

MOLD OPPORTUNITY SITES ASSESSMENT

September 2013



Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners





CONTENTS

Executive summary

1. Background and context	15
2. Site suitability assessment	36
3. Site availability / market testing	39
4. Site viability	60
5. Future Mold - A strategic framework	112

Appendix

A1. Mold transport review
A2. Highways impact assessment
A3. Football pitch options

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Flintshire County Council appointed a consultant team led by Colliers International and Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners, with support on transport and movement issues from Mott MacDonald, to review a wide range of opportunity sites in and around Mold. The purpose of the study is to help Flintshire County Council plan for the future growth of the town in light of ongoing development pressure from developers and landowners. The sites in this report represent a grouping of known opportunity sites, sites being promoted by developers and landowners, strategic sites that may be considered suitable for development and other sites which redevelopment would be welcomed by the local authority.

The study looks well beyond the current plan period – up to 2030 – and in doing so forms an important part of the evidence base for the FUDP's replacement as the Council begin the process of preparing the Flintshire Local Development Plan.

Land use options explored in this study – particularly for the sites beyond the existing settlement boundary, therefore may be contrary to the current adopted development plan. Studies on these sites have been undertaken to inform the plan making process and do not therefore imply that these sites are considered appropriate for development in advance of the preparation of the replacement development plan. For sites beyond the town centre boundary, the study principally explores housing capacity. Development of identified sites would yield the need for new community infrastructure and further work will be required to establish the appropriate levels of provision required.



MOLD

Mold is an historic market town and civic centre with a population of around 9,500 people located 10 miles west of the border of England. It serves as a service hub for up to 40,000 people in its surrounding rural hinterland and is a popular destination for visitors experiencing North East Wales. The town is within easy reach of the Clwydian Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Chester and the North Wales Coast. It has excellent road links with the motorway network via the A55 and frequent bus links to railway stations at Chester, Flint and Wrexham. The historic character of the town centre is recognised through the designation of a conservation area.

Mold is a well contained and tightly defined market town, accessed through open countryside from all approaches. This contributes to its identity as a unique and well defined place. However, there is a danger that further growth could lead to the coalescence of major settlements. This would result in a blurring of the distinction between these two places and would add to the sense of urban sprawl in Flintshire.

Mold sits within the valley of the River Alyn, with land raising to the north-east and south-west resulting in several important long views across the town emphasising its landscape setting. Bailey Hill and St Mary's Church are raised from the valley floor contributing to their visibility and prominence within the town.

The A494 bypasses Mold keeping through traffic out of the town. The primary route into the town, partly due to the majority of movements heading towards Chester and the Northwest of England, is via Chester Road (A541). Mold has an attractive historic core that has withstood the economic downturn and performs relatively well in commercial terms with few vacant units. The town centre boundary is extensive and includes edge-of-centre retail and some housing. The core town centre is more clearly defined with a relatively fine grain and some strong heritage features.

An initial assessment of movement and transport issues relevant to Mold followed by an analysis of the implications for the local road network of the opportunity

sites coming forward for development identified that most routes and opportunity sites are served by hourly or more frequent bus services; there is congestion on the highway network in the peak periods at several junctions and there is a shortage of public short-stay car park capacity in the town centre on Saturdays.

Market perception

An important part of the study was to identify development industry interest in Mold as a location in which to invest. Several major developers from North West England and Wales were consulted. They were very positive about Mold's potential as a location for future development. It is seen as a traditional market town with a strong demographic. It is set in an attractive countryside location, yet it is close to the strategic road network which gives easy access to major employment locations in Deeside, Wrexham, Chester and Merseyside.

The town centre is considered healthy, with few vacancies and a strong independent sector. There are some multiples, but there is perceived to be an under-supply of modern retail floorspace suitable for the requirements of these corporate occupiers. The scope to meet this underlying demand presents major opportunities for the town. In addition to some new modern shops, there is also the opportunity to introduce some leisure outlets, such as restaurants and family pubs to increase dwell time and further enhance Mold as a destination.

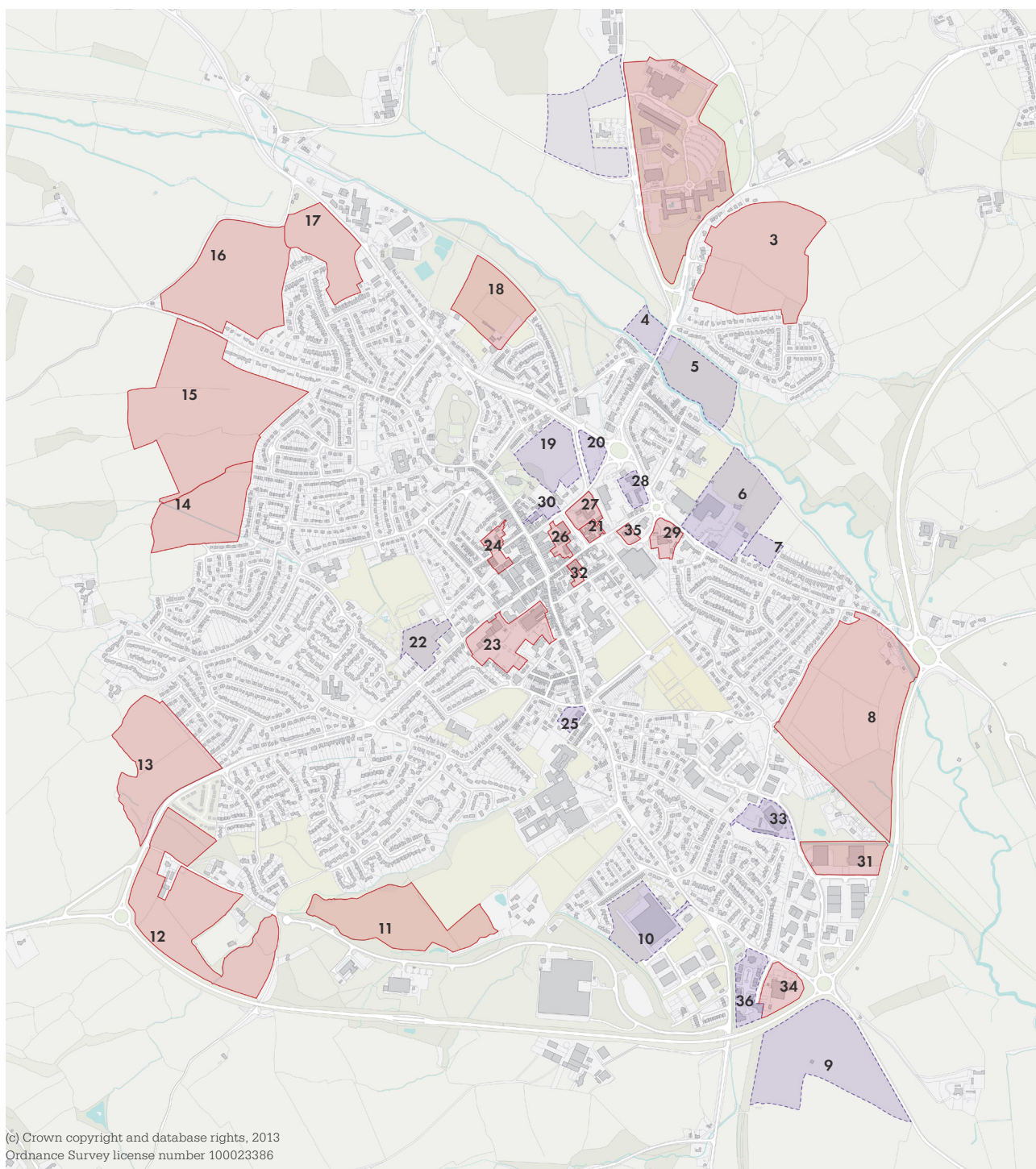
The town is also seen as a good location for housing development and there is confidence that the provision of a range of housing types will be popular in the market. The expansion of the town's population will help to reinforce the demand for retail and leisure outlets in the town centre and help to reinforce the market for new comers into the market.

Developers do not view Mold as a location for the development of large scale industrial or office development for private companies. There will be some demand from local SMEs, but there are large, well located strategic development sites elsewhere in Flintshire and provision for employment land should be concentrated there.

OPPORTUNITY SITES

The study was conducted in three stages. The initial stage was to consider the suitability for development of a long list of sites. This initial high level test considered each of the sites suitability in terms of planning policy, property market issues and transport implications. Secondly, site availability was considered, informed by direct liaison with many of the principal landowners. Finally, an assessment of the viability of development was undertaken during which masterplanning layouts and, in some cases, options for identified sites were prepared and reviewed in terms of development viability and traffic impact. Traffic impacts were tested through a specifically prepared traffic model. The study considers the following sites:

1. Land adjacent to County Hall;
2. County Hall;
3. Land East of Rhyd-y-Galed Farm;
4. Land West of the Bridge Inn;
5. Rugby Pitch, Leadmill;
6. Mold Rugby Club and Former Kwik Save site;
7. Land adjacent to Wood Green off Chester Road;
8. Pen y Bont Farm;
9. Pentrehobyn Estate;
10. Broncoed Industrial Estate;
11. Maes Gwern;
12. Land south-west of Mold / Upper Bryn Coch;
13. Land to south-east of Plas Aney;
14. Land north of Queens Park, Hendy Road;
15. Land to west of Mold;
16. Land at Factory Pool Lane;
17. Land adjacent to A541;
18. Mold Alexandra Football Club;
19. Alyn Meadow;
20. Love Lane Car Park;
21. Terrig House and Courthouse;
22. Kendrick's Field;
23. New Street Car Park;
24. Daniel Owen Square, Library, Post Office and Car Park (Back of Hammersleys);
25. Morris Garage;
26. Cattle Market;
27. Police Station;
28. Fire Station and Ambulance Station;
29. South of Chester Road;
30. Territorial Army and King Street Car Park;
31. Stephen Gray Road, Bromfield Industrial Estate;
32. Telephone Exchange;
33. Bromfield Timber;
34. North Wales Newspaper;
35. Mold Tyres / Harley's Garage; and
36. Mold Business Park.



Opportunity sites suitability assessment

- Opportunity sites considered potentially suitability for development and taken forward to the next assessment stage
- Opportunity sites not taken forward to the next assessment stage

TRAFFIC MODELLING AND SCENARIO TESTING

With the capacities of the opportunity sites carefully assessed, and each site allocated a development phase, the three compound phases were then modelled to ascertain an understanding of the potential highway implications for the projected growth.

The highway network impact assessment shows that there is a good level of capacity provision on the existing highway network to accommodate future development growth. In the longer term, development of the scale considered in this study will put significant increased pressure on highway infrastructure in the Chester Road and King Street corridors in particular.

FUTURE MOLD - A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Mold Strategic Opportunity Sites Assessment demonstrates the capacity for Mold to accommodate housing growth and considers a range of strategic town centre opportunities that would deliver new investment.

Town centre boundary

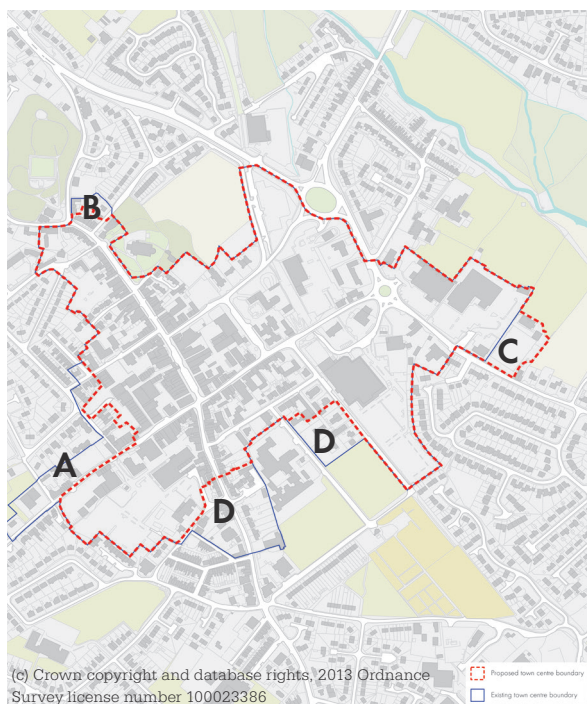
The town centre boundary is an important tool in protecting and promoting the vitality and viability of Mold town centre. Its principal purpose is to define areas of Mold where commercial land uses prevail, which are considered to be the most appropriate – and the most sequentially preferable – for ‘town centre’ uses to take occur.

A tight and defensible town centre boundary is important in achieving these objectives, through which new commercial and mixed-use investment is directed to the heart of Mold. Whilst boundary changes were not recommended during the preparation of the Flintshire Town Centre Health Check study, as a replacement development plan commences preparation of a high level review of the existing adopted town centre boundary suggests that there are a number of areas where revisions to the town centre boundary could have merit. Changes should only be made where they are considered likely to strengthen the economic health of the town centre.



Generally the study recommends that the extent of the town centre boundary is concentrated around existing commercial and retail uses. Potential revisions are detailed in the report. These include the following:

- A. New Street corridor and the western edge
- B. High Street and the northern edge
- C. Chester Road and south eastern corridor
- D. Southern edge

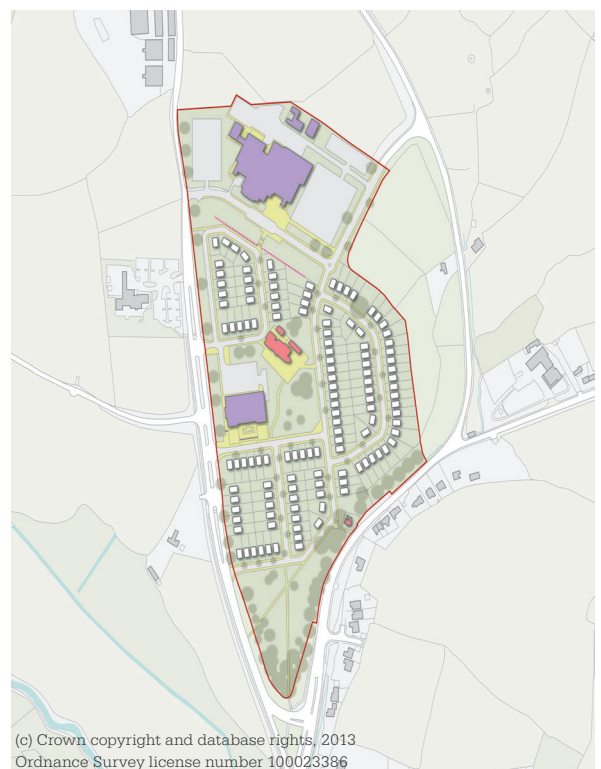


Suggested town centre boundary updates

Mold County Hall

The County Hall site, identified as a strategic opportunity site within this study, in tandem with Clwyd Theatr Cymru, and lies as the heart of a major concentration of civic and community uses including Mold Crown Court. Two strategic options have been considered for this future of the site – one which retains some Flintshire County Council civic uses on the site, assumed to be ceremonial uses such as a Council Chamber and associated meeting rooms.

The remainder of the site is then released for housing led mixed-use development. It is considered that land surrounding the Theatre presents opportunities for commercial leisure uses. The second option assumes that all Flintshire County Council uses are relocated. Redevelopment of the County Hall site should be considered in tandem with the opportunities to revitalise the town centre.



Site 2 - layout option 2

Relocation of Mold Cattle Market

The study recommends that a centrally located development scheme be progressed to attract new, high-quality retail and leisure outlets of the type that are currently missing from Mold's offer. Relocation of The Cattle Market would release a highly accessible parcel of land in the heart of the town centre. New retail-led investment in this central location would create more jobs in the town centre and strengthen the town's retail offer. The impacts associated with the generation of additional traffic would need to be carefully managed.

However, in view of the concentration of public sector owned land immediately to the east, a larger scale phased regeneration of the town centre could conceivably come forward. When combined with the opportunity presented to reintroduce into the town centre significant numbers of County Hall staff in purpose built or refurbished town centre office accommodation, the benefits and implications of the relocation of the Cattle Market site should be considered in greater detail as they be shown to be very significant.

Progress is currently being made on delivering public realm improvements to Daniel Owen Square. This investment is important for the town given the scarcity of formal public spaces in the town centre.

It is also important to improve the links between the town's retail streets and the shopping centre. The redevelopment of the Cattle Market site in tandem with the sites east of the bus station (redevelopment of the Police Station site and sensitive reuse and redevelopment of the sites around Terrig House) also presents an exciting opportunity to provide high quality public space appropriate for this town centre location

Strategic housing growth

The suitability, availability and viability of strategic sites in and around Mold to accommodation a significant phase of housing growth has been central to the study. At a strategic level, all the town's principal corridors have been considered in terms of their respective suitability to accommodation this growth.

The north-west corridor centred on Denbigh Road and Gwernaffield Road is identified as the most appropriate location to accommodate the bulk of this growth, with other corridors playing a significant role in providing a green barrier which prevents coalescence with other nearby settlements.

Further more detailed studies will be required to more fully understand the issues associated with this growth, but it is considered that strategic growth of the town in appropriate locations has the potential to help strengthen the economic vitality of the town centre as well as providing much needed new homes of all tenures, types and sizes.

However, with only very few exceptions, the sites considered in this study are not allocated for development. As things stand, development proposals on these sites would therefore be contrary to the development plan. In light of work undertaken during this study and any further work on the sites identified, appropriate new site allocations should be progressed through the development plan process. Further testing and studies will be required to more fully understand the implications of development of identified sites in order to inform a view on whether they might be considered as suitable for specific land use allocations.

Future infrastructure requirements

The highway network impact assessment shows that there is a good level of capacity provision on the existing highway network to accommodate future development growth. Highway capacity hotspots that have been identified from the traffic model assessment and are detailed in the report.

Over the short (five years) to medium (10 years) time, the network in general is shown to be able to operate with sufficient levels of capacity, although some key locations are showing increasing signs of stress during the peak hours:

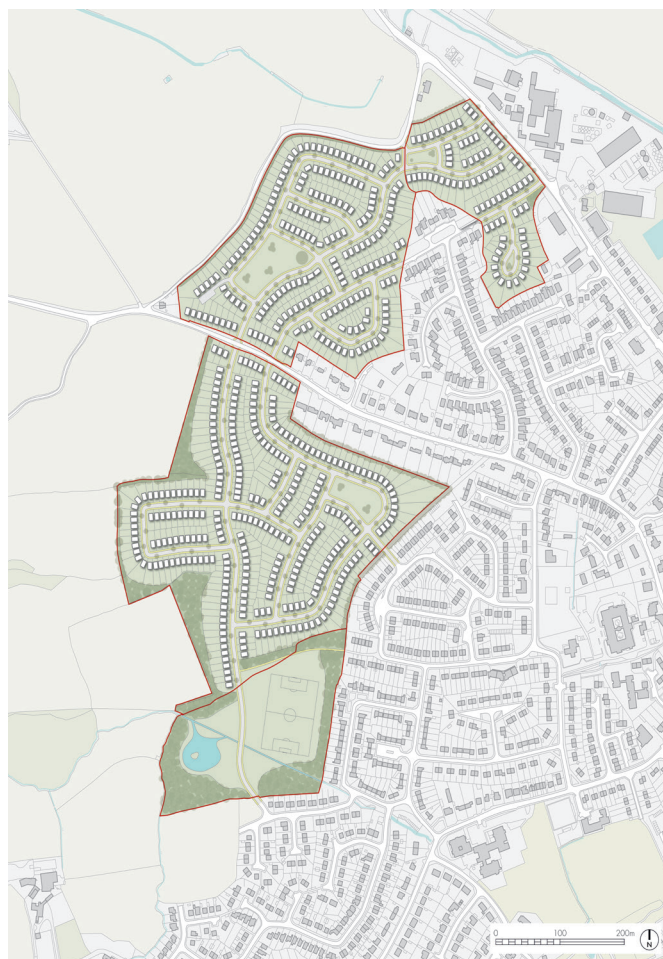
Moving forward to the medium to long term (15 years) time frame, it is evident that some of these junctions will be operating over capacity and as a result excessive queues and delays will form on some of the junction approaches. This may have severe implications on the operation of the A541 Chester Road corridor and the A5119 King Street corridor.

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Relocation of Mold Cattle Market

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Strategic housing growth

NEXT STEPS

The study demonstrates how the town is potentially well placed to accommodate both significant housing growth and major new commercial investments in the town centre. Preparation of the new Local Plan is already underway and this will play an important role outlining a new strategy for the town. Whilst some key stakeholders have been engaged, this has been essentially a theoretical study and has not had the benefit of public consultation. The benefits and issues associated with the growth of the town should be tested and considered further through the planning process. The traffic and movement implications of such investments should also be considered both strategically and locally as these studies are progressed.

Key next steps are considered to include the following:

Progress the release of the County Hall site and the associated relocation of Council staff to office space in Mold town centre

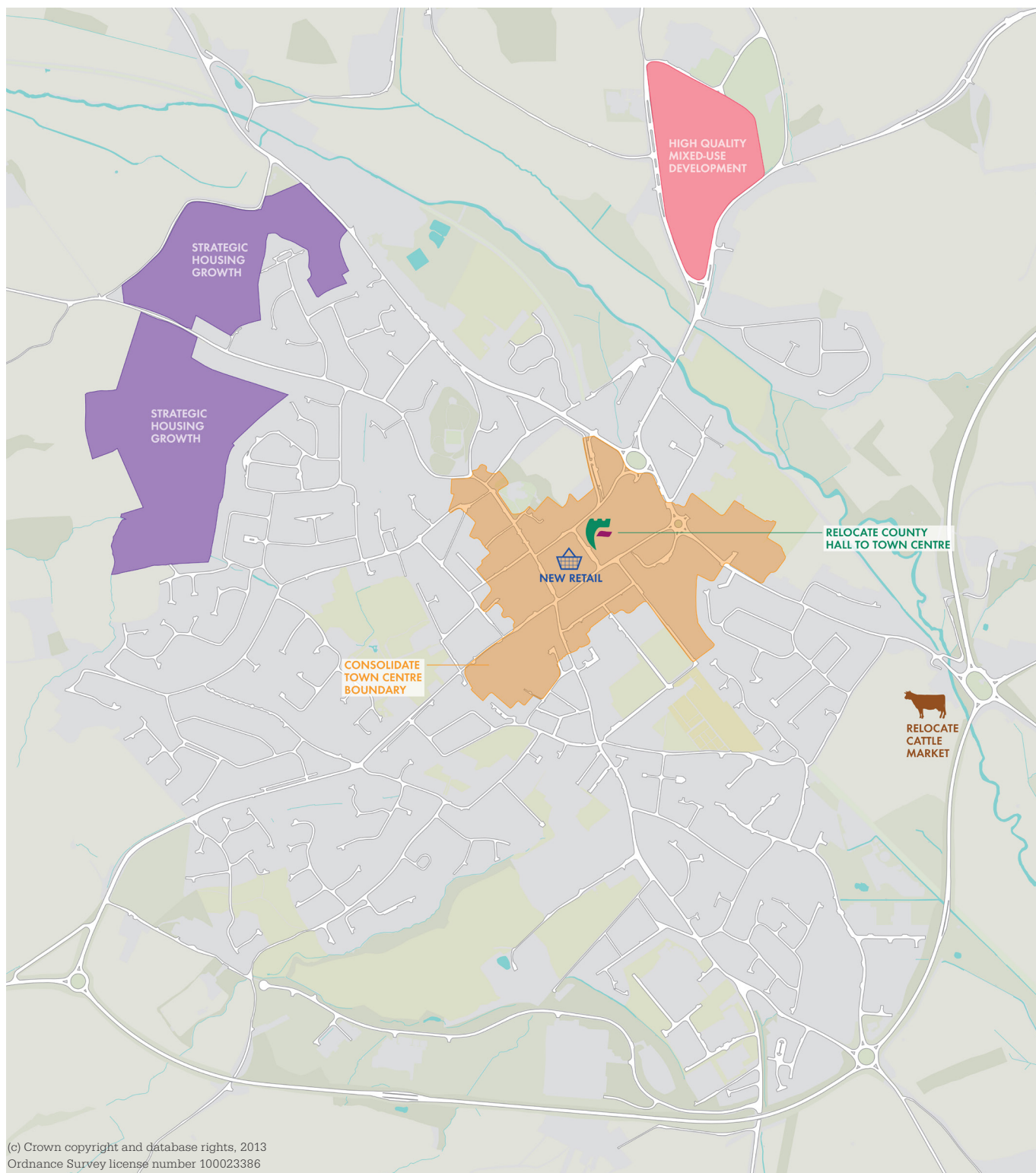
A more detailed feasibility and options study is required which considered the full range of opportunities associated with the sites either side of the existing bus station.

Take a plan-led approach to potential strategic housing growth around the town

With work now underway on the new Flintshire Local Plan, further, more focussed, studies on the issues associated with strategic housing growth considered in this report should be undertaken and public reaction to such options sought and assessed. The issues associated with the scale of change envisaged in this report in terms of strategic housing growth are complex and multifaceted, such as the community infrastructure implications, and further more detailed work is required in this regard. The preparation of the Local Plan should take the lead in this process.

Explore the relocation of the Cattle Market to an edge of centre location with good access to the strategic road network

Discussions with key stakeholders should continue on the potential for a new purpose built cattle market facilities being delivered on a new site on the edge of Mold. This would release land in the heart of the town centre which could help attract significant new retail-led investment. The provision of new purpose built facilities would also help to secure the economic future of Mold Cattle Market itself as it facing increasing competition from other nearby markets several of which have received major investments.



Mold strategic framework key moves



High Street, Mold, with St Mary The Virgin Parish Church in the background

PART 1: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Mold is an historic market town and civic centre with a population of around 9,500 people located 10 miles west of the border with England. It serves as a service hub for up to 40,000 people in its surrounding rural hinterland and is a popular destination for visitors experiencing North East Wales. The town is within easy reach of the Clwydian Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Chester and the North Wales Coast. It has excellent road links with the motorway network via the A55 and frequent bus links to railway stations at Chester, Flint and Wrexham.

