction with this guidance note. A series of general design objectives are set out for each area. In addition, a series of opportunity actions are outlined; these are actions that are not directly related to the planning process, but which could be implemented by the activities by the local authority and by others.

These guidelines complement existing design guidance, development control standards, local planning guidance notes and Conservation Area guidance, which are available from the Planning Department.

Whilst the guidance recognises the diversity and value of Wrexham's townscape and aims to protect the best features within each character area, it does not seek to rule out bold, unusual or innovative urban landscape design solutions, where appropriate.



Existing planning guidance

Policies S4 (b), E1 and E2 of the adopted Wrexham Maelor Local Plan aim to ensure that new development does not materially detrimentally affect landscape and townscape character. Policies PS2 and GDP1(b) of the deposit draft UDP have similar aims and will shortly replace the local plan policies.

summer of 2000. Consultees included all of Wrexham Town's Community Councils, Residents' Associations and amenity societies. An exhibition was also displayed in Wrexham Library's foyer to enable members of the public to submit comments.

The Character Areas

The settlement of Wrexham has been divided into 10 distinct character areas, which fall into 5 categories on a functional and chronological basis showing how the town has grown and changed, particularly since the 19th century.

Public consultation

The guidelines for the character areas have been developed following consultation which was carried out during the

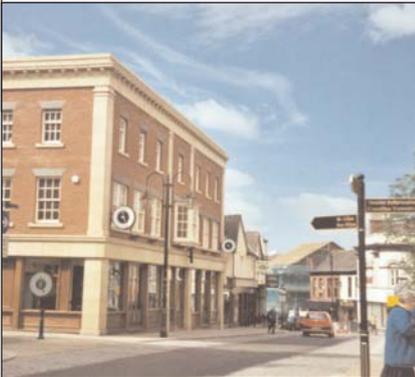


1a Historic Core

Strategy for change:

Conservation
Restoration
Encouragement of diversity

- Refer to existing Conservation Area Guidance and forthcoming Enhancement Proposals



1b Civic centre

Strategy for change:

Enhancement
Encouragement of diversity

- Retain and strengthen public spaces with pedestrian and cycle links radiating out to surrounding and outlying areas of Wrexham
- Promote use of high quality design and high quality materials
- Encourage innovative building design in scale with existing in an appropriate landscape setting
- Break up extensive areas of car parking with trees and shrubs
- Follow existing Conservation Area Guidance where relevant



2a Traditional Terrace

Strategy for change:

Enhancement
Encouragement of conformity

- Retain and enhance all areas of communal open space
- Conserve building form, density and detailing
- Resist loss of existing buildings
- Follow Local Planning Guidance Note No 11 for Terraced Housing in Wrexham for building conservation and restoration
- New housing to respect existing density, building form, building line, materials and boundary features of adjacent buildings

- Retain original stone or brick boundary walls and varied copings, discourage replacements by fencing or alternative materials

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Improve pavements and general conditions for pedestrians and cyclists
- Encourage removal /rationalisation of telegraph poles and unnecessary signage and 'clutter'
- Improve on-street parking where feasible, discourage parking in front gardens



2b Pre World War 1 Suburban

Strategy for change:

Conservation
Restoration

- Refer to existing Conservation Area Assessment, and forthcoming Enhancement Guidelines



3a Interwar Suburban

Strategy for change:

*Conservation
Restoration
Enhancement*

- Conserve and enhance existing highway verges and street trees
- Require sensitive improvements and alterations to dwellings, which retain and recreate existing architectural detailing
- Conserve low density of development and resist over-development of plots or insensitive backland development
- Conserve existing stone or brick boundary walls
- Conserve hedges

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Enhance existing highway verges and street trees



4a Early Post World War 2 Estates

Strategy for change:

*Enhancement and/or redevelopment
Encouragement of diversity*

- Ensure that landscape/townscape issues are given early consideration in any proposals for enhancement or redevelopment
- Retain old lamp posts, ensure new ones are at similar scale
- Encourage rationalisation/removal of telegraph poles as opportunities arise
- Retain stone walls, ensuring repointing is done with a mortar mix weaker than the stone. Use hedging rather than fences on top of stone retaining walls
- Retain hedges (e.g. beech, privet), but if replaced use timber palisade rather than chainlink fencing. Where open plan front gardens are enclosed use hedging (preferable), or stained timber palisade fencing to match existing

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Determine existing and required functions of areas of public open space and develop landscape accordingly
- Clarify public/private boundaries, with planting, walls and fences
- Where opportunities arise provide

high quality detailing needed to give greater richness to streetscape, greater individuality to localities, and to upgrade image of area

- Improve condition of narrow pavements
- Create additional car parking areas where needed on edge of grassed open space, with surrounding planting
- Use opportunities available in extensive areas of public open space to plant larger trees, provide footpaths and cycleways
- Enhance all areas of open space to give areas more interest and identity streetscape, greater individuality to localities, and to upgrade image of area



3b Interwar planned suburbans

Strategy for change:

*Conservation
Restoration
Enhancement
Encouragement of conformity*

- Encourage retention and replacement of hedges



- Encourage retention of original 'Arts and Crafts' design features to buildings and original landscape lamp posts, mature trees in grass verges

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Look at alternative solutions to parking problems
- Reinstate lost verges
- Encourage cost-effective estate-wide maintenance which protects and enhances important features
- Improve conditions for pedestrians
- Encourage traffic calming using materials appropriate to location
- Improve conditions for pedestrians

4b Hightown Flats

Strategy for change:

*Enhancement and/or redevelopment
Encouragement of diversity*

- Promote alterations which help break up scale of buildings, help integration into surroundings and improve image
- Replace losses in public open space as often as required

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Enrich landscape with high quality street furniture where appropriate
- Use colour to break up scale of buildings
- Encourage planting on balconies
- Intensify planting in public open space
- Resurface pedestrian paths with high quality materials

4c Recent Estates

Strategy for change:

*Enhancement
Encouragement of diversity*

- Introduce large trees where possible which will contribute more to future amenity than 'garden' size trees.
- Encourage use of alternative hedging species to reduce future problems with fast-growing Leyland and Lawson cypresses
- Provide landscape buffer for new developments on the edge of the countryside and incorporate former countryside features into new development. Provide links into surrounding countryside as well as links into existing urban areas
- In new developments, consider road layouts which depart from the standard guidelines to encourage innovative housing schemes which are not designed around the car
- Encourage planting of street trees and boundary hedges in new developments

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Look for opportunities to increase pedestrian and cycle linkage between cul-de-sacs to reduce the dominance and impact of the car
- Introduce large trees where possible



5 Mixed Non-Residential

Strategy for change:

*Enhancement
Redevelopment (some)
Encouragement of diversity*

- Retain the best of the existing landscape in new developments, including areas of ecological interest (even if not designated), hedgerows, stone walls, watercourses and any other features of historic or other value
- Keep the use of security fencing to a minimum, particularly palisade fencing, if fencing is necessary use dark green colour or black, with posts of the same colour.
- Maintain and create links into surrounding housing and the town centre, using opportunities for separate footways/cycleways and also new bus stops/shelters which are attractive, safe and comfortable to use
- Retain and protect existing mature trees and Integrate large retail developments into townscape by use of recessive

colours for walls and roofs, and large scale tree planting. 'Green roofs' may be an option for the future. Break up rooflines to reduce apparent scale (e.g. old 'sawtooth' factory roofs with northfacing lights are energy efficient and fit in with scale of domestic roofs)

- Avoid large scale cut and fill operations which destroy the original landform and create unnatural cuttings and embankments. Consider split level developments as an alternative
- Maintain a landscape buffer zone next to watercourses and water bodies
- Introduce new planting where appropriate

OPPORTUNITY ACTIONS

- Break up extensive car parking areas with tree and shrub planting and contrasting surfacing
- Plant replacement trees



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