Flintshire County Council appointed a consultant team led by Colliers International and Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners, with support on transport and movement issues from Mott MacDonald, to review a wide range of opportunity sites in and around Mold. The purpose of the study is to help Flintshire County Council plan for the future growth of Mold in light of ongoing development pressure from developers and landowners. The sites included in the brief and to be assessed in this report represent a grouping of known opportunity sites. In some cases they have been promoted by developers and landowners, some represent known strategic sites that may be considered suitable for development and other sites where redevelopment would be welcomed by the local authority. The study looks forward to help establish a vision for Mold in 2030 – well beyond the current plan period.

1.2 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

In line with national planning policy, our assessment methodology was based on three sequential stages, as follows:

Suitability assessment – initially, all sites were assessed in view of their suitability for development. This qualitative assessment, supported by site visits, was undertaken by the full consultant team and involved an assessment of the suitability for redevelopment of each site in terms of planning issues, transport and movement issues and commercial property issues. Sites that were considered suitable for redevelopment in principle were taken to the next stage of the assessment.

Availability assessment – the suitable sites were then considered in terms of their availability. This assessment was made in light of meetings and telephone conversations with relevant land owners and developers.

Viability assessment – this final assessment stage involved the technical assessment of the remaining sites in terms of issues associated with the viability of development proposals. This technical assessment stage involved the following:

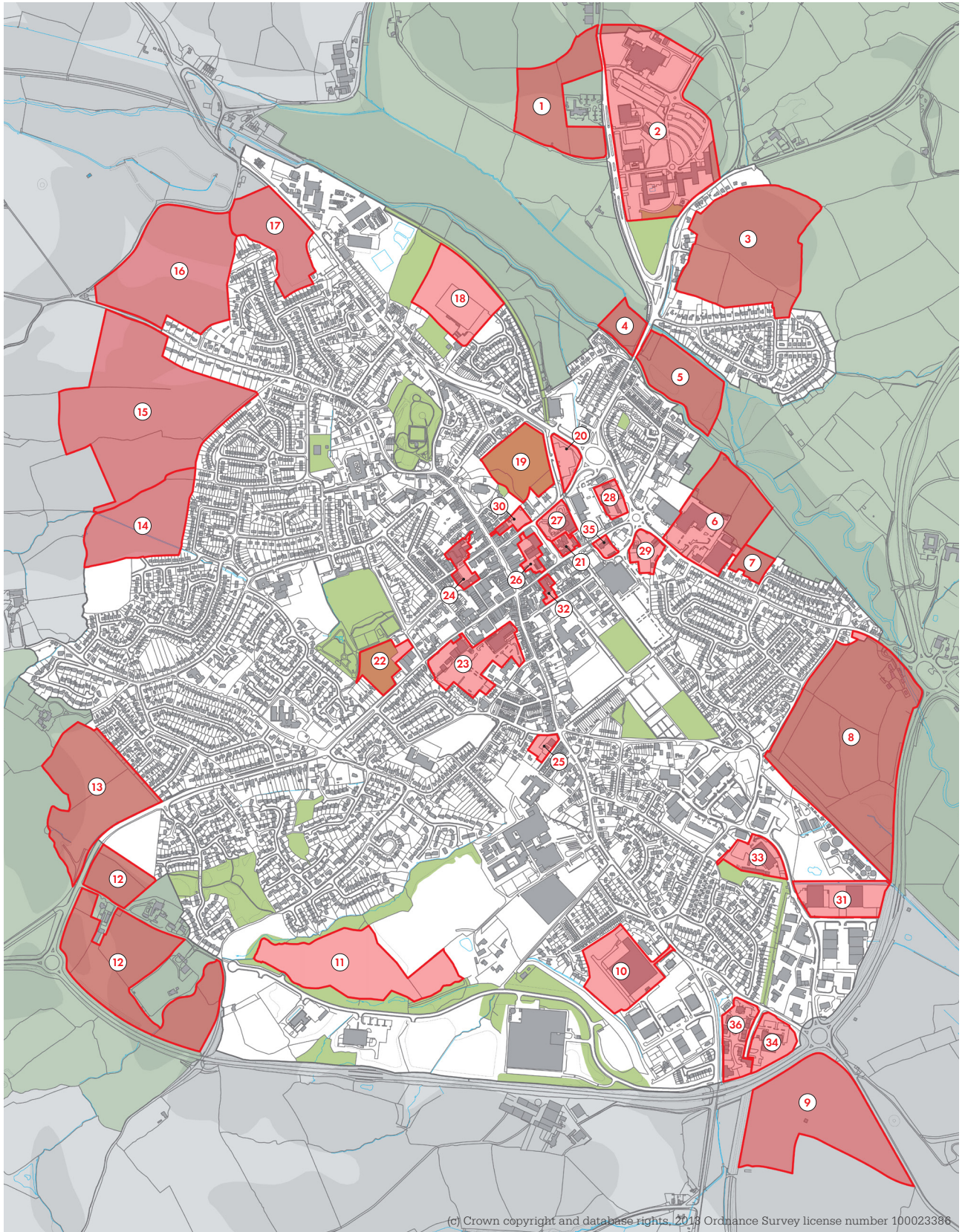
- Capacity assessment – masterplanning design options were prepared for each site together with an associated schedule of development capacity. Where appropriate, a number of development options were considered on particular sites.
- Traffic modelling – a base/current traffic model position was established and agreed. Each site was then allocated to one of three development phases and three future modelling scenarios were developed in order to ascertain the traffic impact associated with the redevelopment of the identified opportunity sites.

The report concludes with an overarching 20 year vision for Mold which takes account of the compound impact of the opportunity sites coming forward.

1.3 SITES FOR ASSESSMENT

The plan on the facing page shows the location and boundaries of the sites identified for assessment within the brief for this study. These sites are:

1. Land adjacent to County Hall;
2. County Hall;
3. Land East of Rhyd-y-Galed Farm;
4. Land West of the Bridge Inn;
5. Rugby Pitch, Leadmill;
6. Mold Rugby Club and Former Kwik Save site;
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32. Telephone Exchange;
33. Bromfield Timber;
34. North Wales Newspaper;
35. Mold Tyres / Harley's Garage; and
36. Mold Business Park.



Mold opportunity sites for assessment

1.4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Overview

The Flintshire Unitary Development Plan (FUDP) was adopted, following a lengthy production process, in September 2011. The FUDP is the adopted development plan for the 15 year period 2000 – 2015. The aim of the FUDP is to provide a framework for making rational and consistent decisions on planning applications and to guide development to appropriate locations.

This study looks well beyond the current plan period – up to 2030 – and in doing so forms an important part of the evidence base for the FUDP's replacement as the Council begins the process of preparing the Flintshire Local Development Plan.

Some of the sites included in this strategic assessment, whilst not identified as site allocations in the FUDP, were promoted as such during the preparation of the plan. In some cases, a view was provided by the FUDP Examination Inspector on the site's suitability for development and, whilst the timescales for this study extend beyond those of the FUDP, these views were relevant in the identification of sites considered in principle to be suitable for development.

Land use options explored in this study – particularly for the sites beyond the existing settlement boundary, therefore may be contrary to the current adopted development plan. Studies on these sites have been undertaken to inform the plan making process and do not therefore imply that these sites are considered appropriate for development in advance of the preparation of the replacement development plan.

Flintshire Unitary Development Plan 2008

The adjacent plan is an extract from Flintshire's Unitary Development Plan Proposals Maps and shows the existing allocation of land within Mold. The outlines of the potential site allocations have been added for reference.

Key spatial policies to consider with regard to the potential site allocations include:

- GEN4 Green Barriers - a significant proportion of the edge of Mold to the north east and south west is defined as a green barrier, including identified potential site allocations. The Green Barrier is similar to Green Belt but is a local and non-statutory designation. The extent of Green Barrier designation has recently been reviewed resulting in a tightening of the designation which has helped to strengthen its aim of ensuring towns do not coalesce.
- L3 Green Spaces - within Mold several green spaces are identified within which the UDP states that "development will only be permitted which does not unacceptably harm their function or value as a green space nor threaten their value to the community" (p19). Two of the potential site allocations (22 Kendrick's Field and 19 Alyn Meadow) are classified green spaces.
- STR5 Town Centre Boundaries - a significant proportion of the central potential opportunity sites are within the existing town centre boundary. These sites should be expected to promote the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the existing centre. Strengthening the heart of the town centre and promoting development opportunities within it is of particular importance for the centre. The defined town centre is extensive and could potentially benefit from consolidation.
- S7 Core Retail Area Boundaries - only one potential site allocation, 24 Daniel Owen Square, straddles the core retail area boundary, although other central sites border it. Retail uses form the preferred use within the core retail area which is focused on the High Street area.
- EM1/2 Employment allocations - there is a clustering of employment land allocations at the southern edge of the town north of the A494 bypass. This includes two areas identified as new potential site allocations.
- MIN8 Protection of Mineral Interests – the majority of the edge of the town is identified as a Mineral Safeguarding Area, within these areas non-mineral development will require evidence as to what extent it may sterilise or restrict the working of mineral resources.

1.5 RELEVANT REPORTS AND STUDIES

A number of existing studies and reports are relevant to the Mold Opportunity Sites Assessment. These include the following:

The Mold Health Check Study, 2008

Undertaken by Roger Tym & Partners, this study concluded that Mold is a relatively healthy town centre, but that there is a need for intervention to stave off potential decline. The report highlighted the strengthening competition from larger nearby centres and recommended that the Council and its partners seriously consider the potential for delivering a centrally located development scheme to attract new, high-quality retail and leisure outlets of the type that are currently missing from Mold's offer. Mold was considered to be the only one of the County's seven centres where there would be sufficient developer and operator interest to make a significant retail-led development scheme viable.

The Flintshire Employment Land Review, 2009

This was carried out for Flintshire County Council by DPDS in 2009. In general terms, the study anticipated that the majority of future employment allocations would be associated with urban extensions in Mold, the Connah's Quay/Shotton/Queensferry/Buckley/Broughton area or in the Chester area.

The study finds that, whilst there is sufficient or even potentially a surplus of employment land, the specific type and quality of sites may not be suited to the future demands of employers.

The key demand characteristics identified in the historic employment land development rates suggest the need for c.15 hectares of land per annum across the county.

In Mold the employment land is a group of sites arranged in an arc around the southern and eastern fringes of the town. Maes Gwern is identified as high quality business park, though it is acknowledged that considerable earth modelling will be required and the site is therefore likely to be a medium term opportunity.

For future supply, it is recommended that smaller scale, high quality sites should be sought in or adjacent to the towns of Mold and Flint.

The Mold Sports Pitch relocation study, 2012

This study was produced by Knight, Kavanagh and Page on behalf of Flintshire County Council. It was a feasibility study to assess the potential of collocating Mold Rugby, Cricket Club and Mold Alexandra Football Club in one multi-sports complex.

The key conclusions to be drawn from the feasibility study can be identified as follows:

- A multi-sports club development was not, and is still not, the preferred option for both the Rugby and Cricket clubs.
- Although Mold Alexandra was keen to progress a multi-sports club development, its preferred option was always a stand-alone facility.
- The Pen Y Bont site is viewed as the most secure option for clubs as the Welsh Government is willing to sell the land to the clubs and the cost is likely to be based on agricultural land value – although this would have to be negotiated with the Welsh Government.
- Although Synthite is aware of the possibility to secure permission for residential development on the Mold Alexandra site the company does not foresee any urgency to develop the land (i.e. given the current housing market). Therefore it is willing to continue to provide the club with a rolling 6 month lease.

The Mold Cattle Market feasibility report

The possibility of redeveloping the site has been under consideration for some time. A 1989 commercial and financial study of the site by Rural Planning Services considered four economic scenarios: close the market, do nothing, invest in the site, and relocate. Relocation was considered as the only means by which the long term future of the market could be maintained. Fundamental to this site realising its true potential is the selection of a suitable alternative site for the market to relocate to.

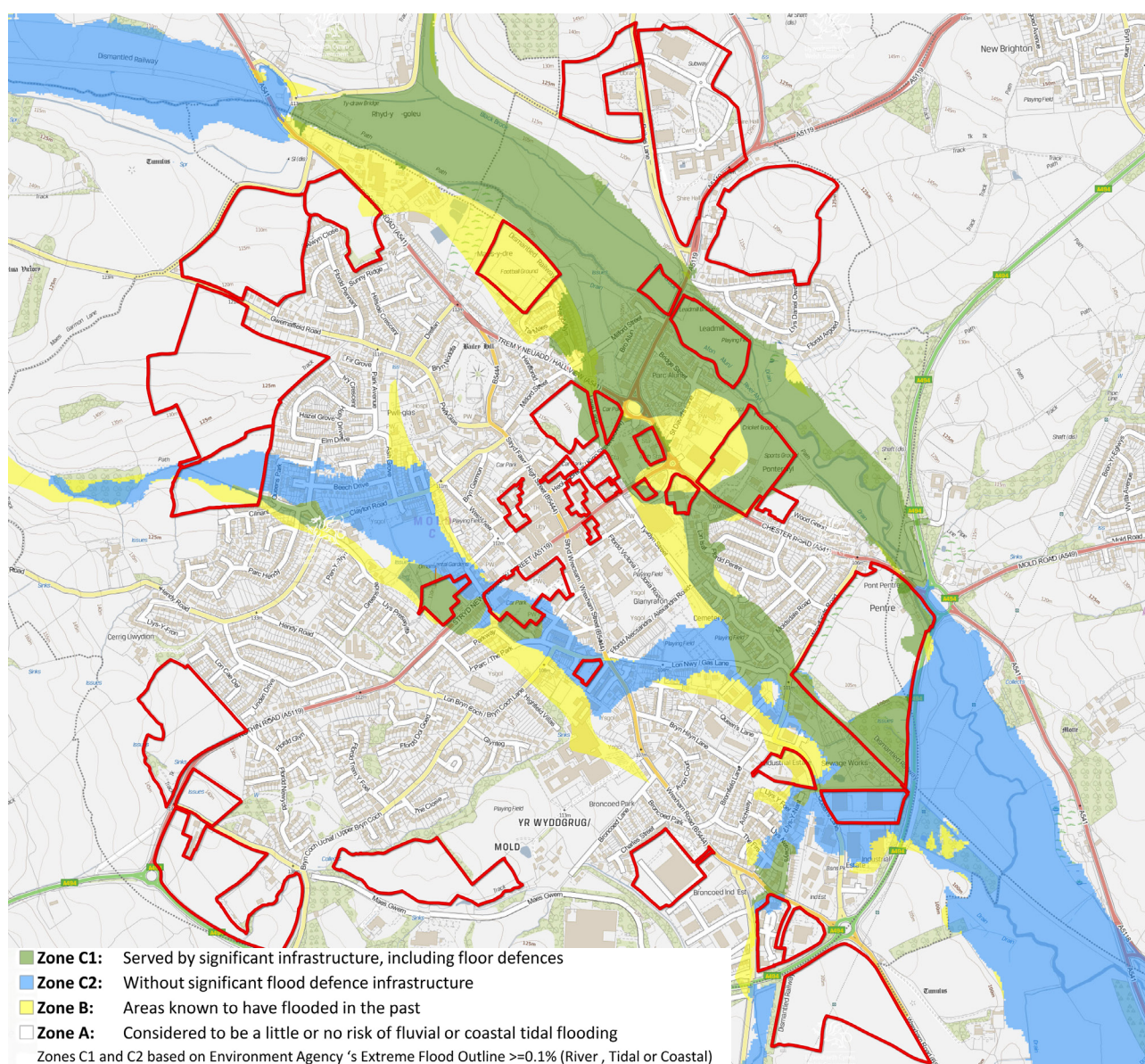
It was recommended that the relocation site should meet the following criteria:

- Easy access onto the major highway network (Mold by-pass)

- Proximity to all major infrastructure services with adequate capacity for future expansion
- Ability to cater for future expansion of both the livestock market and ancillary agro-industrial businesses and remain acceptable in both environmental, planning and highway terms
- Site should be conveniently located to both serve the catchment area of the market and also retain its historic links with the town.

Flintshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Report, 2011

As required under by TAN15, Flintshire County Council undertook a preliminary flood risk assessment report for the County. The maps and data provided by the Environment Agency do not identify any indicative Flood Risk Areas in Flintshire because the declared threshold of 5,000 persons at risk of flooding in a community is not met. However, with the course of the River Alyn running through the town, many of the sites are identified as liable to flood. Policy EWP17 outlines the Council's policy on floor risk associated with new development.



Mold flood risk

Source: <http://data.wales.gov.uk/apps/flood mapping>

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1.6 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Mold Sense of Place Study, 2010

During the early stages of the Town Action Plan process, the Town Council, Cittaslow group and County Council commissioned Heritage Initiatives to produce a feasibility study to identify ways in which the character and distinctiveness of the town could be strengthened and greater benefits realised. The Mold Sense of Place study has been an important document in capturing and communicating the values of stakeholders in Mold and sets out clear aspirations for maintaining the distinctiveness of the town including: maintaining its historic assets; improving the public realm; improving accessibility and legibility; and increasing its visitor appeal.

The Town Action Plan for Mold

The Town Partnership brings together public, private and voluntary sector organisations to consider the future needs of Mold as a whole, not just the town centre, and to co-ordinate the efforts of the many groups working in the town. The Town Action Plan for Mold, adopted in 2011, is firmly rooted in the distinctive character of Mold and in the strong sense of ambition from the Partnership that the town can “punch above its weight” due to its unique strengths. The aims for Mold are to become:

1. An attractive town with well designed public spaces and a strong sense of place.
2. A high quality commercial environment supporting thriving businesses and a valued local workforce.
3. An inclusive community with a strong sense of belonging and participation.
4. A distinctive place where locals and visitors connect with history, culture and countryside.
5. A model of environmental sustainability, embracing change and innovation.
6. An active contributor in local partnerships with strong integrated networks across the region. (Mold Action Plan 2011)

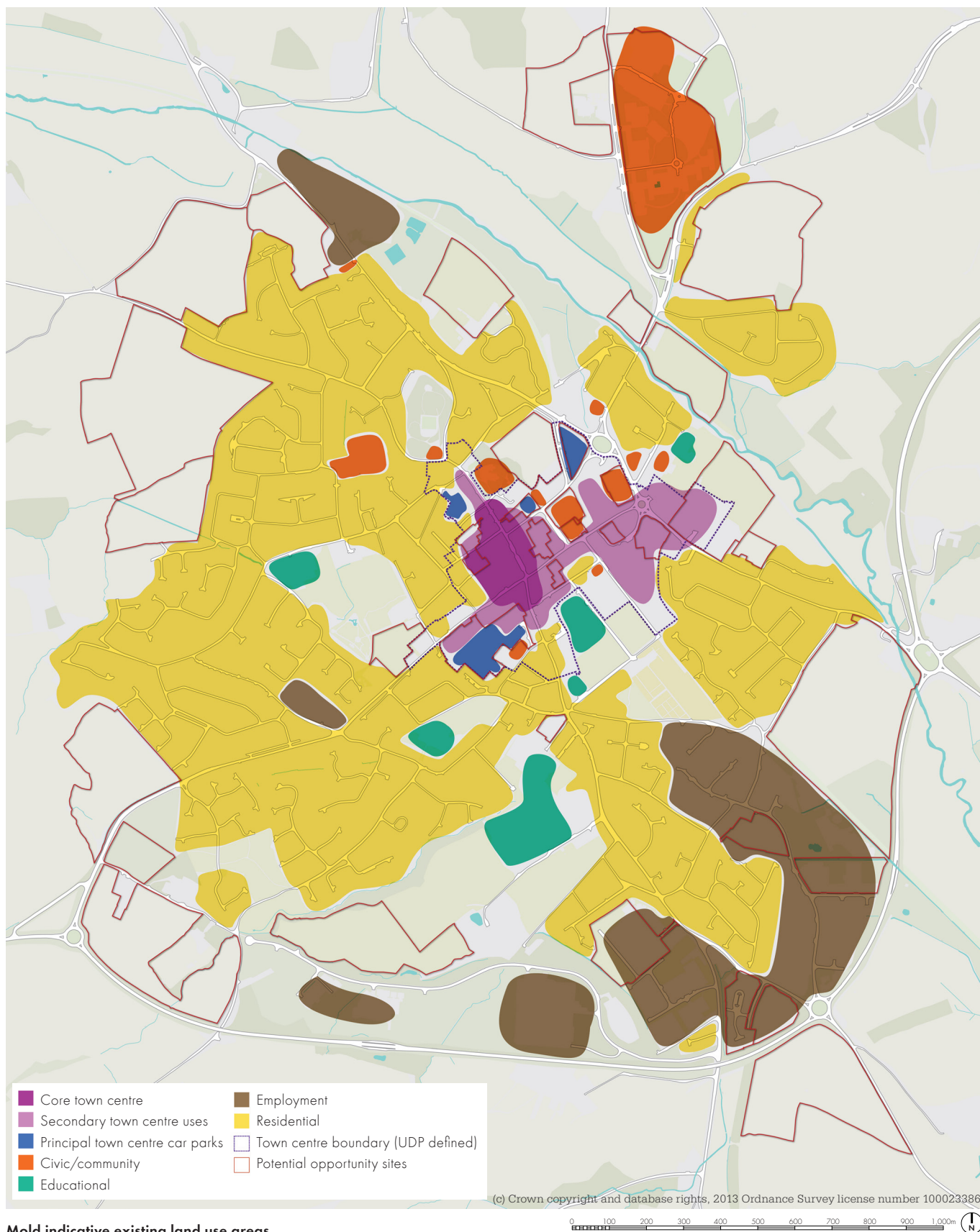
Introduction

To help inform the suitability assessment, town-wide environmental analysis has been undertaken. Summarised in the following sequence of plans, this analysis seeks to ensure the suitability assessment takes full account of land use character, heritage issues, landscape character, issues associated with Mold's urban edge conditions, topography and an appreciation of the principal road network serving the town. Analysis of the central commercial area also identified some of the key issues in Mold town centre.

Land use zones

The urban area of Mold comprises of a number of broad land use zones as shown on the plan on the facing page. Key features include:

- **Core and secondary town centre** - the core town centre, where finer grain retail uses are concentrated and there is the highest pedestrian footfall, is concentrated in the High Street area. A larger secondary area stretches eastwards towards Chester Road where larger retail units are directly accessed from the A541 Lead Mills and Chester Road.
- **Civic campus** - the County Council offices and services and the Clwyd Theatr Cymru form a large civic campus which is detached from the town to the northeast, on the northern side of the River Alyn.
- **Employment land** - there is a clustering of light industrial and office employment uses at the southern and south-eastern edge of the town. These benefit from good vehicular access from the A494 bypass.
- **Residential development** - housing growth has occurred in two main stages, ribbon development along historic routes followed by estate developments usually arranged in cul-de-sacs. The large number of cul-de-sacs can be clearly seen on the plan with few routes through residential areas away from the principal road network.

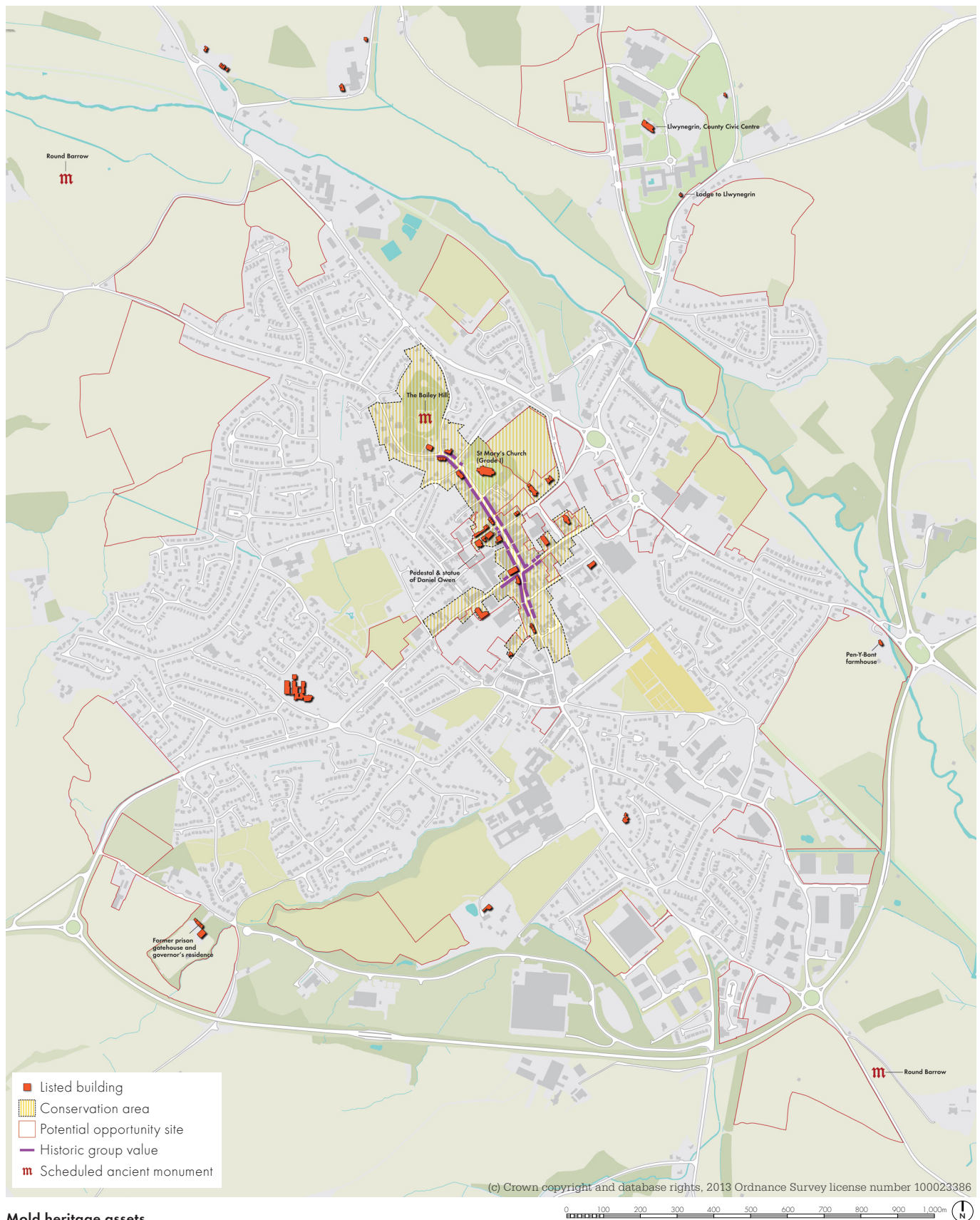


Mold indicative existing land use areas

Heritage and conservation

Mold is an historic market town retaining a number of heritage assets within its centre. These include the Grade I listed St Mary's Church, the ancient scheduled monument Bailey Hill fortress (eleventh century) and several listed buildings within a fine grain shopping core where the rhythm and scale of buildings along High Street has significant group value.

The historic character of the town centre is recognised through the designation of a conservation area. Outside the town centre two of the potential opportunity sites contain listed buildings, these are the Llwynegrin Hall and its associated lodge within the civic campus (site 2) and the semi-derelict Pen-Y-Bont (site 8) farmhouse at the junction of Chester Road and the A494.



Mold heritage assets

(Listed buildings identified from spot data accessed from the Historic Wales Portal
 - <http://jura.rcahms.gov.uk/NMW/start.jsp> - and curtilage/location may not be accurate)

Landscape character

Mold is a relatively contained town which is accessed through open countryside in all directions. These rural approaches positively contribute to the town's landscape setting. However, the settlement of Myndydd Isa (joined with Buckley) is less than 1km to the east and there is a danger that further growth could lead to the coalescence of these two settlements.

The River Alyn acts as the north-eastern border of the town, with the river valley forming a green wedge between the civic centre and the town centre. The A494 bypass forms the southern edge of the town. Trees along the northern side of this road screen the town, with open views retained over open countryside to the south. A line of pylons which pass to the south east of the town are a prominent feature on the landscape.

There are a number of key views approaching and leaving Mold along the principal roads which contribute to its landscape setting. These are strongly related to the topography of the area which conceals the town from some views, particularly when approaching from the north-west on Denbigh Road.

There are a number of notable hedgerows along field boundaries and roadsides and existing trees which should be considered when assessing the potential site allocations at the edge of the town.



Issues associated with Mold's urban edge

There are four broad categories that define Mold's urban edge, these are:

- **The River Alyn valley** - the valley forms the northeast edge of the town, with the river and associated topography having restricted the town's growth. Any development beside the river would erode the openness of this key landscape feature.
- **A494 bypass** - the bypass forms the southern edge of Mold, with a landscape barrier of trees planted on its northern side shielding views of the town. The impact of development at the potential opportunity sites immediately north of the A494 would be lessened by the existing landscape barrier.
- **Western fringe** - the western edge of Mold is formed by housing estates bordering open farmland. Houses back onto the open farmland for a significant proportion of this edge, limiting where urban growth could occur in an integrated way.
- **Satellite development** - the civic campus and the houses accessed from Bryn Awelon, form a satellite of development separated from the main town by the River Alyn.

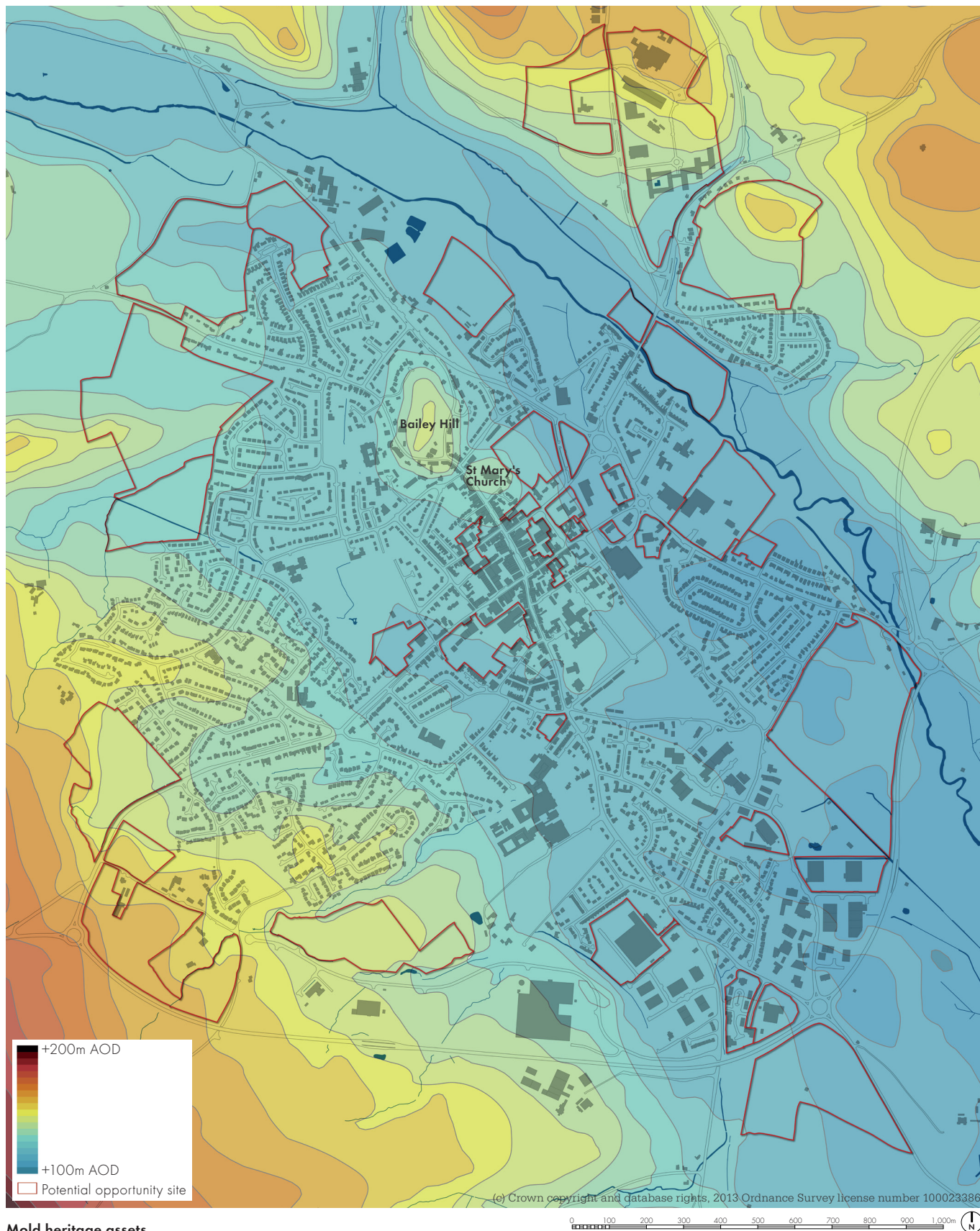


Topography

Mold sits within the valley of the River Alyn, with land raising to the north-east and south-west resulting in several important long views across the town emphasising its landscape setting. Bailey Hill and St Mary's Church are raised from the valley floor contributing to their visibility and prominence within the town.

The civic centre campus is on a hill side, with the topography contributing significantly to its character. The positioning and scale of the council offices also makes them a prominent feature of the town.

The topography plan on the facing page highlights the undulating nature of several of the larger potential opportunity sites on the edge of Mold. Proposals on these sites will need to consider how the topography will affect views, exploring the potential for the visual impact of development to be reduced by positioning below ridges.

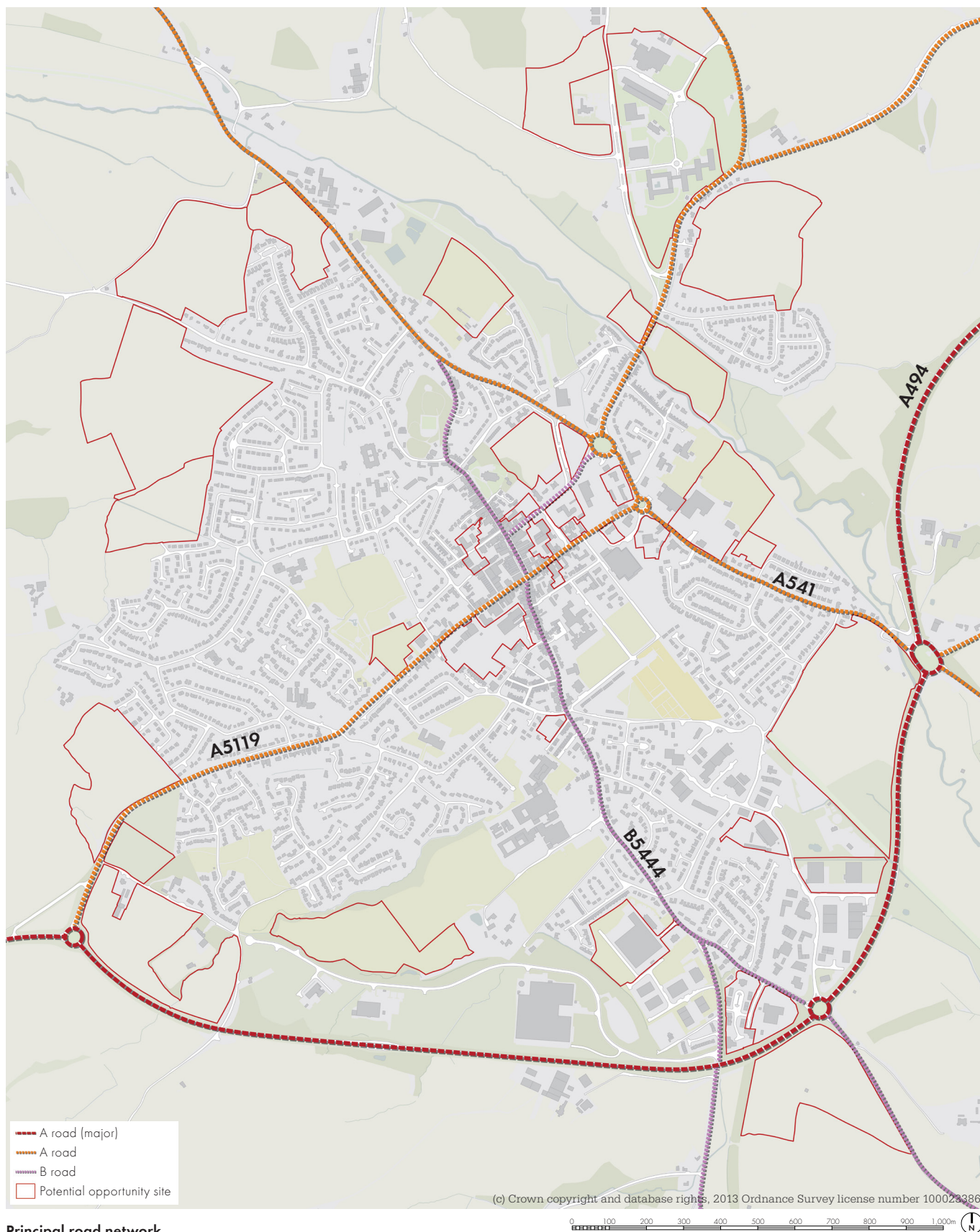


Mold heritage assets

Principal road network

The A494 bypasses Mold keeping through traffic out of the town. The primary route into the town, partly due to the majority of movements heading towards Chester and the North West of England, is via Chester Road (A541).

The plan on the facing page shows the potential opportunity sites in relation to the principal road network. Accessibility to this network will be a consideration in assessing the suitability of the potential sites for development.



Principal road network

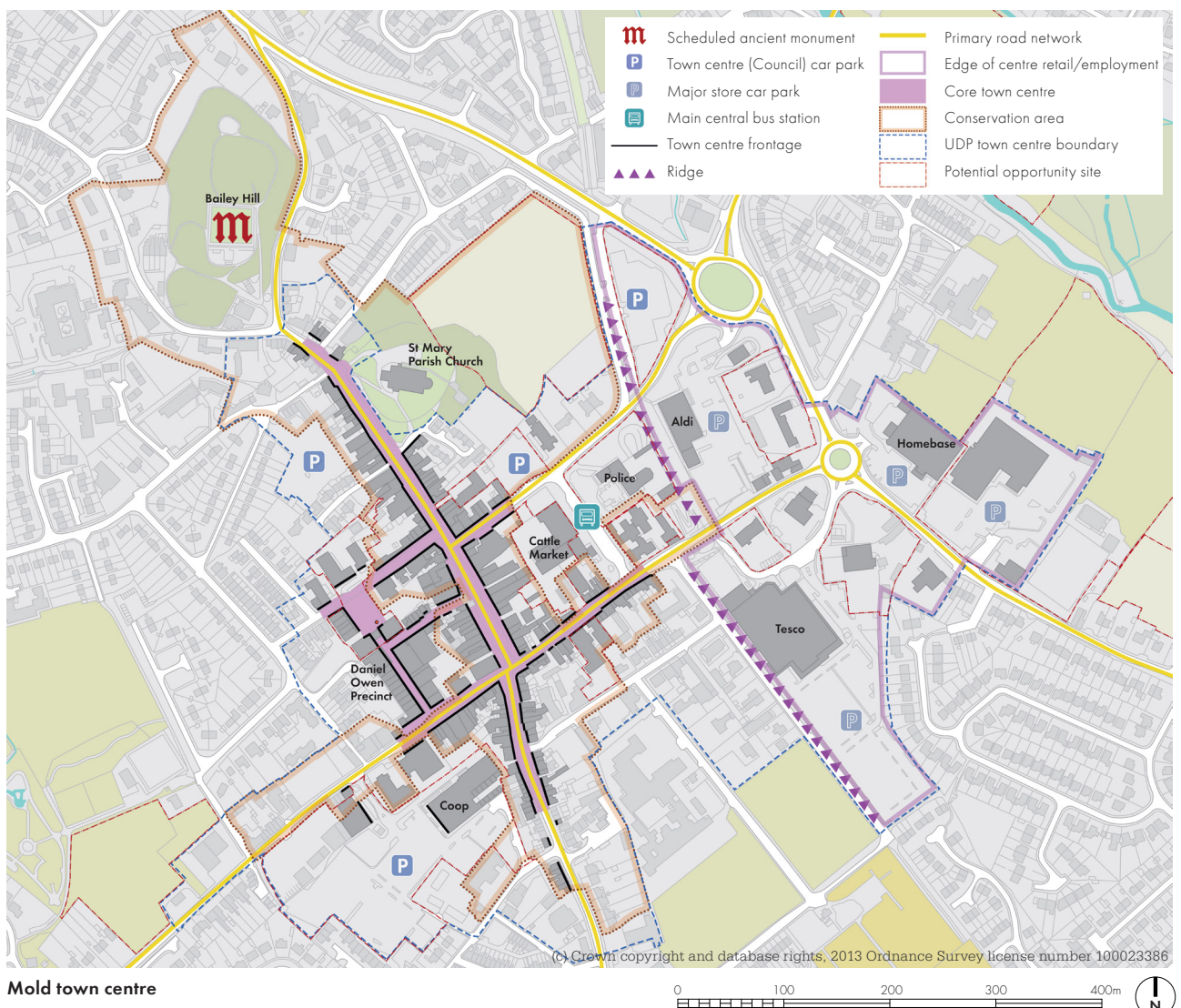
Town centre issues

Mold has a varied town centre with an attractive historic core that appears to perform relatively well in commercial terms with few vacant units. However, the focus of commercial activity has shifted eastwards in recent years with the addition of large format edge-of-centre retail developments and supermarkets. This eastward edge of the town is separated from the centre by a ridge formed by the path of a former railway.

The town centre boundary is relatively extensive and includes edge-of-centre retail and some housing. The core town centre is more clearly defined with a relatively fine grain and some strong heritage features.

The historic cross roads of High Street and Chester/New Street remains a central focal point for the town with the main core high street heading north towards St Mary the Virgin Parish Church. This is a key historic axis for the town which also links to the remains of the 11th century fortress at Bailey Hill. Retail loops have been created to the west of the high street through the Daniel Owen Precinct connecting New Street, Earl Road and High Street. This area is the focus for Mold's popular outdoor market which contributes significantly to the town's vitality.

The plan below shows how each of the central potential opportunity sites are positioned in relationship each other and the town centre.



Mold town centre

1.7 TRANSPORT, MOVEMENT AND PARKING CONTEXT

In undertaking an initial assessment of movement and transport issues relevant to Mold followed by an assessment of the implications of the opportunity sites coming forward for development for the local road network, Mott MacDonald have undertaken a high level review of the infrastructure issues relevant to Mold. A separate baseline report (Appendix 1) provides a more detailed review of all modes of transport. The key points arising from this review include:

- Most routes and opportunity sites are served by hourly or more frequent bus services;
- Congestion is noted on the highway network in the peak periods on:
 - the A541 Chester Road corridor from the Tesco roundabout junction to the A494, inbound to Mold;
 - the A5119 Chester Street from the Tesco roundabout to the High Street junction; and
 - King Street, between High Street and the bus station access.
- There is a shortage of public short-stay car park capacity on a Saturday.

The impact of developments on the Mold's highway network and upon the existing level of congestion will be tested at the Site Viability stage through the application of Saturn modelling. The impact of development sites on car parking provision is considered as part of this stage of the study.

PART 2: SITE SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

An initial site suitability assessment was undertaken by the consultancy team. The matrix on the following pages was prepared through which the suitability of all identified opportunity sites was considered. A suitability assessment was made of each site under the following headings:

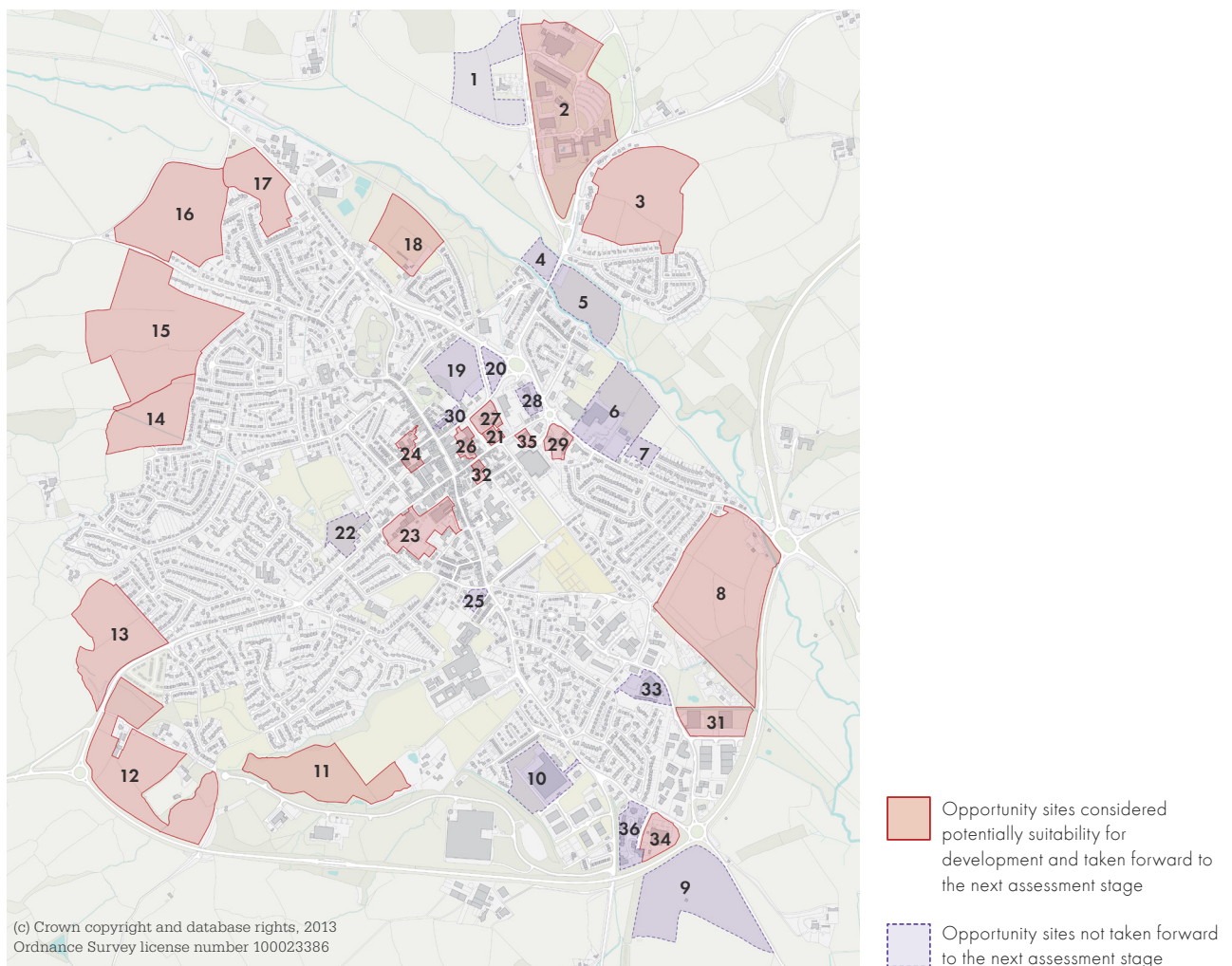
- Existing use;
- Planning issues;
- Planning issues assessment;
- Flooding;
- Property issues;
- Transport issues;
- Potentially suitable uses; and
- Overall assessment of suitability.

Informed by the town-wide policy, environmental and transport analysis undertaken together with high level consideration of the prevailing property market

issues associated with the opportunity sites across the town, an assessment was made of each site.

Sites considered suitable for development are taken through to subsequent stages of the opportunity sites assessment. However no further work is undertaken on sites identified as unsuitable for development at this initial stage. The plan below shows which sites have been excluded through the initial suitability assessment.

In advance of the assessment of individual site assessments and in light of the need to identify areas best suited to accommodating a significant period of growth in the town, each of Mold's key corridors were strategically assessed.



PART 3: SITE AVAILABILITY / MARKET TESTING

3.1 MARKET TESTING

The Strategic Opportunity Sites Study represents an ambitious programme which, if substantially implemented, will radically transform the town of Mold, with potential identified for over 1,500 new dwellings, a new civic hub and new retail and leisure outlets in the town centre.

The plans in this study are presented as statements of intent which will guide the overall development programme. More detailed masterplans and feasibility work will be required for individual proposals before they can be implemented and if these deviate somewhat from the overall framework, this will not invalidate the report.

The study team's approach is to ensure that market reality is at the forefront of our thinking when making recommendations for the sites. As such, we have discussed the sites and their potential delivery with a range of developers active in North Wales and the North West of England.

Developers were encouraged to make observations on viability and deliverability. Meetings were held with landowners, agents and developers to explore reactions to Mold and Flintshire as locations and to gauge the appetite of some of these companies to be considered as a potential development partner for the town centre scheme.

The list of developers consulted was as follows:

- Henry Boot Developments;
- Liberty Properties;
- Brookhouse Group;
- Muse Developments;
- Lucent Group;
- Himor Property Company;
- Simons Group;
- Mactaggart and Mickel;
- Hallam Land; and
- Maple Grove Developments.

In addition to these organisations, we have also spoken direct to Marstons plc and several foodstore operators, including Morrisons, Waitrose, M&S Simply Food and Booths.

As there are no firm plans in place for any of the sites, the comments on the various plots are non-attributed.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT INDUSTRY PERCEPTIONS OF MOLD

All of the companies consulted were positive about Mold's potential as a location for future development. It is seen as a traditional market town with a strong demographic. Mold is set in an attractive location, yet it is close to the strategic road network which gives easy access to major employment locations in Deeside, Wrexham, Chester and Merseyside.

The town centre is considered healthy, with few vacancies and a strong independent sector. There are some multiples, but it is considered that there is probably an under supply of modern stock suitable for the requirements of these corporate occupiers. The provision of such stock is an opportunity. In addition to some new modern shops, there is also the opportunity to introduce some leisure outlets, such as restaurants and family pubs to increase dwell time and further enhance Mold as a destination.

Mold is also seen as a good location for housing development and there is confidence that the provision of a range of housing types will be popular in the market. The expansion of the town's population will help to reinforce the demand for retail and leisure outlets in the town centre and help to reinforce the market for newcomers into the market.

Developers do not view Mold as a location for the development of large scale industrial or office development for private companies. There will be some demand from local SMEs, but there are large, well located strategic development sites elsewhere in Flintshire and provision for employment land should be concentrated there.

Included below is a short summary of the views recorded. It should be noted that these are market driven sentiments and do not take note of other factors which may render development inappropriate.

3.3 OPPORTUNITY SITES

Outlined below are property market-based assessments of the suitable opportunity sites. This is a combination of information provided by Flintshire County Council in their consultants' briefing and additional observations and intelligence gathered by the study team.



Opportunity Site 2: County Hall

Development issues:

This is a short - medium term opportunity. The Council need to vacate by end of 2015. The planning process is starting in summer 2013.

The existing, ageing complex will need significant refurbishment and upgrading in order for it to be reused. Alternatively if it is not viable or fit for purpose, demolition would be required. There exists the opportunity to provide some complementary uses with the theatre and law courts already on site. The size of the site and its sustainable accessibility provides the potential to create a sustainable mixed use development provided the scale of any retail and commercial elements do not detract from the town centre vitality and viability.

Market view:

Excellent residential site with good existing infrastructure and place making features (mature trees, views of town centre, Clwydian Hills). It is considered that this is likely to be developed as a mixture of family housing, possibly including some low density, high value housing with mixed use opportunities close to the theatre.



Opportunity Site 3: Land east of Rhyd-y-Galed Farm

Development issues:

This is a sloping site with few site conditions to concern development economics, but highways may be costly .

The site is bounded to the west by a small residential development Cwrt Rhyd Galed, on the site of a former farmhouse. Development of the site would represent a substantial encroachment into open countryside and, if not carefully handled, could harm the open character and appearance of a strategic Green Barrier between Mold and New Brighton.

Market view:

Rhyd y Galed is similar to the County Hall site and also attractive as a residential development site.



Opportunity Site 4: Land West of the Bridge Inn

Development issues:

The site provides an attractive landscape feature when approaching Mold from the north east and provides far reaching views down the valley to the north west. The development of this site would need to be assessed for flood risk and harm to the Green Barrier and landscape setting.



Opportunity Site 5: Rugby Pitch, Leadmill

Development issues:

The site is an existing sports pitch and key recreational facility for the community which provides an attractive landscape feature when approaching Mold from the north east and far reaching views down the valley to the north west. The development of this site would need to be assessed for flood risk and harm to the Green Barrier and landscape setting as well as the loss of the present recreational use.



Opportunity Site 6: Mold Rugby Club and Former Kwik Save Site

Development issues:

The cost implications for redevelopment are medium to high due to the cost of relocation and redeveloping the site should it not be attractive in its current form. The site is partly within the Town Centre Boundary in the UDP therefore the potential exists for complementary town centre uses.

Market view:

This is a high profile site on the edge of the town centre. It is a good retail location and is to be developed as a Sainsbury's food store.



Opportunity Site 7: Land adj. Wood Green off Chester Road

Development issues:

The site abuts the settlement boundary being bounded by frontage residential development along Chester Road to the south and partly by residential development on Wood Green to the east. Provision of an access may necessitate the removal of mature trees which are an attractive amenity feature. The site has no physical northern boundary, forming part of a larger agricultural field sloping down to the River Alyn. This field wraps around the western edge of the site, beyond which is the Mold Rugby Club Sports Ground.



Opportunity Site 8: Pen y Bont Farm

Development issues:

This would appear to be a viable site, although there have been some concerns stated over the stability of the land due to fault lines underneath. We are assured that these will not preclude development.

Market view:

Pen y Bont is a high profile site that fronts the bypass, providing good access into the town centre. Attractive mixed use development opportunity that would be attractive to a family pub/restaurant, gym, hotel etc. If the cattle market was to be relocated from the town centre, this is the logical place for it to go. Subject to planning, the site would also be very suitable for residential development and would be attractive to major house builders.



Opportunity Site 9: Pentrehobyn Estate

Development issues:

The site is located on the outer edge of the bypass and is outside the settlement boundary of the town. It currently has high voltage electricity pylons running across it which would need to be taken into account when planning any future site development. It is currently used for agricultural purposes and the site is undesignated, unallocated land within the open countryside where there are restrictions on built development. The site hosted the 2007 Eisteddfod and accommodated a range of events. The 2012 Feasibility Report into the Re-location Of Three Mold Sports Clubs indicates that sport and recreation use (i.e. development of outdoor pitches with associated built development to serve these) could be acceptable.



Opportunity Site 10: Broncoed Industrial Estate

Development issues:

Demolition and site clearance required. Proximity to industrial area inhibits the values that will be generated which therefore impacts on development economics. The site is adjacent to a Principal Employment Area and it was granted planning permission for housing in 2008 (045139) which has not been implemented.

Market view:

Whilst benefitting from planning consent, in reality this is a medium to long term opportunity. Market conditions are a major factor. The site is not attractive enough to generate interest in the current market. There are likely to be more attractive sites coming forward in the medium to long term.



Opportunity Site 11: Maes Gwern

Development issues:

This is a large vacant site towards the edge of Mold, allocated for high quality employment purposes although it suffers from poor highway access and an unadopted road. Access costs and some levelling work and flood alleviation are likely to be required, but these are not considered to impact significantly on viability.

Market view:

This is currently allocated as employment land, but there is no interest in the land for this use. There is a very slow take-up rate for industry and there is already over-provision in Mold. There are some access issues that need to be overcome, but this site would be attractive as a residential development site. Colliers International is aware of development interest in the site for residential use.



**Opportunity Site 12: Land south west of Mold/
Upper Bryn Coch**

Development issues:

This site is a prominent gateway site on the western side of Mold and, in principle, provides a site with defensible boundaries for further growth but any development will need to be sympathetic to the site and surrounding area and in particular the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

Market view:

The land owner, market appetite and the planning process are the constraints that make this a longer term opportunity. There are no major cost issues and reasonable values should be achieved. The adjacent site has been built recently and this is a logical extension to this scheme.



**Opportunity Site 13: Land to south east of Plas
Aney**

Development issues:

The site is bounded by estate type built development to the east, and by Ruthin Road to the south. The remaining boundaries feature hedgerows, beyond which are further agricultural fields. The site comprises two fields which slope generally upwards in a westerly direction. An assessment of the harm development would have on the strategic Green Barrier and open countryside would need to be undertaken at the early stages of any proposal.

Market view:

The site is in the Green Barrier designation and is open countryside which makes it a medium to long term opportunity. Its attractive location will appeal to residential developers, subject to market confidence.



Opportunity Site 14: Land to north of Queens Park, Hendy Road

Development issues:

This is a medium to long term opportunity. Flooding issues, the planning system and market confidence are all issues. A sizeable proportion of the central part of the site alongside the diagonal watercourse is within a Zone C2 (undefended) area of flood risk. It should prove viable if taken in conjunction with the larger growth area.



Opportunity Site 15: Land to west of Mold

Development issues:

This is a medium to long term opportunity. It is currently unallocated and there are highways issues to overcome. The site is bounded to the east and north east by residential development and agricultural land in all other directions. Achieving access to the site appears to be challenging. It is held in several ownerships. It is likely to require a developer to reach agreement with all the owners if development is to proceed.



Opportunity Site 16: Land at Factory Pool Lane

Development issues:

This is a long term opportunity with significant planning issues to overcome and market confidence issues, though there is known interest from land promoters. There do not appear to be any extraordinary costs in developing this site. Any development would have to be assessed to look at the harm posed to the character and appearance of open countryside.

Market view:

These sites form a logical growth area to the west of Mold. There are some access issues that need to be overcome, but this site would be attractive as a residential development opportunity. Colliers International is aware of market interest in this as a concept.



Opportunity Site 17: Land adj. to A541

Development issues:

This site consists, primarily, of farm land. A very small part of the site is identified as being at risk of flooding and experiences standing water during heavy rain. The site is owned by Synthite and the land owner is gearing up for representations/a planning application. It would seem that there are no major issues and development is likely to come forward in three to five years.



Opportunity Site 18: Mold Alexandra Football Club

Development issues:

The Football Club are on a rolling 6 month agreement with site owners Synthite. The club needs to be relocated before development can happen. But the site is considered likely to attract developer interest.

Major costs have already been dealt with. There should be no viability issues. The site is located alongside of the A541 Denbigh Road. It is bounded to the north by the tree lined trackbed of a former railway line, beyond which is agricultural land and the River Alyn. To the east is Maes y Dre, a former brownfield site, which has been developed by Morris Homes. To the west is an area of naturally regenerating land, beyond which is the Synthite works. To the south of the site is a small office building, and playing field/playground, set behind frontage residential development on Denbigh Road. The relocation of the football club remains the main

constraint on the development of the site. Flooding concerns should have been addressed by flood mitigation works associated with the adjacent Morris Homes development. Feasibility work has recently been undertaken on finding a suitable alternative site to relocate the football club to. Provided the football club can be relocated, this site is suitable for development.

Market View of sites 17 and 18

These sites are in (the same) private ownership and are likely to come forward as housing earlier than the sites to the west. The football club site is a logical extension of the existing popular scheme and would appear to be the most straight forward site that would come to the market earliest (subject to the requirement to relocate the club).



Opportunity Site 19: Alyn Meadow

Development issues:

The site is viewed as an attractive area of open land, which is important both in its own right and as a setting to St. Mary's Church. It provides an attractive break in the built up area at an important gateway into Mold, within a conservation area and forming part of the setting of a listed building.



Opportunity Site 20: Love Lane Car Park

Development issues:

This is a brownfield site comprising of an operational car park which is particularly busy during the fortnightly farmer's market, therefore the potential loss of car parking spaces would need to be fully assessed prior to any development proposals being considered.

Market view:

Love Lane has good road frontage, it is flat and in single ownership. This makes it an attractive retail development site and it would also be of interest to drive-through restaurants and possibly a gym operator. The site benefits from a direct connection to the Police Station site which may support the case for that being the site of a new Civic Hub.



Opportunity Site 21: Terrig House and Courthouse

Development issues:

Terrig House is not listed, but the adjacent Grade 2 listed Old County Hall building will mean high redevelopment costs will need to be absorbed by a wider scheme. The site is in a central location next to the bus station. The size of the site and the access to it may prove to be a constraint to its reuse or redevelopment.

Market view:

If it is to be developed as part of a public sector hub, consultation would indicate that there will be considerable interest in being a development partner to Flintshire County Council. The development of a public sector hub will be very significant to the town centre. It will add considerable spending power into the town which will enhance the attractiveness of the town for additional retail and leisure development. Some retail and a town centre hotel and restaurant would possibly be part of the mix.



Opportunity Site 22: Kendrick's Field

Development issues:

Not a development site. There may be landscaping and infrastructure costs to service the site for events. This is an important recreation space which is well related to Maes Bodlonfa town park. A complementary use on the park will enhance the recreational uses on the adjacent area and support the town's wider recreation/leisure offer. The site has the potential to be used as an events ground as made evident by the 2012 'Y Fin' music festival being held there. The site's potential as an events ground was explored in the Mold Sense of Place Study (2010) where following a comprehensive review of shortlisted sites and Kendrick's Field was selected as the preferred location for the Mold Events Ground.



Opportunity Site 23: New Street Car Park

Development issues:

The site is within the Town Centre Boundary in the UDP which seeks to maintain and enhance the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the town centre. The site comprises a public car park, a building merchant site and supermarket. The car park is used to host the Mold Food Festival, a function which has proved successful, therefore its loss to another use would need to be considered in that context along with its role as one of the town's main car parks.

Market view:

The Travis Perkins site is a good food retail location and there have been pro-active approaches from developers looking to secure the site. The car park would also be of interest if it was to come to the market.



Opportunity Site 24: Daniel Owen Square, Library, Post Office and Car Park (Back of Hammersleys)

Development issues:

The whole site is within the town centre boundary but only the southern portion is within the core retail area in the UDP. For Daniel Owen Square the Mold Sense of Place Study (2010) recommended the development of a feasibility proposal for the Square to increase space for events, specialist markets and greater community use. A study looking at design solutions for the Square is currently being undertaken. The need for a cash incentive to encourage the Royal Mail to leave would appear to render this site undeliverable in the medium term. Whitley Properties will also need to be engaged.

Market view:

If the Post Office and Royal Mail depot were to relocate, this could become a reasonably attractive development site, though there are better locations elsewhere in the town centre. The public realm improvements and redesign of the square will enhance the general feel of the town.



Opportunity Site 26: Cattle Market

Development issues:

The site is bounded to the west by the High Street shops and to the east by the bus station. The possibility of redeveloping the site has been under consideration for some time. Fundamental to this opportunity site realising its true potential is the selection of a suitable alternative site for the market to relocate to. A 1989 commercial and financial study of the site considered four economic scenarios. Relocation was considered to be the only means by which the long term future of the market could be maintained. The land owner does not want to move, and will only consider offers if somebody provides an alternative site and builds a new market.

This is a medium term opportunity. It would be costly to relocate business and any financial package may require subsidy from Welsh Government in addition to discounted land value.

The council is unlikely to acquire and as such, it would need to be developer led. We are aware of developer interest, but this would be dependent on occupiers. It would seem an ideal site for foodstore linking in to the town centre.

Market view:

A long-established use that may prove difficult to move; but if it can be, this would be the logical location for new retail. This may be a food retail store with a higher value offer (Waitrose, Booths, M&S Simply Food) and the appeal of the site for this use can only be enhanced by the presence of the Public Sector Hub building and the growth of the wider town.



Opportunity Site 27: Police Station

Development issues:

North Wales Police are to vacate the site by 2015. The Police are keen to work with FCC on masterplanning and future disposal. Colliers International are confident of development partner interest in bringing the site forward for suitable development. A viable scheme can be developed over a wider area which combines this land and Terrig House. Likely to be a mixed-use scheme incorporating higher value uses. The existing access may be problematic should the use of the site alter. Although the Police Force have indicated this site is surplus to requirements the relocation of any necessary police functions will be key to this site coming forward for another use.

Market view:

The site would appear to be ideal as a location for Flintshire County Council's town centre presence and this use would be ideal as one of the anchor tenants of a future scheme.



Opportunity Site 28: Fire Station and Ambulance Station

Development issues:

Although within the Town Centre Boundary in the UDP this site is just to the east of the town centre and a fairly short walking distance from the Core Retail Area. The Ambulance Service has declared this site surplus to requirements and will be operating from Dobshill in the future. The Fire Service would also need to relocate in order to create a viable site for redevelopment. Mold Fire Station is a retained station and it must remain in the town centre so that its fire fighters, some of whom are part time, can reach the station quickly. There are no plans in the Fires Services' capital programme to relocate for at least five years. Equivalent replacement costs are circa £2.5 million.

Market view:

These sites are in a high profile location on the edge of the town centre. They are flat, easy to develop sites in public ownership. The ambulance station site would be suitable for retail uses, as exemplified by its purchase for future development as a Farmfoods store. If it was to be available, the Fire Station would also attract similar retail and roadside uses.



Opportunity Site 29: South of Chester Road (Commercial Allocation)

Development issues:

Although within the Town Centre Boundary in the UDP, the site is to the east of the Core Retail Area and sits in a prominent position near the junction of the A541 and A5119. The site is appropriate for commercial development given its location relative to the town centre. It will increase the commercial provision within the town whilst helping to stem the loss of expenditure to out of town shopping centres. However the size of the site and its proximity to Tesco and other retailers may be factors which are currently preventing its development.

There is a very complex land ownership situation with interests held by Somerfield (R.Griffiths strip), Scottish Power, Tesco, Scottish Power (sub-station), Lesley Ray Mulliner t/a Crown Fuels, Sainsbury's - option on Mold Builders' Merchants. It would be very expensive to acquire the ransom strips and the electricity sub-stations. It will need to be private sector led for a high value use.

Market view:

The site south of Chester Road has a high profile location on the edge of the town centre and at the front of the Tesco access road. If it was to be available and deliverable, there would be strong interest in the site.



Opportunity Site 30: Territorial Army and King Street Car Park

Development issues:

The site is in the ownership of Flintshire County Council and Territorial Army. The site performs an important and strategic public parking role in Mold.

Part of this site forms a key town centre car park therefore the development of this site would need to be justified as part of a wider review of town centre car parking and have regard to the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings.

Market view:

This is a town centre site that is flat and does not have complex land ownership. Whilst there is no immediate interest in developing the site; if the public sector hub building comes forward, this site will immediately become more attractive for development and there may be pressure on its current role as a car park.



Opportunity Site 31: Stephen Gray Road, Bromfield Industrial Estate

Development issues:

The site is within an established industrial area designated as a Principal Employment Area in the UDP. A high voltage main electricity cable runs north-south through the site. The site is generally low and falls within Flood Zone C2.

Market view:

There will be very limited interest in this site.



Opportunity Site 32: Telephone Exchange

Development issues:

This opportunity site comprises a 3/4 storey building and associated parking space. The building has an unattractive frontage and detracts from the character of the Mold Conservation Area. Given its location the site could offer a potential use that would contribute to the existing town centre offer whilst improving the site's appearance.

This is a long term opportunity. BT Property has a 10 year lease from 19.04.11 to Arqiva Services Ltd. Telereal Securitised Property. Therefore acquisition is likely to be expensive and complicated. This would need to be private sector led.

Market view:

If it becomes available, this will be a very attractive mixed-use town centre site. Even without a redeveloped hub building, it would generate interest for retail, leisure and residential uses.



Opportunity Site 33: Bromfield Timber

Development issues:

This brownfield site within an established industrial area lies vacant and underused but has the benefit of planning permission (034920 and 047039) for 122 dwellings (comprising 14 houses and 108 apartments) which was granted in 2010.

Market view:

This is not an attractive residential site. Even in an improving market, it is hard to see this situation changing and it is likely that much more attractive sites will come forward in the short to medium term.



Opportunity Site 34: North Wales Newspaper

Development issues:

The operational printing and distribution site at North Wales Newspaper sits in a prominent location adjacent to the A494(T) bypass and could provide an attractive site for other uses; although it sits partly within an area of flood risk. Whilst the principle of redeveloping brownfield land is looked upon favourably any proposals would need to satisfy UDP policy EM6 which seeks to protect employment land from other uses.

Market view:

If North Wales Newspapers was to relocate, it is likely that the site would be redeveloped for employment uses, perhaps as a small office development. It also has potential as a location for a hotel, though there is competition from several other locations in the town.



Opportunity Site 35: Mold Tyres/Harley's Garage

Development issues:

This is a medium to long term opportunity with potential scope for roadside/drive through uses. Potential contamination, land acquisition premiums and changes in level means that higher value uses will be necessary for viable development. There are other more attractive sites available or likely to come forward in the medium term.

Market view:

The site is well located and has good road frontage, but there are complications with the levels and it would appear that there will be contamination issues. Land assembly is also likely to be problematic. Retail and roadside uses could be accommodated if the land is unencumbered.

3.4 MARKET TESTING AND SITE AVAILABILITY OVERVIEW



Opportunity Site 36: Mold Business Park

Development issues:

The site is an existing business park which is designated as a Principal Employment Area in the UDP. The site is a prominent one as it is situated near one of the main gateways into Mold and shares an access off Wrexham Road with the adjacent North Wales Newspaper site. Whilst the principal of redeveloping brownfield sites is looked upon favourably any proposals would need to satisfy policy EM6 - Protection of Employment Land.

Market view:

This is an attractive site and would be viewed in very similar terms to North Wales Newspapers. We would recommend that this site remains as a business park and it is Colliers International's opinion that this use should be retained even if current occupiers depart. The site is ideal for local SMEs.

Mold is viewed in a positive light by the developers we have consulted. This confidence is underpinned by the town's good demographics and attractive, but accessible, location. In demand terms, there is most confidence in the residential sector; but there is also a feeling from the developers that the town centre retail (and leisure) offer could be enhanced. The towns of Formby, Heswall and Knutsford have all been suggested as comparators. The cattle market and New Street Car Park are the most attractive locations for the development of new retail units.

Whilst there is little appetite for office development in the town, the presence of a public sector hub building anchored by Flintshire County Council would be of great interest to developers and there would be strong interest in being a development partner if that was the route that FCC wish to take. There would be considerable additional benefits to the town centre market if this development was to happen and this would stimulate new activity.

There is little interest in speculative office and industrial development in Mold. The town already has an adequate supply of land for these uses and no additional sites need to be allocated for employment.

PART 4: SITE VIABILITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The site viability stage of the assessment is a technical stage centred on the preparation of masterplan options for the sites to enable a view to be taken on their respective development capacity. Each site is then allocated one of three – short, medium or long term – development phases and the development capacity information plugged into a traffic model of the town. The traffic model is run under three scenarios to obtain a strategic view on the traffic impact of the collective development of the opportunity sites. The scenarios relate to the three composite phases of development.

4.2 DEVELOPMENT VIABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Development viability issues have been taken into account in the preparation of the masterplan capacity studies. Views on the property market issues associated with each suitable opportunity site are included in Section 3 above.

4.3 DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS - SITE CAPACITIES

Masterplan options have been prepared for all the suitable strategic development sites and are presented on the following pages within this section. Informed by an appreciation of the prevailing property market conditions, transport and movement issues and the environmental analysis undertaken together with an appreciation of the emerging longer term aspirations for the town, the masterplan options seek to respond positively to each site's environmental assets and conditions.

On some of the larger sites, a development framework plan has been prepared which identifies the key principles underpinning the preparation of masterplan options.

SITE 2

EXISTING SITE

The site contains a number of existing civic buildings within an attractive hillside landscape setting, with the ground sloping up moving northwards.

The existing buildings, numerically referenced on the adjacent plan, are:

1. Clwyd Theatr Cymru;
2. Decked car park;
3. Flintshire library;
4. Llwnegrin Hall;
5. Law Courts; and
6. Council offices.



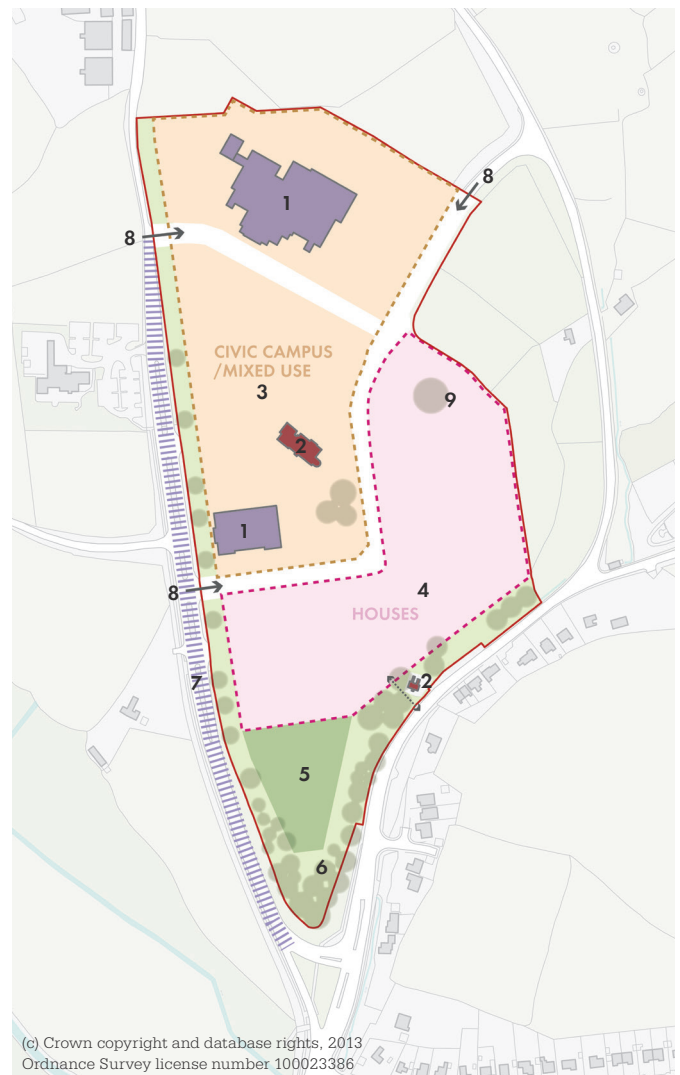
Site 2 - Existing site plan



SITE FRAMEWORK

The civic nature of the site is retained within a consolidated area allowing for the introduction of residential development on part of the site. Key parameters are:

1. Clwyd Theatr Cymru and the law courts to be retained;
2. Listed buildings to be retained but with potential for new uses;
3. Civic campus consolidated within the area between the theatre and law courts. This area benefits from direct access from Raikes Lane and is given extra prominence as the site slopes up to the theatre;
4. New residential development of family houses. This part of the site is seen as suitable for residential development with the potential to form a coherent residential area with an attractive landscape setting;
5. Open space preserved to provide amenity and in recognition of its UDP designation;
6. Landscape edge treatment of the site, including all mature trees, to be retained to minimise impact of new development to views from the A5119 when approaching and leaving Mold town centre;
7. Green character of Raikes Lane to be preserved as a formal civic boulevard;
8. Existing entry points utilised for future development;
9. Mature trees should be preserved wherever possible, with design proposals informed by a recent tree survey.



Site 2 - Framework plan

In addition, any development proposals should seek to utilise the gradient of the site to provide long views across the valley and concealed undercroft parking (if suitable) for buildings with sufficiently large footprints.

SITE LAYOUT - OPTION 1

Option 1 includes a new civic hub, a hotel and a commercial leisure building alongside the Clwyd Theatr Cymru and the law courts within the civic campus. The site layout would deliver the following new development:

- **Civic hub** - 1,850m² building footprint;
- **Hotel** - 850m² building footprint (c.85 rooms over 3 floors);
- **Commercial leisure** - 1,850m² building footprint; and
- **Houses** - 96 family homes.



Site 2 - layout option 1

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Retained civic use | New hotel |
| Retained listed building | New commercial leisure |
| New civic hub | New residential |

SITE LAYOUT - OPTION 2

Option 2 does not include any new civic or commercial uses, but instead accommodates a larger number of homes. This option would require less visitor parking for the civic campus with parking need primarily focused at the theatre. The following new development would be delivered:

- **Apartments** - 2,500m² building footprint (c.80 apartments over 3 floors); and
- **Houses** - 124 family homes.



Site 2 - layout option 2

- Retained civic use
- Retained listed building
- New residential

SITE 3

EXISTING SITE

The site is an open field to the rear of houses on the A5119 and Bryn Awelon. The site slopes up to a mound on the northern part of the site.

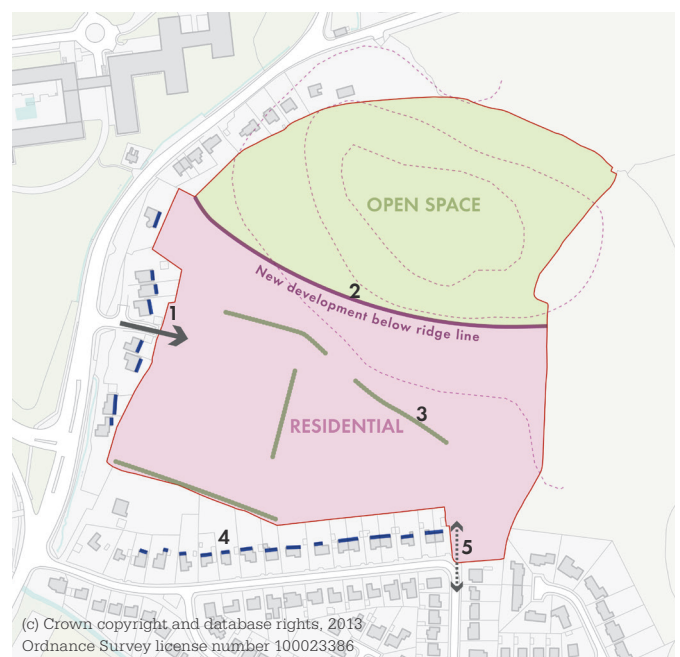


Site 3 - Existing site plan

SITE FRAMEWORK

The lower part of the site is viewed as potentially suitable for residential development, with any new homes built below the ridge line of the hill to minimise the impact of new development to views from the A5119. The key parameters of the framework are:

1. Existing access from the A5119 extended into the site;
2. Indicative line that new development should not cross in order to remain unseen from the A5119;
3. Existing hedgerows which should be preserved if possible;
4. Existing 'backs' should be respected, with a 'back-to-back' arrangement in any new scheme; and
5. Opportunity for a walking connection to Bryn Awelon.



Site 3 - Framework plan

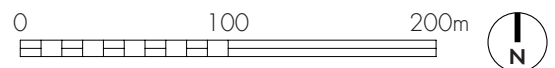
SITE LAYOUT

The site layout shows the site developed for family homes, with hedgerows preserved and houses kept below the ridge line.

116 houses would be delivered by this layout.



Site 3 - layout plan

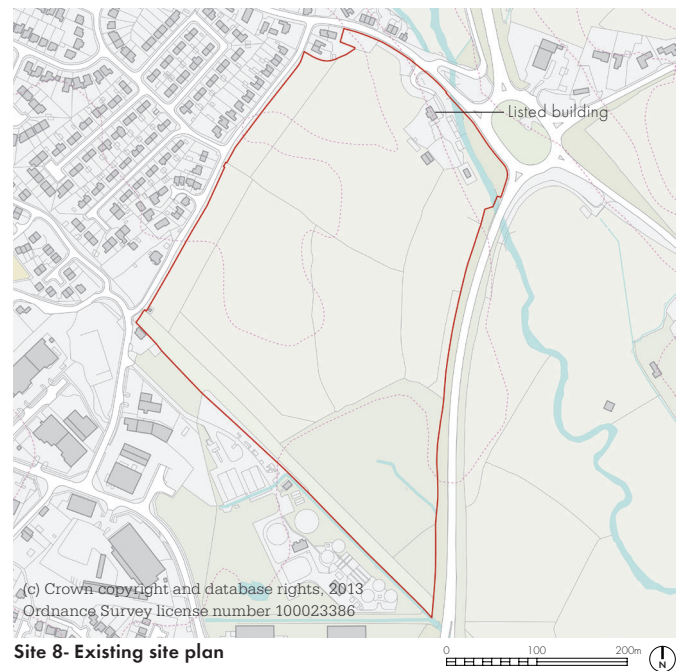


SITE 8

EXISTING SITE

The site comprises a number of fields at the edge of the town. It provides open views across fields when entering the town on the A541. The site is also easily accessible from the junction of the A494, A541 and A549.

There is an abandoned farmhouse towards the north-eastern corner of the site which is a listed building.

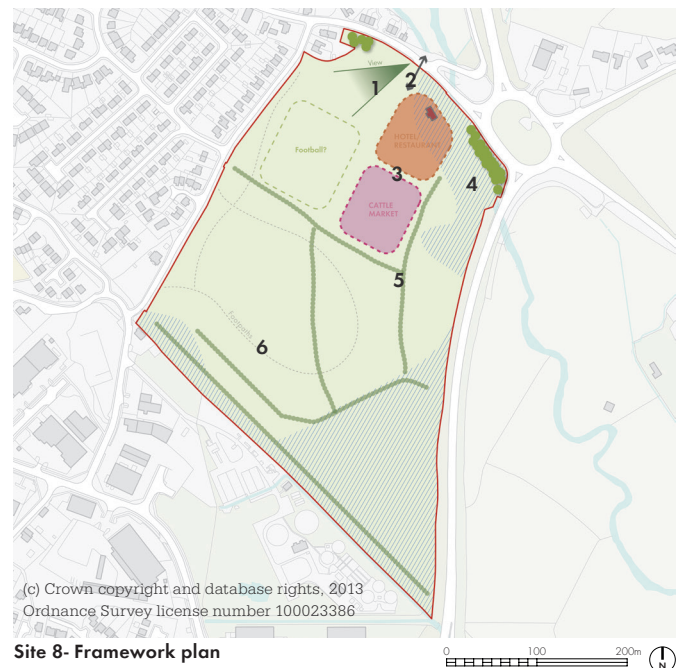


Site 8- Existing site plan

SITE FRAMEWORK

The framework preserves the open character of most of the site whilst providing a new home for an expanded cattle market and a hotel and restaurant associated with the existing listed building. Key parameters are:

1. Open views maintained when entering Mold;
2. Existing access point utilised for new development;
3. Hotel closer to the main junction with the cattle market to the rear. The hotel has opportunity to utilise existing listed buildings, open space and existing vegetation as part of its gardens;
4. Limited new development within the floodplain;
5. Hedgerows to be preserved; and
6. Public access to the open space to be preserved and enhanced.



Site 8- Framework plan

SITE LAYOUT

The layout provides opportunity for the hotel to have a strong relationship with the existing listed building which would be extended to form a restaurant. The cattle market in Ruthin has been used as a precedent for the size shown in the layout. Building areas are:

- **Cattle market** - 4,600m²;
- **Hotel** - 915m² building footprint (c.91 rooms over 3 floors);
- **Restaurant** - 210m².



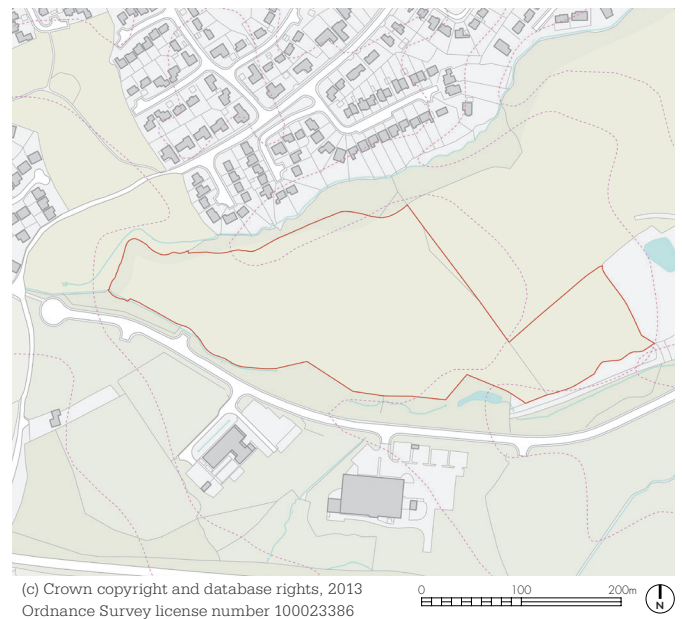
Site 8 - layout plan



SITE 11

EXISTING SITE

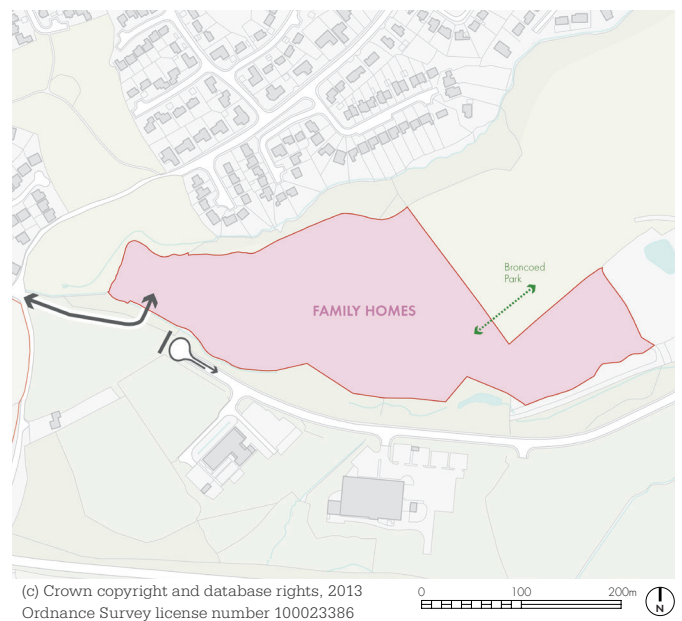
This large site at the southern edge of the town is within the Mold urban area and is presently allocated for employment uses. Broncoed Park is immediately adjacent to the north-east of the site with the Alun High School and Mold Leisure Centre complex beyond. This relatively steeply sloping site is encircled with belts of mature trees which are on land allocated as Green Space. The minor watercourse running through site will need consideration.



Site 11 - Existing site plan

SITE FRAMEWORK

Subject to the re-allocation of the site through the Local Plan review on the basis that the land is not required for employment purposes, the surrounding amenities and high quality landscape features give rise to the potential for residential development. The site has a range of potential access points including Maes Gwern to the south which has been designed to service the adjacent employment sites and, potentially Upper Bryn Coch if a new link can be provided via an adjacent housing development site.



Site 11 - Framework plan

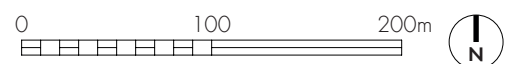
SITE LAYOUT

The surrounding belts of mature trees encircling the site raise the potential for a new, secluded, residential environment, with all streets fronted by new houses. Access is an issue and will preferably be from the west via Upper Bryn Coch where there are established residential communities.

- 147 homes



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Site 11 - layout plan

SITE 12

EXISTING SITE

On the western side of Mold in the open countryside. The site falls within the Green Barrier designation. Landscape quality in this part of the town is high with good views north, west and south. Good access to the road network is provided by the nearby A494.



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Site 12 - Existing site plan

SITE FRAMEWORK

As part of the Green Barrier, the open character of this location is important as are the associated long views across the site. Parts of the site are divided by established hedgerows which should be retained and the former prisoner's gatehouse and governor's residence forms a collection of listed buildings, the built and landscape setting of which should be protected. Access to the different parts of the site is most appropriately taken off Upper Bryn Coch.



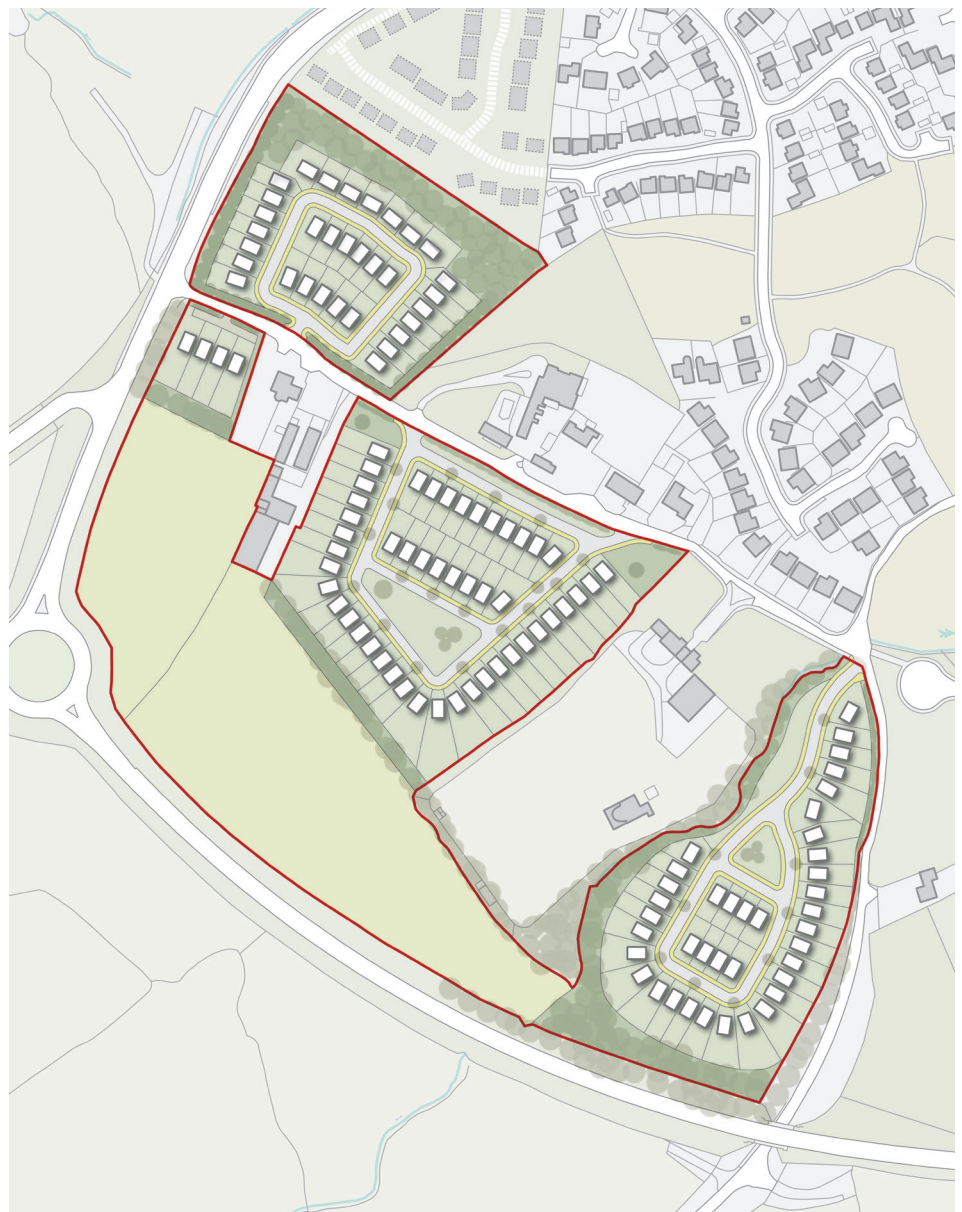
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Site 12 - Framework plan

SITE LAYOUT

Each discrete part of the site offers the potential for new housing development. New development should address Upper Bryn Coch which provides the principal point of access to the sites. With limited opportunities to link these sites, they provide the opportunity for high quality housing enclaves of a scale and density appropriate for this rural location with the opportunity for the provision of on-site public open space as part of the development parcels. The site's heritage assets and mature landscape features should be retained. Land to the south should be left undeveloped so views across the site are maintained which will help retain part of the site's rural character.

- 123 homes



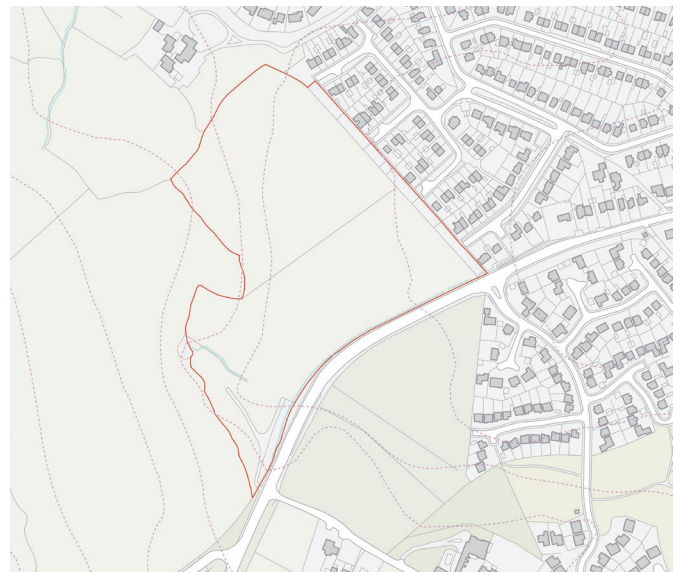
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Site 12 - layout plan

SITE 13

EXISTING SITE

The site abuts the south western edge of the town. The site is bounded housing estates to the east, and by Ruthin Road to the south. The remaining boundaries feature hedgerows, beyond which are further agricultural fields. The site comprises two fields which slope upwards in a westerly direction.



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Site 13 - Existing site plan

SITE FRAMEWORK

Falling within the Green Barrier, the key issue associated with the potential redevelopment of the site will be the impact new development has on the character of the open countryside. However, with potentially good quality vehicular access via Ruthin Road and with the site opposite having already been developed for housing, this site presents a logical extension to the urban area. Creating good quality street frontage along Ruthin Road is important, as will be retaining mature and structural landscape features. The form of existing residential neighbourhood to the east, along Lon-Y-Berth, provides the opportunity to properly integrate new development with established residential communities.



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Site 13 - Framework plan

SITE LAYOUT

A strong street edge is created along Ruthin Road with a regular street pattern on the main body of the site. The routes are aligned with the adjacent streets, creating the opportunity for pedestrian routes to be created to integrate new development with the town. Mature landscape features are retained and the site has the potential to deliver public amenity space in this site which currently lies beyond the town's urban edge.

- 126 homes



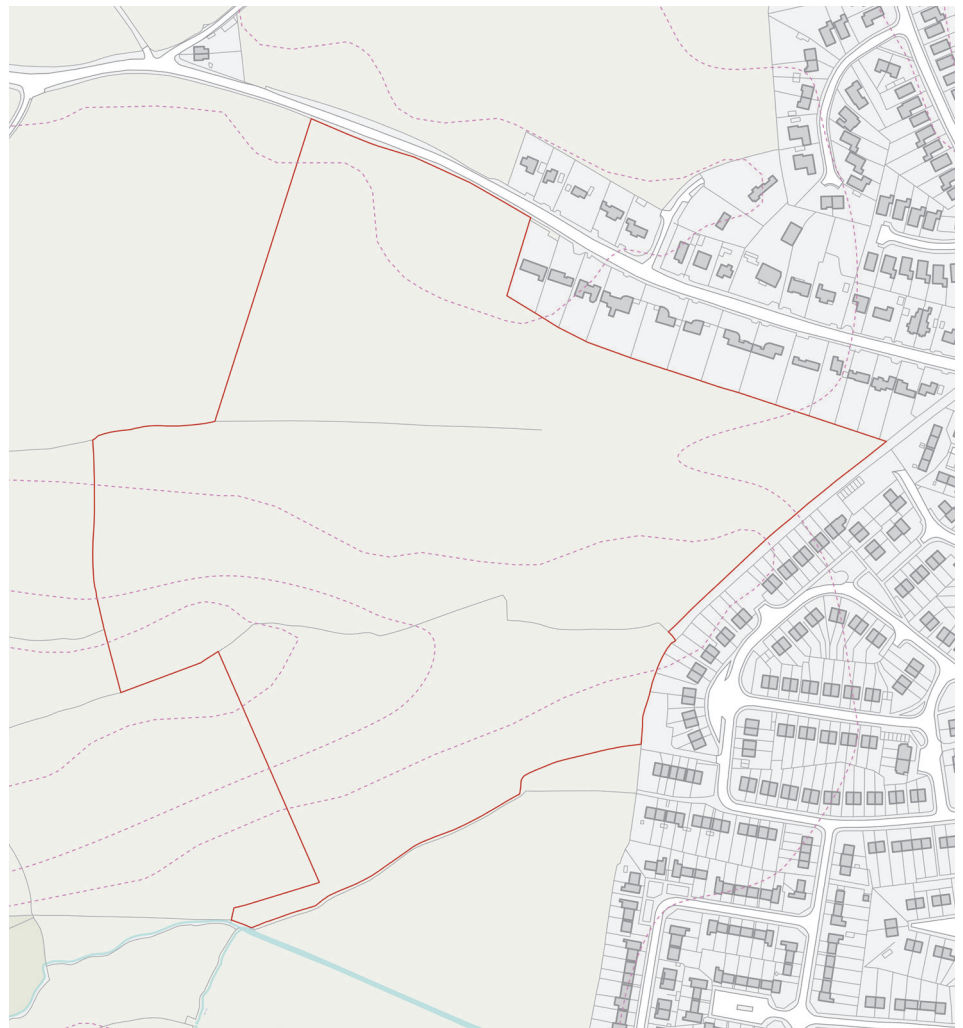
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Site 13 - layout plan

SITE 15

EXISTING SITE

The site lies on the western edge of Mold, south of the Gwernaffield Road. The site is bounded to the east and north east by residential development and agricultural land in all other directions. The site is not constrained by Green Barrier designations. This large site is potentially accessed directly off Gwernaffield Road which provides a direct connection to Mold's High Street.



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Site 15 - existing

SITE LAYOUT

Two options have been considered – one of which seeks to limit the scale and extent of new development at this urban threshold, the other which explores the capacity of the site if comprehensively developed. Principal vehicular access can be taken off Gwernaffield Road with the new houses responding to the existing houses with large rear gardens along Gwernaffield Road. There is scope to connect to Hawthorn Avenue if any play space lost is appropriately reprovided. On the initial option, the new urban edge should be well landscaped.

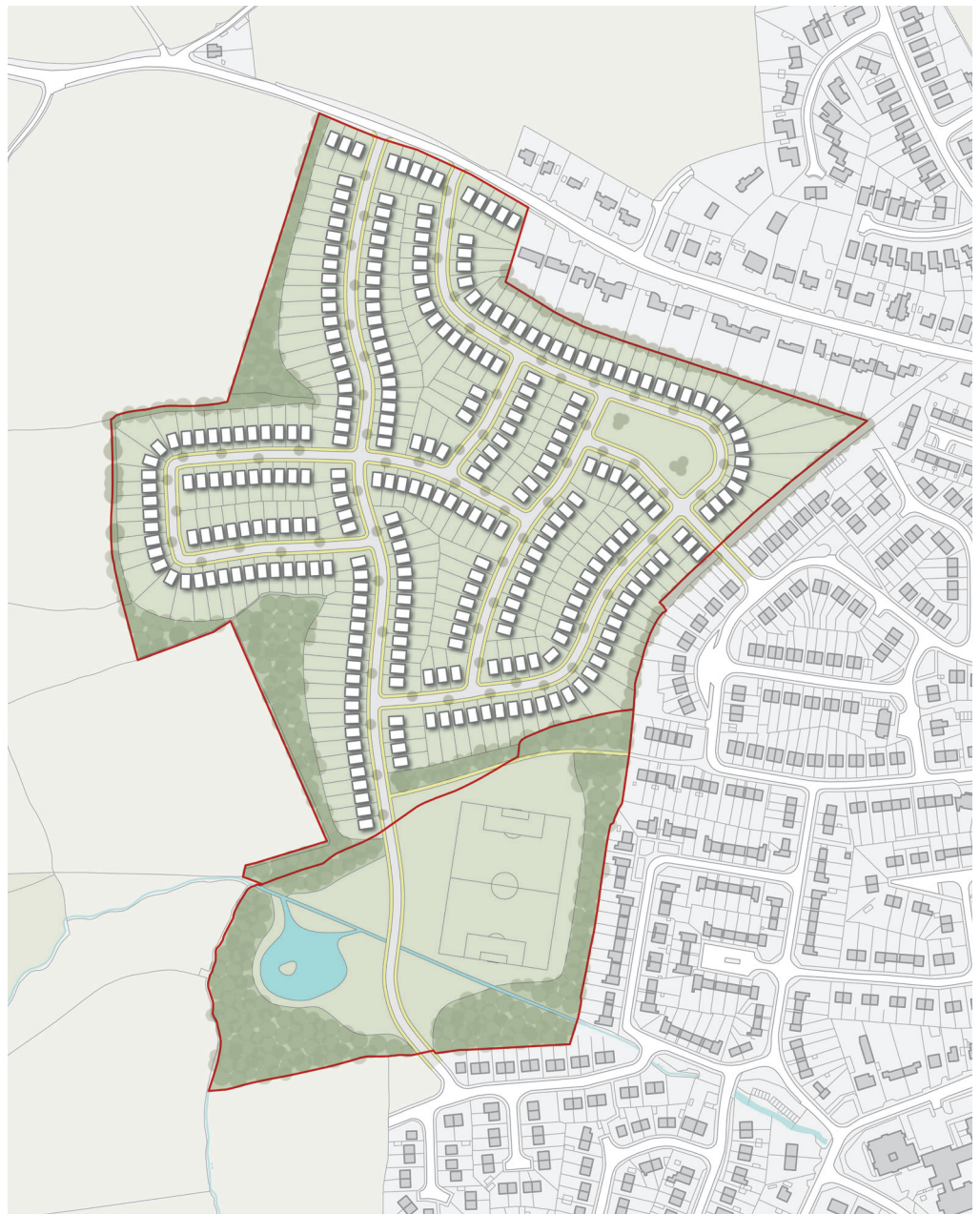
The second option would enable a more permeable network of streets and routes to be created, with a possibility of a north-south through route being created which could connect Gwernaffield Road with Cilnant. Land to the south, liable to flood, could provide formal recreation space.

- 157 homes

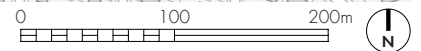


SITE LAYOUT

- 305 homes



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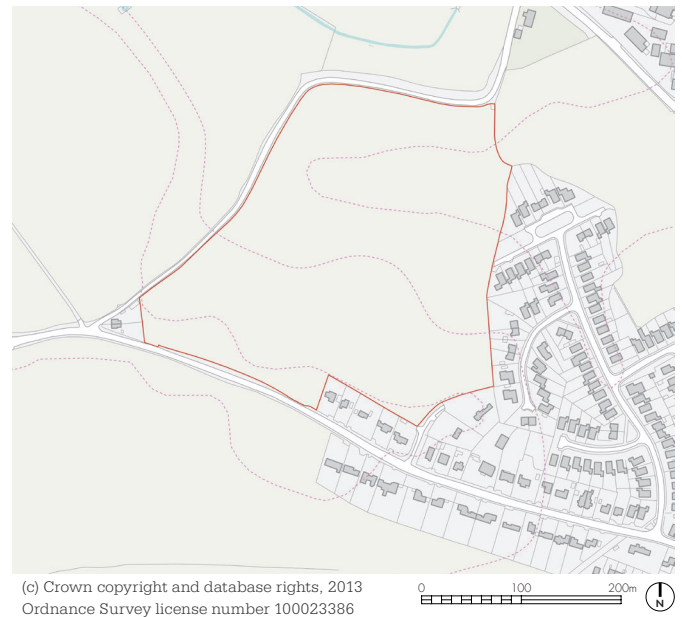


Site 15 - site layout option 2

SITE 16

EXISTING SITE

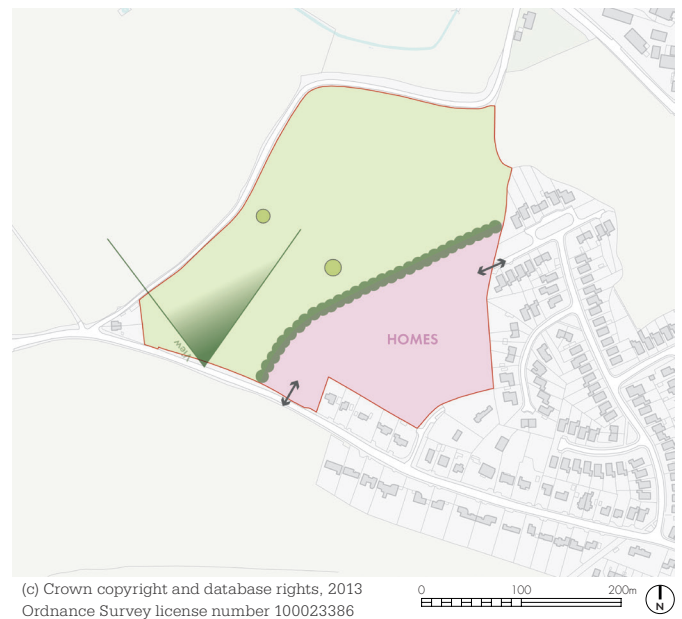
The site lies on the north western fringe of Mold in the open countryside. The site is bounded to the west and north by Factory Pool Lane which is a narrow hedge-lined public highway. To the east the site is partly bounded by housing estates and to the south partly by a ribbon of residential development on the north side of Gwernaffield Road. The site comprises a single field and is relatively flat.



Site 16 - Existing site plan

SITE FRAMEWORK

The south-east of the site is the most appropriate location for new development, with Meadowside to the east providing a logical alignment for the extent of development assuming some land is to remain undeveloped. This option also protects the setting of the attractive Groes Onnen Cottages. The new built edge to the site should be well landscaped.



Site 16 - Framework plan

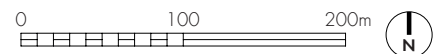
SITE LAYOUT

Two variant options can be considered. The principal access is taken from Gwernaffield Road. New back gardens will back on to existing back gardens along Gwernaffield Road and Beechwood Close. No access is taken from the minor Factory Pool Lane. Internal road alignment should provide the opportunity of direct connections with adjacent potential development sites. Mature trees are retained.

- 65 homes



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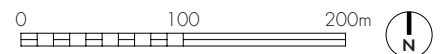
Site 16 - layout plan option 1

SITE LAYOUT

- 205 homes



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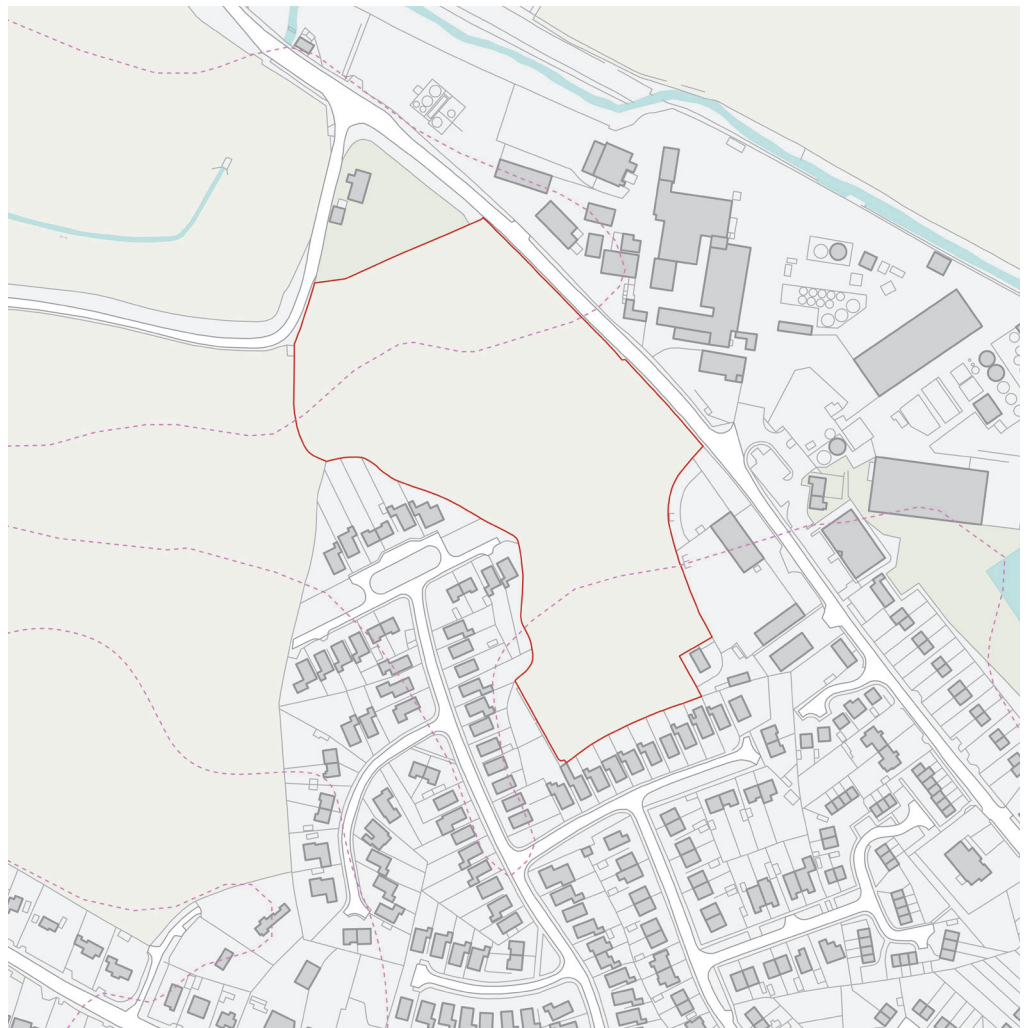


Site 16 - layout plan option 2

SITE 17

EXISTING SITE

The site lies on the north western side of Mold, with frontage along Denbigh Road. There are some mature landscape features at the site's boundaries. Existing development at the corner of Denbigh Road and Factory Pool Lane should be retained and its amenity protected.



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Site 17 - existing

SITE LAYOUT

The layout is driven by the alignment of Meadowside to the west, with an access road connecting this street with Denbigh Road. New houses can be accommodated at the south which back on to surrounding back gardens. New dwellings should address Denbigh Road. Existing development at the corner of Denbigh Road and Factory Pool Lane should be retained and its amenity protected.

- 34 homes



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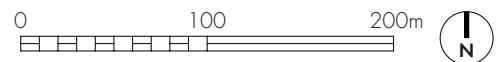
Site 17 - layout plan option 1

SITE LAYOUT

- 85 homes



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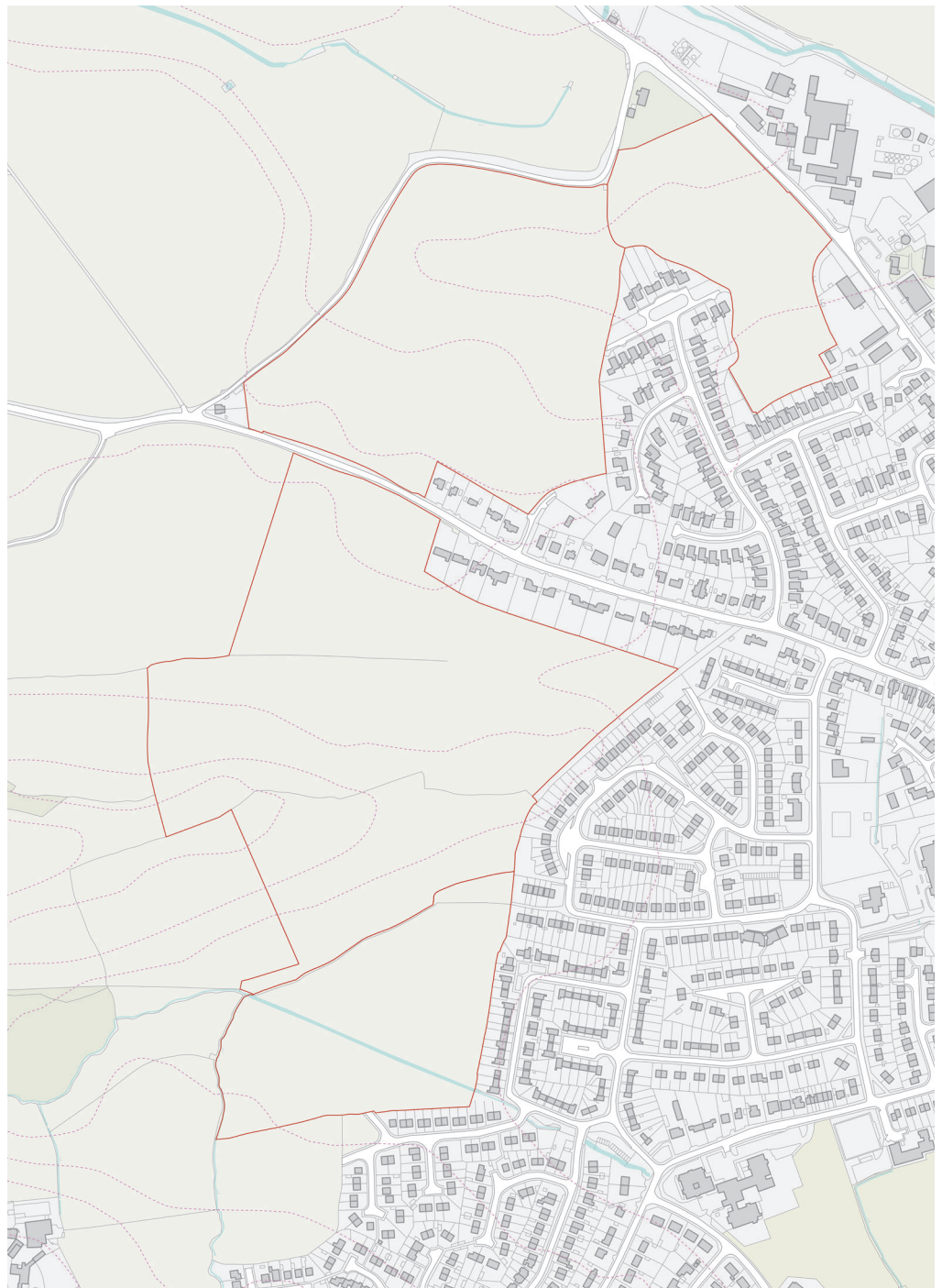


Site 17 - layout plan option 2

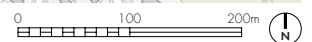
NORTHWEST EXTENSION

EXISTING SITES

Collectively sites 14, 15, 16 and 17 represent a significant opportunity for an urban extension to the northwest of Mold. The options for these sites are presented together on the following two pages.

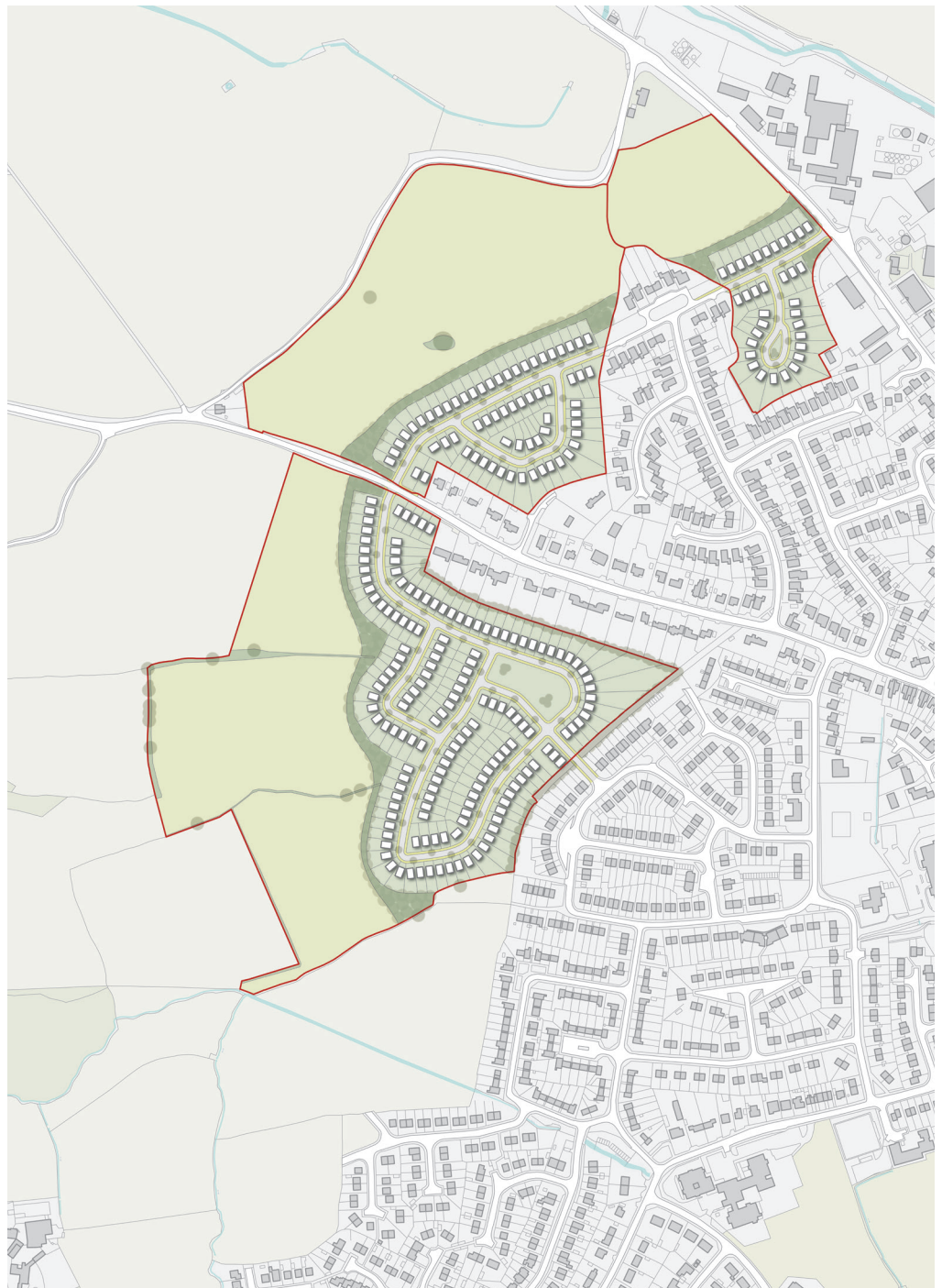


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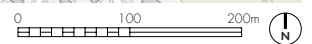


OPTION 1

- 256 homes

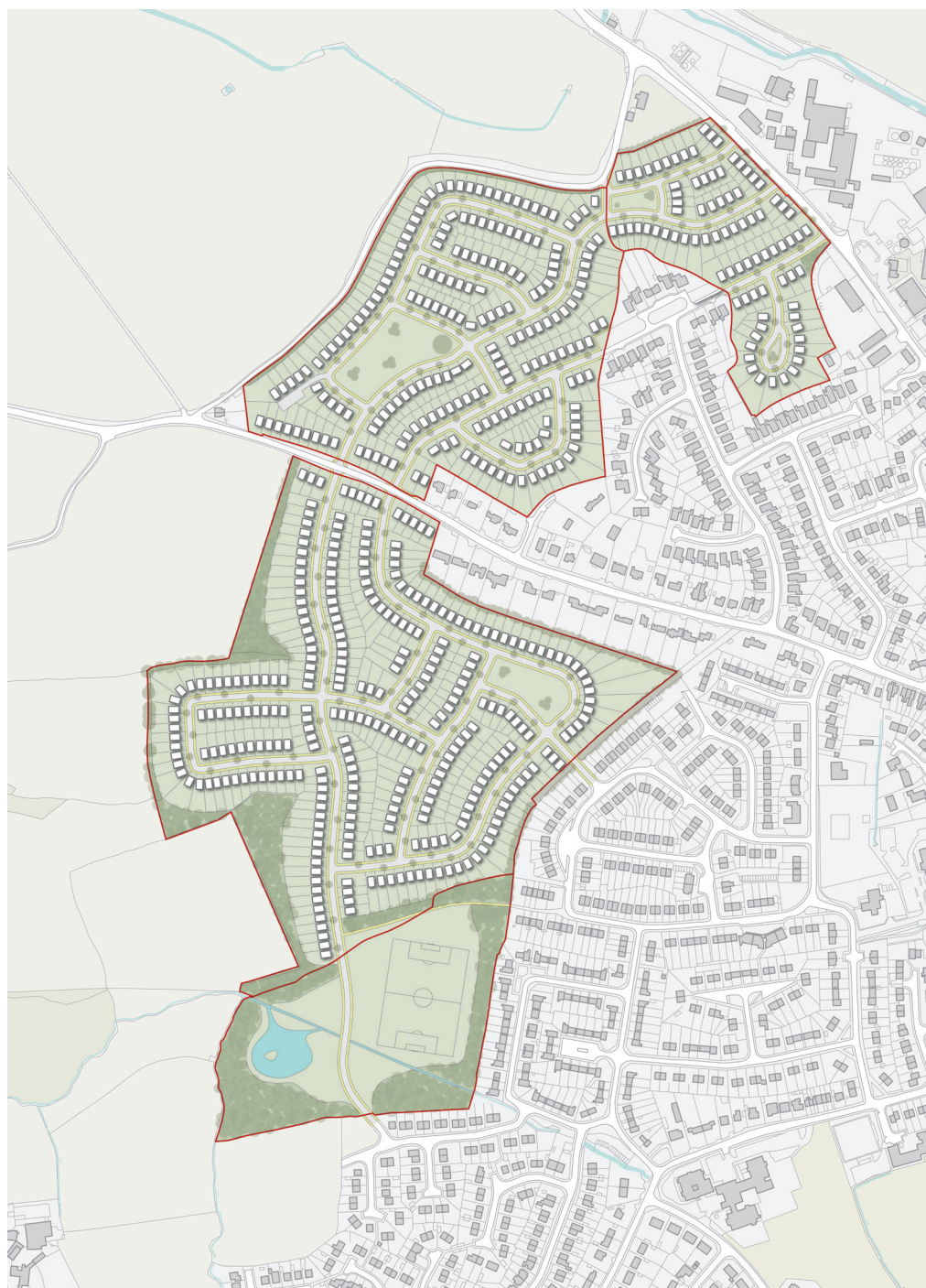


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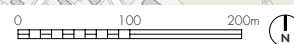


OPTION 2

- 595 homes



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SITE 18

EXISTING SITE

Site of Mold Football Club, located alongside the A541 Denbigh Road. Access to the site is from a relatively steep lane from Denbigh Road. Adjacent land to the south-east has recently been developed for housing. Relocation of the football pitch is a prerequisite of the site coming forward for development (see Appendix 3 for consideration of a range of alternative locations for the football pitch).



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Site 18 - existing

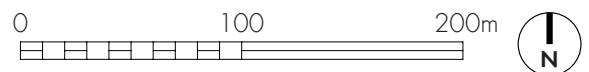
SITE LAYOUT

Housing layout should be a logical extension of the adjacent Morris Homes site. Access to surrounding pedestrian lanes and routes should be maintained.

- 92 homes



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Site 18 - layout plan

SITES 21, 22, 26 AND 32

EXISTING SITES

Sites 21 and 22, Terrig House (and listed courthouse) and the police station border each other and are effectively treated as a single site. There is a significant drop across the site towards the old railway lines, this is currently utilised to provide decked car parking for the police station.

Site 26, the existing cattle market, is extended to incorporate the empty sites on Earl Road. It is also extended to the south east to include the bus station within a second option for the site. These additions are indicated through the dotted lines on the adjacent plan.

Site 32 is the British Telecoms building with potential for frontage to Chester Street and King Street.



Site 21, 22, 26 and 32 - existing

SITES FRAMEWORK

A retail-led redevelopment of the cattle market is shown with the following features:

1. An anchor store located on the northern part of the site;
2. Active town centre frontage to existing roads;
3. A central public space; and
4. New walkways through the site facing and lined by new retail frontage.

The police station and Terrig House are shown as the new location for a relocated civic centre, with the following features:

5. A central public space and walking route with the listed courthouse as a central feature. The walking route would link to the new retail at the cattle market if both sites were redeveloped;
6. A public entrance facing the bus station which would also provide access into the retained Terrig House;
7. The slope of the site utilised, as per the existing police station, to provide decked car parking; and
8. Mature trees and green space retained on King Street.

The framework shows the British Telecoms site as split between town centre and residential uses, these would be:

9. A hotel or flats above shops facing Chester Street; and
10. Houses facing Grosvenor Street.



Site 21, 22, 26 and 32 - sites framework

SITES LAYOUT, OPTION 1

The cattle market is replaced by a retail-led scheme which creates a new connection between the bus station and the high street whilst providing an opportunity for a larger anchor store. A new civic centre is built on the police station site which incorporates Terrig House, creating a new walking route and courtyard around the listed building. The BT site has houses facing Grosvenor Street and a hotel or shops with flats above facing Chester Street.

Building areas, per site, are:

Site 26, cattle market:

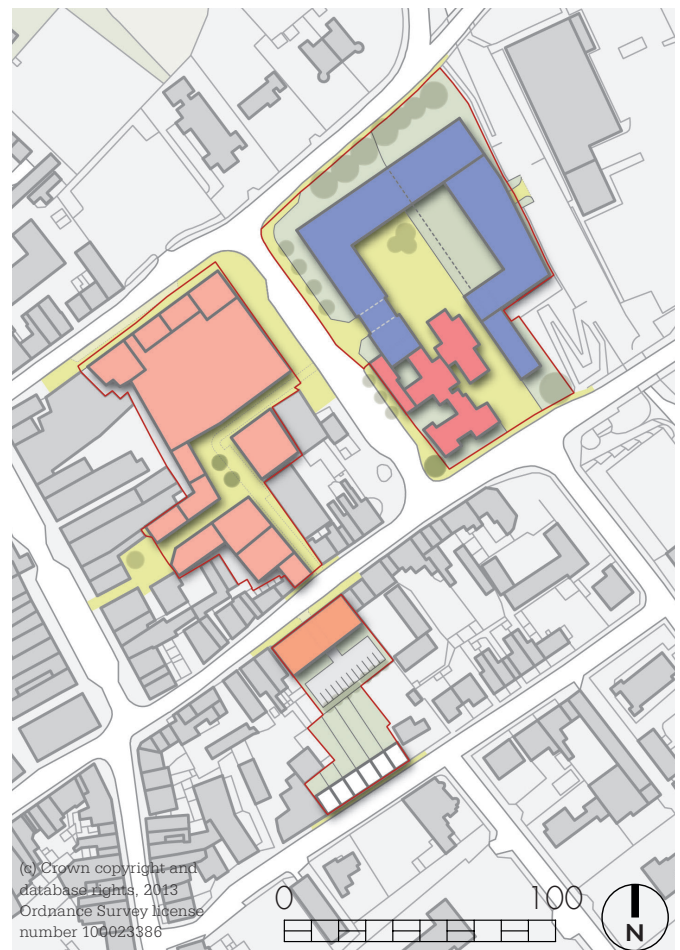
- **Retail** - 3,750m² (including 1,825m² anchor store).

Sites 21 and 22, Terrig House and police station:

- **Civic centre** - 8,400m² new build (over 4 floors facing the bus station and 2 floors above decked parking to the rear;
- **Decked parking** - 4,000m² (c.133 spaces) over 2 floors accessed from Love Lane; and
- **Terrig House and Courthouse** - c.1,450m² existing buildings.

Sites 32, British Telecom:

- **Hotel** - 420m² building footprint, c.28 rooms if a 3 storey building with rooms on upper floors and other uses on ground; or **shops with flats above** - c.285m² retail with 840m² flats above (c.9 flats); and
- **Houses** - 6 town houses.



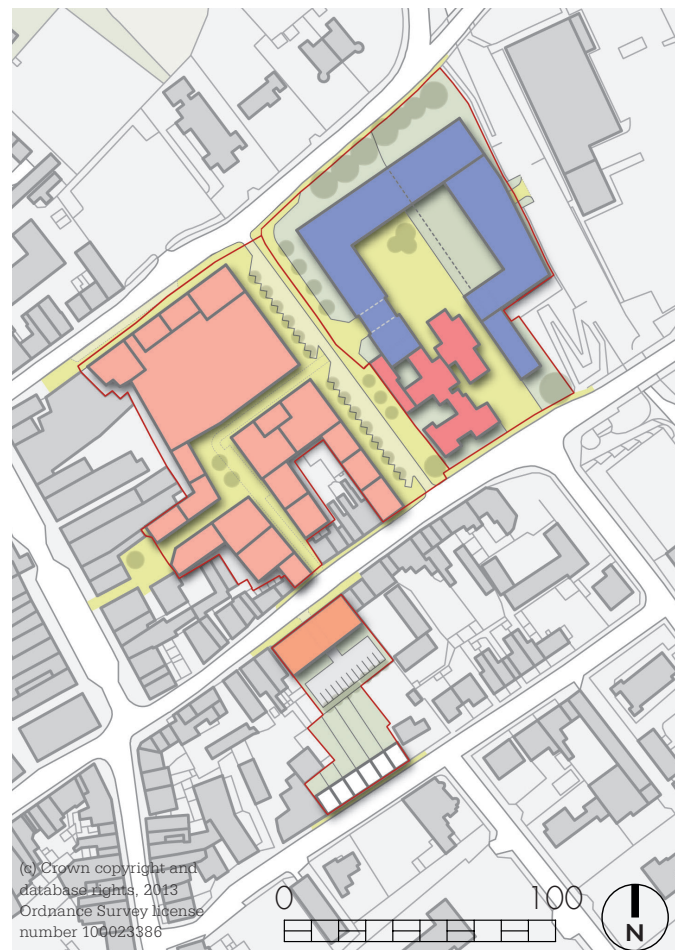
Site 21, 22, 26 and 32 - layout plan, option 1

SITES LAYOUT, OPTION 2

Option 2 increases the size of the cattle market site by incorporating adjacent sites in the south eastern corner. Bus stops are also relocated out of the bus station to neighbouring streets to slightly further enlarge the development site and provide on street parking for the new retail.

The option 2 areas for site 26, cattle market, are:

- **Retail** - 4,900m² (including 1,945m² anchor store).



Site 21, 22, 26 and 32 - layout plan, option 2

SITE 26 LAYOUT, OPTION 3

Retail - 2,855m²
Parking - 45 spaces

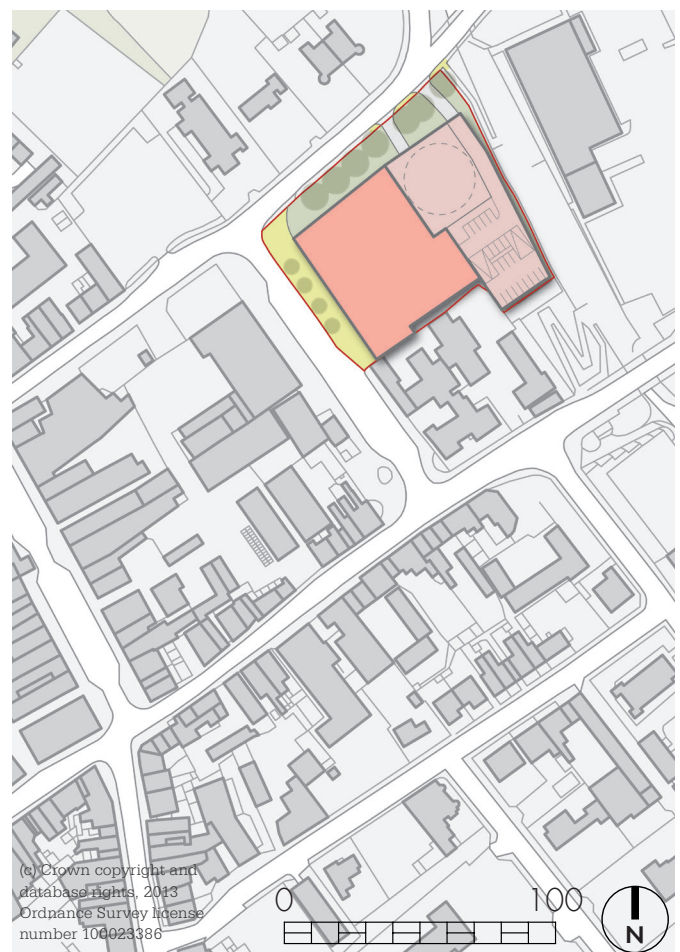


Site 26 - layout plan, option 3

SITE 27 LAYOUT, OPTION 2

Retail - 2,400m²

Parking - 145 spaces



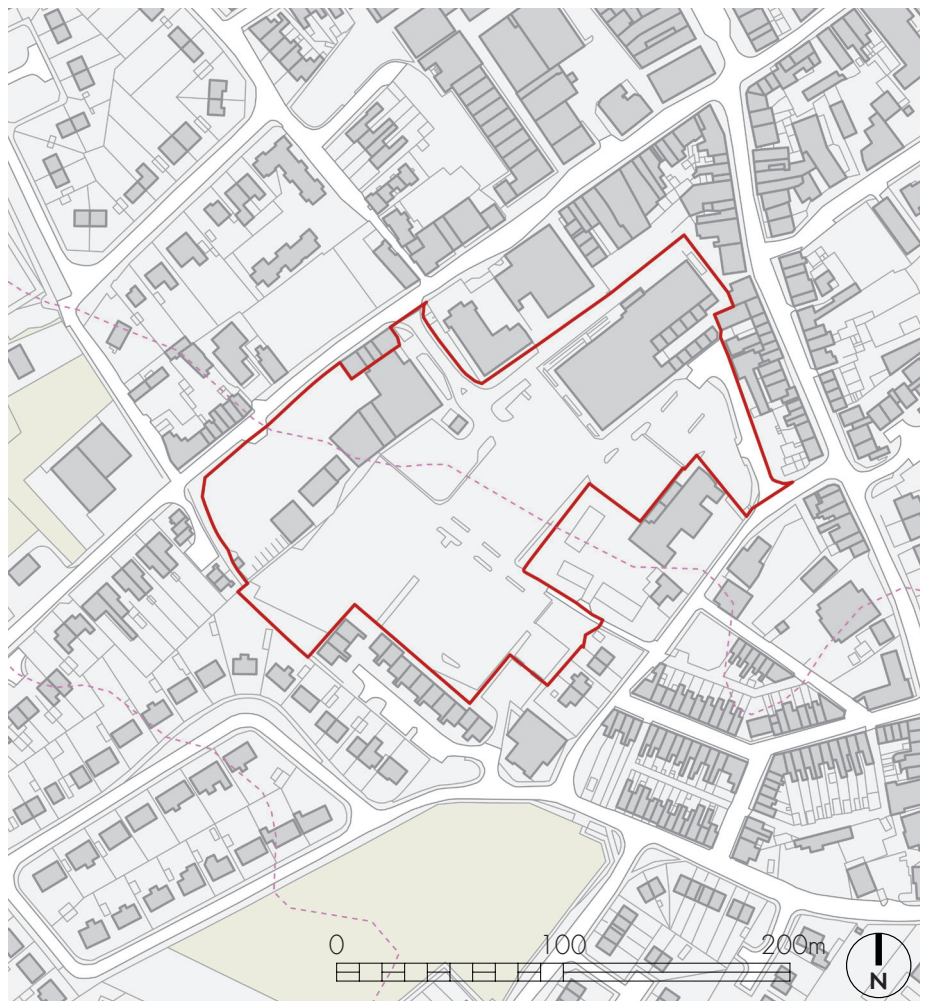
Site 27 - layout plan, option 2

SITE 23

EXISTING SITE

Site of the town's largest New Street car park. A food store with mixed commercial uses above is located to the north-east of the site and is an integrated part of the town centre. The site includes a builder's merchant on New Street, which subject to relocation could be redeveloped for new uses. The public parking plays an important economic role in the town.

Assuming the builders' merchant use could be satisfactorily relocated, the site would be well suited to a new food retail use given the level of car parking provision available and the significant potential to generate linked trips. Two options are considered, one a retail only option and one a mixed-use option. Ensuring new any new development addresses the public spaces and routes around its edges is a priority. The pedestrian link to Kendrick's Fields should be improved.

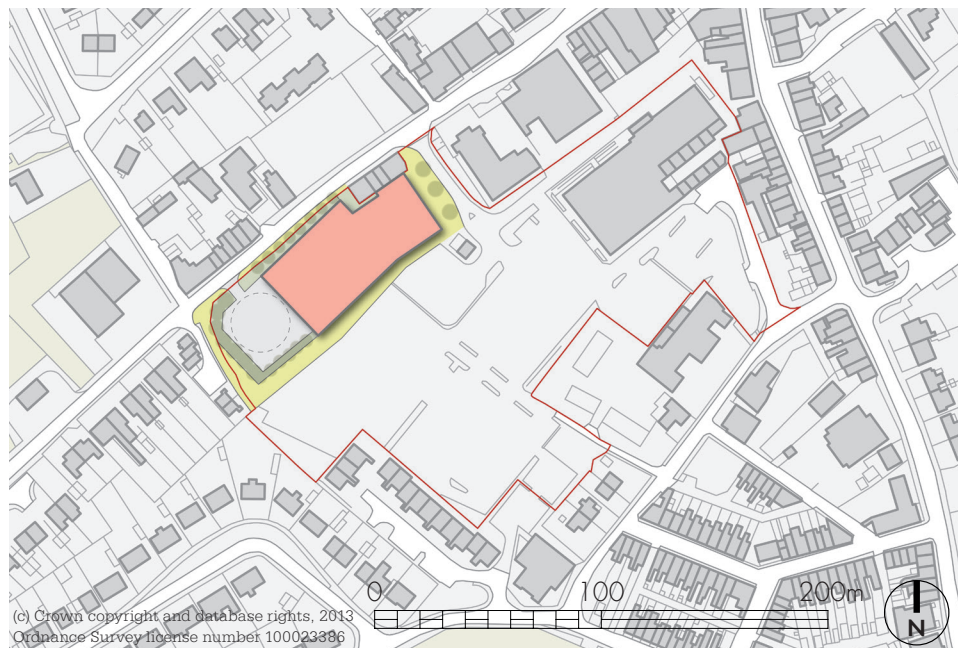


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Site 23 - existing

SITE 23, OPTION 1

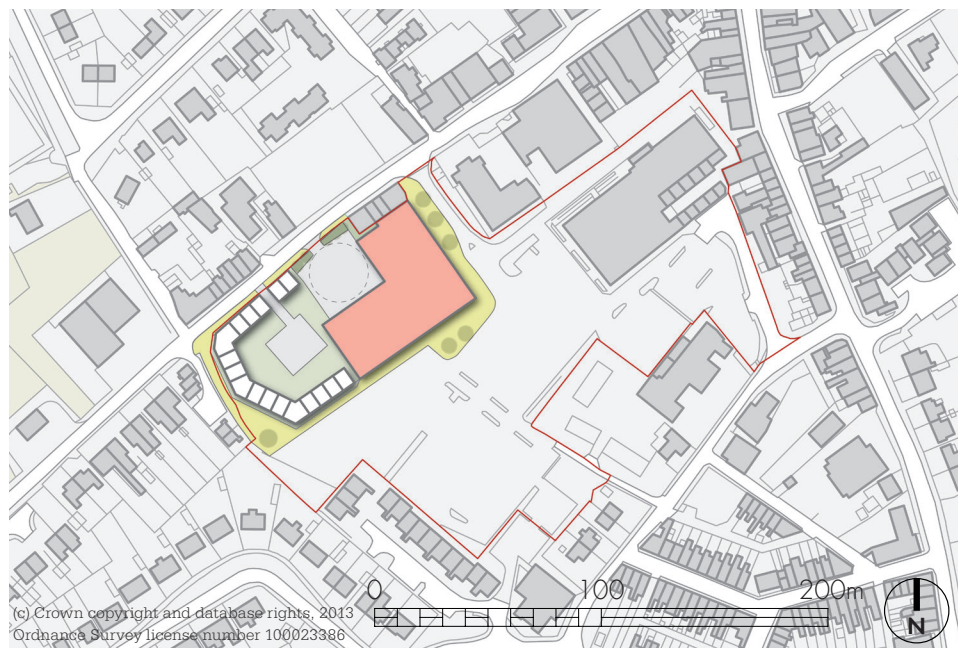
- Supermarket - 2,500m²



Site 23 - layout plan, option 1

SITE 23, OPTION 2

- Retail - 2,500m²
- Housing - 14 houses and 6 flats



Site 23 - layout plan, option 2

SITE 24

EXISTING SITE

This collection of sites incorporates the Post Office and Royal Mail Sorting Office sites together with Daniel Owen Square on the opposite side of Earl Road. However the site coming forward for redevelopment will be dependent on the existing uses being suitably relocated or incorporated into new development. The Post Office in particular is a very important town centre amenity which should remain in a prominent and accessible location.



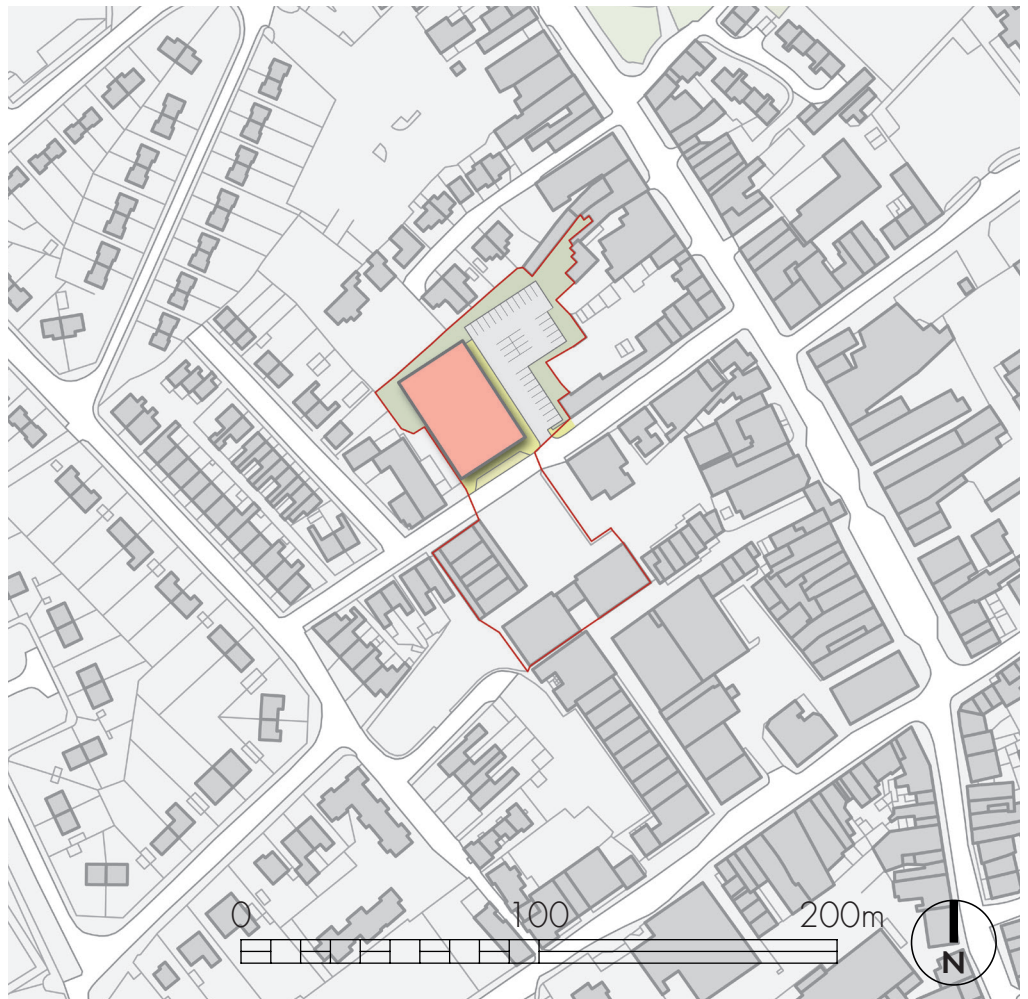
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Site 24 - existing

SITE 24, SITE LAYOUT

The site has potential for retail development with the opportunity to incorporate adjacent parking areas. There is an opportunity through redevelopment to strengthen the commercial frontage along Earl Road and create a better link across the road to Daniel Owen Square.

- Retail - 1,000m²



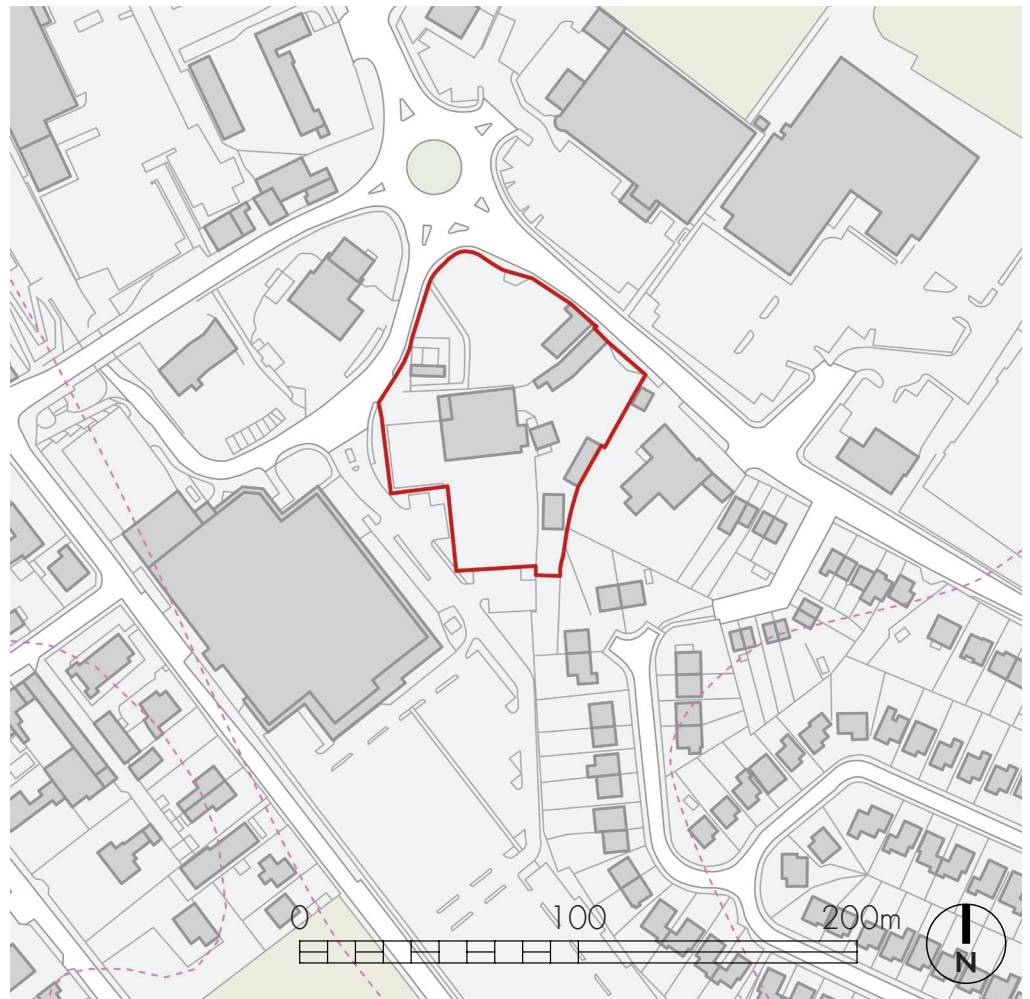
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Site 24 - site layout

SITE 29

EXISTING SITE

This is a prominent site at the edge of the town centre located adjacent to a very busy roundabout and the access to the town's largest supermarket. It is therefore a priority to see the site developed and the site is supported by a retail allocation in the UDP. Access to the site will be difficult to resolve.



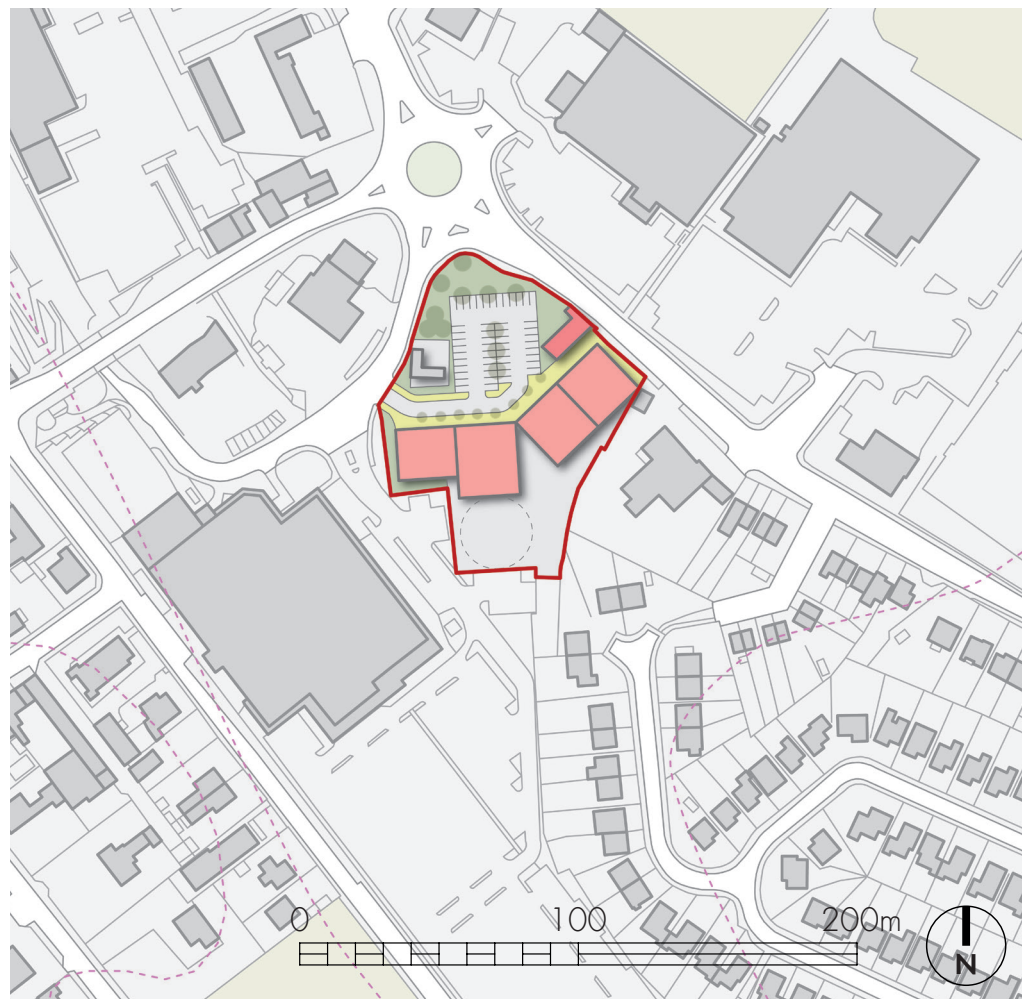
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Site 29 - existing

SITE LAYOUT

The site is well suited to edge of town centre retail uses. Servicing should be to the rear and, in view of the site's prominent location, creating good quality retail frontage of an appropriate scale is key to a successful redevelopment scheme for the site.

- Retail - 1,000m²
- Parking - 50 spaces



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Site 29 - site layout

SITE 31

EXISTING SITE



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Site 31 - existing

SITE LAYOUT

Light industry -
1,000m²



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Site 31 - site layout

SITE 34

EXISTING SITE



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Site 34 - existing

SITE LAYOUT

Offices - 2,030m²

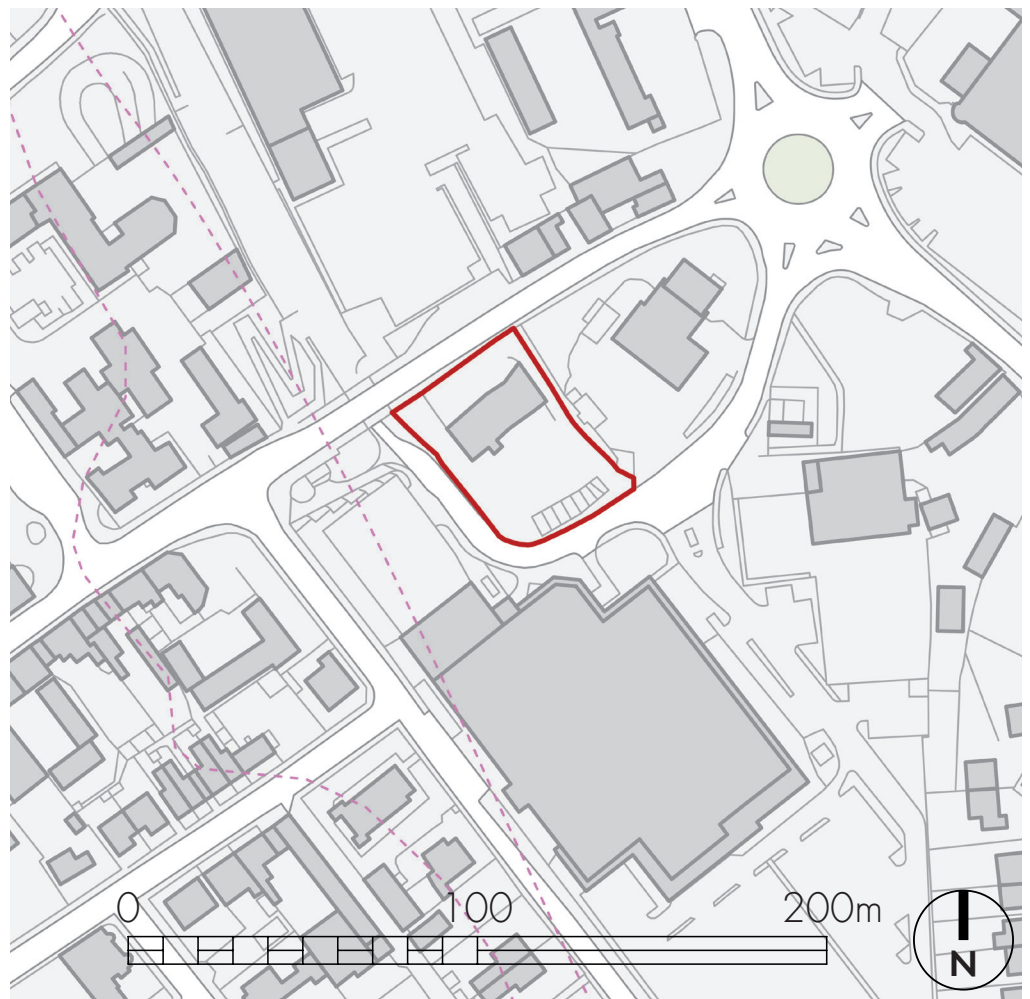


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Site 34 - site layout

SITE 35

EXISTING SITE

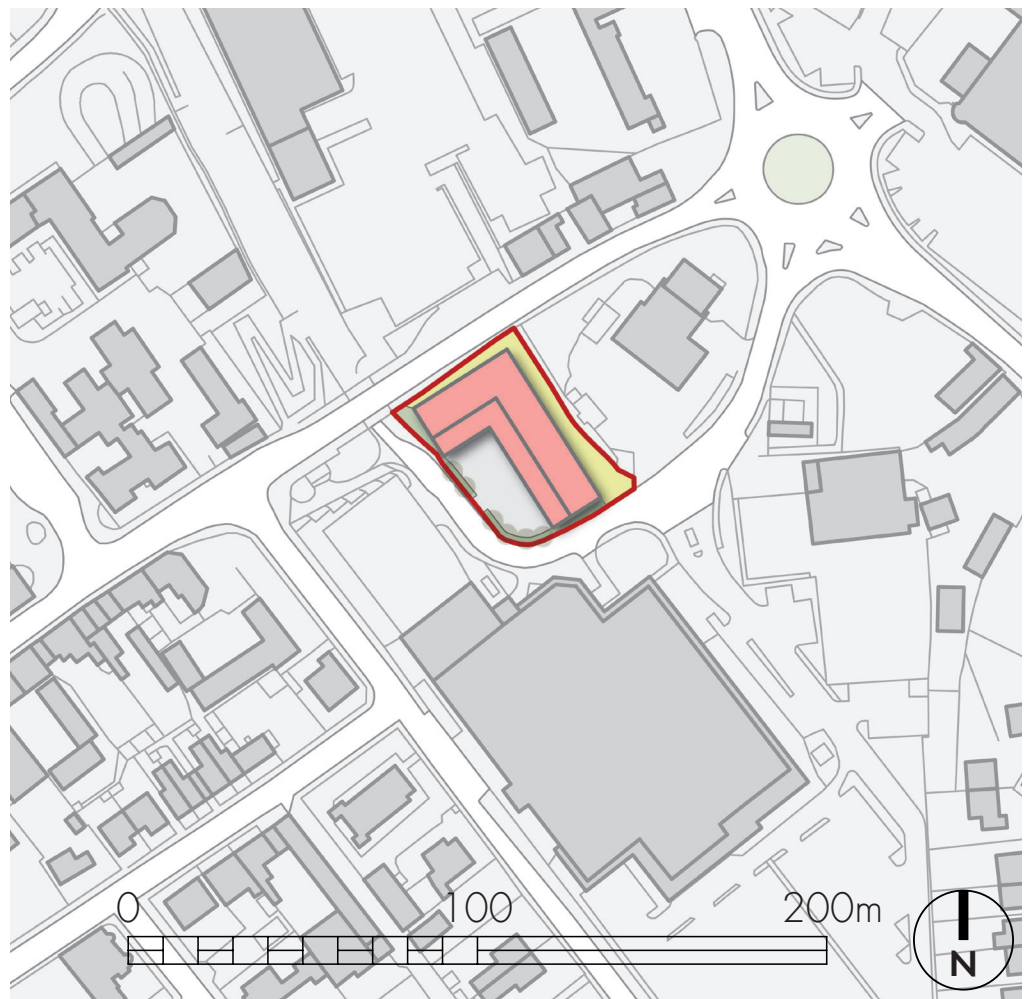


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Site 35 - existing

SITE LAYOUT

Retail - 2,030m²
Flats - 2,030m²



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Site 35 - existing

4.4 SITE CAPACITIES SUMMARY TABLE

The table on the facing page provides a summary of the site capacities generated through the masterplan options for each appropriate site. Other design approaches to each site are possible and the capacity table should not be viewed as Council policy. Instead, the figures in the table should be viewed as an indication of the amount of development which could be delivered for each site in a manner appropriate for its location, size and context.

The site capacity table includes options for some sites. In these cases, the option highlighted with a red box has been used for traffic modelling the impacts of development (see Appendix 2).

Total development quantum

The tables below present the total development that would be achieved if all the appropriate sites were developed as per the capacities generated through the masterplan studies, with the quantum split by phase.

This is considered to represent something approaching a maximum extent as it is considered unlikely that all the sites identified as having development potential will be allocated through the Local Plan process. It should also be noted that, in some cases, the land use shown in the capacity table may not represent the most appropriate end use for the site but has been included for the purpose of traffic modelling.

	Houses (no.)	Flats (no.)	Housing (sqm)	Retail (sqm)	Offices (sqm)	Hotel (sqm)	Leisure (sqm)	Light industry (sqm)	Car parking (sqm)
OPTION 1									
Phase 1 (9 sites)	166	99	20,410	7,140	15,300	2,550	3,700	0	27,410
Phase 2 (9 sites)	287	119	42,275	5,550	0	2,750	0	13,085	11,170
Phase 3 (10 sites)	593	0	68,195	2,500	2,030	1,260	0	0	3,290
Total	1,046	218	130,880	15,190	17,330	6,560	3,700	13,085	41,870

	Houses (no.)	Flats (no.)	Housing (sqm)	Retail (sqm)	Offices (sqm)	Hotel (sqm)	Leisure (sqm)	Light industry (sqm)	Car parking (sqm)
MODELLED OPTION									
Phase 1 (9 sites)	194	99	23,630	7,140	9,750	2,550	3,700	0	22,460
Phase 2 (9 sites)	338	119	48,140	4,655	0	2,750	0	13,085	12,210
Phase 3 (10 sites)	897	15	104,025	3,735	2,030	0	0	0	3,290
Total	1,429	233	175,795	15,530	11,780	5,300	3,700	13,085	37,960

Site number	Site name	Phase	Notes	Option (when applicable)	Site capacity testing								Car parking (sqm)
					Houses (no.)	Flats (no.)	Housing (sqm)	Retail (sqm)	Offices (sqm)	Hotel (sqm)	Leisure (sqm)	Light industry (sqm)	
1	Land adjacent to County Hall												
2	County Hall	1	Within the urban area but requires FCC decant	1	96	-	10810	-	5550	2550	3700	-	12,850
				2	124	-	14030	-	-	-	-	-	7,900
				3	124	-	14,030	-	-	2550	3700	-	7,900
3	Land east of Rhydy-Galed Farm	3	Beyond urban area - dependent of policy review		116	-	13,340	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Lane west of the Bridge Inn												
5	Rugby Pitch, Leadmill												
6	Mold Rugby Club and former Kwik Save	1	Current proposals - discussions ongoing		-	-	-	5,185	-	-	-	-	9,500
7	Land adj. Wood Green off Chester	1	Current proposals - discussions ongoing		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Pen y Bont Farm	2	Beyond urban area - dependent of policy review		-	-	-	-	-	2,750	-	4,600	4,970
9	Pentreholyn Estate												
10	Broncoed Industrial Estate	1	Permission granted		70	75	7,450						
11	Maes Gwern	2	Contrary to existing UDP - would require policy review, but is within the urban area and is already an		147	-	16,905	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	Land south-west of Mold/Upper Bryn	3	Beyond urban area - dependent on policy review		123	-	14,145	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	Land to south-east of Plas Aney	3	Beyond urban area - dependent on policy review		126	-	14,490	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Land north of Queens Park, Hendy Road	3	Beyond urban area - dependent on policy review		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	Land to west of Mold	3	Beyond urban area - dependent on policy review	1	157	-	18,055	-	-	-	-	-	-
				2	305	-	35,075	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	Land at Factory Pool Lane	3	Beyond urban area - dependent on policy review	1	65	-	7,475	-	-	-	-	-	-
				2	205	-	23,575	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	Land adjacent to A541	2	Beyond urban area - dependent of policy review - but potentially linked with site 18	1	34	-	3,910	-	-	-	-	-	-
				2	85	-	9,775	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	Mold Alexandra Football Club	2	Policy compliant but requires Mold Alex relocation		92	-	10,580	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	Alyn Meadow												
20	Love Lane car park	2	For a potential multi-storey car park		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,200
21	Terrig House and Courthouse	1	Town centre site - available for development		-	-	-	-	2,250	-	-	-	-
22	Kendricks Field												
23	New Street car park	3	Town centre site for town centre uses - but Travis Perkins happy to stay	1	-	-	-	2,500	-	-	-	-	-
				2	16	6	1,870	2,450	-	-	-	-	-
24	Daniel Owen Square, library, Post office and car park	3	Town centre site for town centre uses, but long term given the PO's stance, a funding shortfall and the ongoing work to redesign the square		-	-	-	1,000	-	-	-	-	-
25	Morris garage	1	Permission granted		-	-	24	2,150	-	-	-	-	-
26	Cattle market	2	Cattle Market relocation required before development can commence	1	-	-	-	3,750	-	-	-	-	-
				2	-	-	-	4,900	-	-	-	-	-
				3	-	-	-	2855	-	-	-	-	1,040
27	Police station	1	Town centre site for town centre uses	1	-	-	-	-	7,500	-	-	-	4,000
				2	-	-	-	2,400	-	-	-	-	4,350
28	Fire station and ambulance station	1	Current proposals - discussions ongoing		?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
29	South of Chester Road	1	Town centre site for town centre uses		-	-	-	1,955	-	-	-	-	1,060
30	Terrestrial Army and King Street car park												
31	Stephen Gray Road, Bromfield Industrial	2	Employment site for employment uses - but already in employment uses		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,485	-
32	Telephone exchange	3	Town centre site for town centre uses but unlikely to come forward in the short-medium future	1	6	-	690	-	-	1,260	-	-	-
				2	6	9	1,530	285	-	-	-	-	-
33	Bromfield Timber	2	Residential permission granted - but will need to be revised in current market conditions		14	108	9,860	-	-	-	-	-	-
34	North Wales Newspaper	3	Employment site for employment uses - but long term as already in employment uses		-	-	-	-	2,030	-	-	-	3,290
35	Mold Tyres/Harley's Garage	2	Town centre site for town centre uses - but ownership issues are holding site back from the market		-	11	1,020	800	-	-	-	-	-

Site capacity schedule based on masterplan capacity assessments

- Not suitable for development
- Short term / phase 1
- Medium term / phase 2
- Long term / phase 3

4.5 PHASING OF DEVELOPMENT

Each site has been allocated one of three phases of development, informed by its assessment and ownership information. The phases are as follows:

Phase 1 (short term) – 0 - 5 years

Phase 2 (medium term) – 6 - 10 years

Phase 3 (long term) – 11+ years

Site no	Site name	Phase
2	County Hall	1
3	Land east of Rhyd-y-Galed Farm	3
8	Pen y Bont Farm	2
10	Broncoed Industrial Estate	1
11	Maes Gwern	2
12	Land south-west of Mold/Upper Bryn Coch	3
13	Land to south-east of Plas Aney	3
14	Land north of Queens Park, Hendy Road	3
15	Land to west of Mold	3
16	Land at Factory Pool Lane	3
17	Land adjacent to A541	2
18	Mold Alexandra Football Club	2
20	Love Lane car park	2
21	Terrig House and Courthouse	1
23	New Street car park	3
24	Daniel Owen Square, library. Post office and car park	3
25	Morris garage	1
26	Cattle market	2
27	Police station	1
28	Fire station and ambulance station	1
29	South of Chester Road	1
31	Stephen Gray Road, Bromfield Industrial Estate	2
32	Telephone exchange	3
33	Bromfield Timber	2
34	North Wales Newspaper	3
35	Mold Tyres/Harley's Garage	2

4.6 TRAFFIC MODELLING AND SCENARIO TESTING

During the development capacity masterplanning phase of work, the Mold traffic base model was being prepared by Mott MacDonald. With the capacities of the opportunity sites carefully assessed, and each site allocated a development phase, the three compound phases were then modelled to ascertain an understanding of the potential highway implications for the projected growth.

The highways impact assessment study that has been carried out through the development of a SATURN 'Light' highway traffic model. The 'light' terminology is used here to define a model that has all the components of an industry standard model; however aspects of the model would require strengthening before the outputs could be relied upon to support scheme design. The model contains all the components necessary to be updated at a future date – most importantly to include observed Road Side Interview data. Analysis presented in this report provides an understanding of the operational performance of the highway network to support future development growth for Mold.

The results of the traffic modelling are outlined in detail in Appendix 2, Stage 3 Viability - Highway Impact Assessment. The highways network impact assessment shows that there is a good level of capacity provision on the existing highway network to accommodate future development growth. In the longer term, development of the scale considered in this study will put significant increased pressure on highway infrastructure in the Chester Road and King Street corridors in particular.

Further conclusions and next steps emerging from the modelling work are summarised in Section 5 below.

PART 5: FUTURE MOLD

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Mold Strategic Opportunity Sites Assessment demonstrates the capacity for Mold to accommodate housing growth and considers a range of strategic town centre opportunities that would deliver new investment.

The Assessment has been prepared to inform the emerging replacement County development plan. The review of the Mold town centre boundary is a specific requirement of the brief for this study and has been undertaken in the context of the wider strategic assessment of opportunity sites. Recommendations on potential revisions to the town centre boundary therefore form part of a series of key moves for Mold which, taken together and informed by the evidence presented in this report, combine to form a 20 year strategic framework for Mold.

The key moves in this 20 year strategic framework for Mold are considered to be as follows:

1. Consolidate the town centre boundary to strengthen the concentration of commercial uses in the town centre;
2. Relocate County Hall to Mold town centre and release the existing site for high quality mixed-use redevelopment;
3. Explore the viability and benefits of relocating the Cattle Market to an edge of town location with new purpose built facilities and good transport access;
4. Explore the viability and benefits of redevelopment of existing Cattle Market site for retail-led mixed-use development;
5. Plan for strategic housing growth with the associated community infrastructure to the north-west of the town.
6. Commit to the delivery of the highest standards of design quality and sustainability in all new developments in the County.

5.2 MOLD TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY

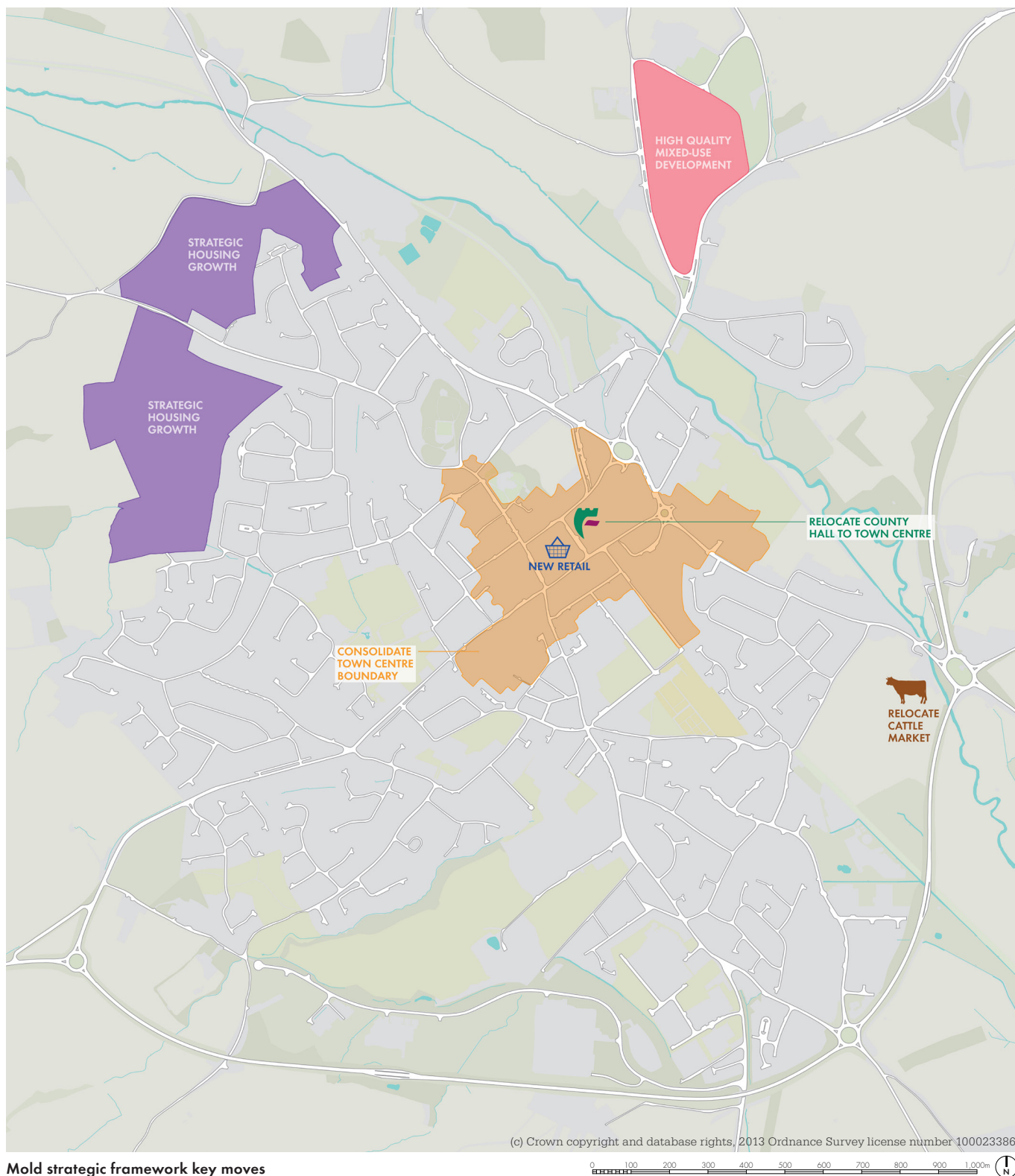
The town centre boundary is an important tool in protecting and promoting the vitality and viability of Mold town centre. Its principal purpose is to define areas of Mold, where commercial land uses prevail, which are considered to be the most appropriate – and the most sequentially preferable – for ‘town centre’ uses to be developed.

A tight and defensible town centre boundary is important in achieving these objectives, directing new commercial and mixed-use investment to the heart of Mold. Whilst boundary changes were not recommended during the preparation of the Flintshire Town Centre Health Check study, as a replacement development plan commences preparation a high level review of the existing adopted town centre boundary suggests that there are a number of areas where revisions to the town centre boundary are worth consideration. Changes should only be made where they are considered likely to strengthen the economic health of the town centre. Potential revisions including the following:

A. New Street corridor and the western edge

Located directly adjacent to New Street car park, the existing Travis Perkins site represents a significant medium to long term town centre development opportunity. However, a number of sites opposite on the northern side of New Street – including a housing allocation - have, in recent years, come forward for housing-led redevelopment. Whilst some commercial uses are located at the far western edge of the town, these uses are out of town in their nature and format. Consideration should therefore be given to the removal from the town centre boundary of the northern side of New Street beyond the Daniel Owen Precinct.

This rationalisation could continue north to exclude the traditional housing properties on the eastern side of Meadow Place and residential properties at the western end of Earl Road. Car parks which play an important role in serving the town centre throughout the day should remain part of the defined town centre boundary.



Mold strategic framework key moves

B. High Street and the northern edge

Whilst, as noted in the Flintshire Town Centre Health Check Study, Mold is a radial town rather than a linear one, High Street is the town's principal commercial axis. Minor rationalisation of the boundary could be considered to remove residential property behind the eastern side of High Street between Milford Street and Bailey Hill. In view of the important role of Bailey Hill as a visitor attraction, consideration could also be given to including the Chapel, Sunday School and other nearby structures and buildings within the town centre boundary. This might open up opportunities for these buildings to strengthen the role played by this area in the town centre and help improve links between this top end of High Street and the main shopping area.

C. Chester Road and south eastern corridor

In view of supermarket proposals incorporating Mold Rugby Club land, this site should be considered as a natural extension of the town centre boundary. Whilst this is an edge of centre site, this area forms an integral part of this second part of the town centre, dominated by food stores.

D. Southern edge

Grosvenor Street currently acts as the southern boundary of the town centre although the town centre boundary extends south to include significant areas between Tyddyn Street and Victoria Road and Wrexham Street.

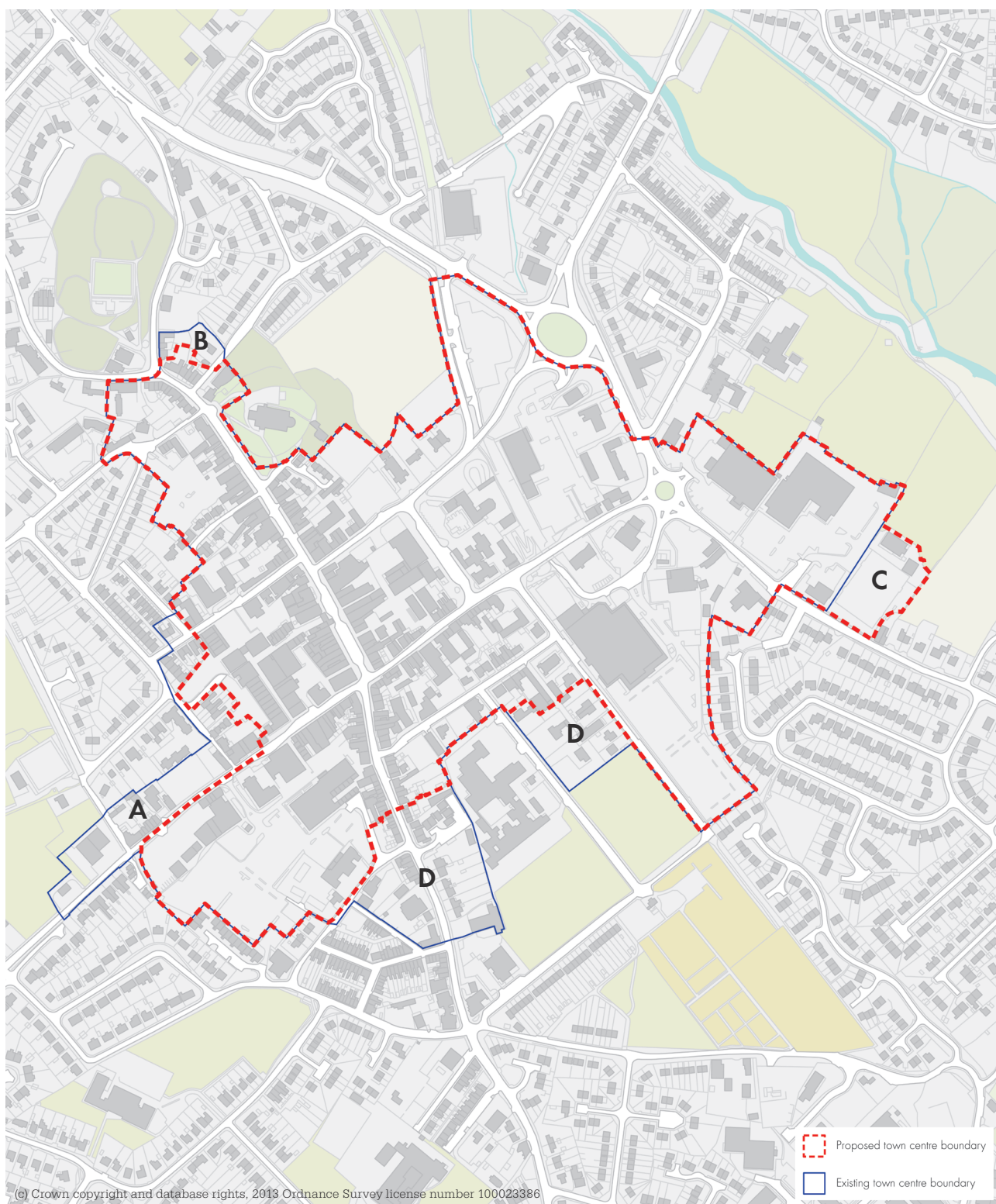
Whilst it is sensible to include the whole of the Tesco car park site within the town centre boundary, consideration could be given to excluding the community and residential uses between Tyddyn Street and Victoria Road in view of the fact that Bryn Coch School lies beyond the boundary.

Along Wrexham Road, the plan shows a revised boundary which defines the location where continuous commercial uses on the ground floor replace predominantly residential uses. Such a change would result in some clubs and community facilities falling outside the boundary, and the pros and cons of such a change should be considered.

Town centre boundary overview

Whilst High Street is the principal commercial spine, Mold is a radial centre, with commercial uses extending along each of the key routes to and from the centre. The traditional retail centre is centred on the High Street/New Street/Wrexham Street/Chester Street junction. In more recent times, supermarkets have developed along Chester Road/Lead Mills together with other edge and out of centre format stores. These uses have effectively extended the town centre eastwards and created an additional, complementary centre. Whilst this relatively recent concentration of food retail will have drawn some local trade away from the traditional town centre, equally it will attract more trips to and spending in the town centre.

The changes proposed to the town centre boundary seek to ensure that town centre commercial activity is focussed in a more compact retail centre, with boundaries which respect recent developments and prevailing land uses.



Suggested town centre boundary updates

5.3 MOLD COUNTY HALL SITE

The County Hall site is identified as a strategic opportunity site within this study in tandem with Clwyd Theatr Cymru, and lies at the heart of a major concentration of civic and community uses including Mold Crown Court. Two strategic options have been considered for this future of the site – one which retains some Flintshire County Council civic uses on the site, assumed to be ceremonial uses such as a Council Chamber and associated meeting rooms. The remainder of the site is then released for housing led mixed-use development. It is considered that land surrounding the Theatre presents opportunities for commercial leisure uses. The second option assumes that all Flintshire County Council uses are relocated.

Redevelopment of the County Hall site should be considered in tandem with the opportunities to revitalise the town centre. Whilst any traffic implications will need to be carefully considered, the relocation of civic uses from the County Hall site into the heart of Mold Town Centre has the potential to deliver significant benefits to the town centre economy. The land parcels centred around the existing Mold Police Station are considered to present the best opportunity for a public sector-led town centre development. Such a scheme could incorporate and deliver much needed investment to the sites around Terrig House and the Courthouse building.

The provision and management of parking provision associated with the redevelopment will be critical to the success of the site as a major public sector hub. The level changes across the site associated with the historic railway cut and the boundary that the site shares with the Council owned car park on its eastern boundary together with the close proximity and direct access to the Love Lane Car Park.



Existing Flintshire County Hall buildings

5.4 RELOCATION OF MOLD CATTLE MARKET

The pros and cons associated with the relocation of Mold Cattle Market have been debated locally for many years. The Cattle Market is synonymous with Mold's identity as one of the principal market towns in the area. The Sense of Place study reinforces the importance of the Cattle Market being located in the town centre.

A feasibility options report into the future of the Cattle Market undertaken in 1989 concluded that relocation of the market to a more accessible and less constrained site in the town was the best way of securing the market's future. In addition, the 2008 Retail Study identified Mold as the only one of the County's seven centres where there would be sufficient developer and operator interest to make a significant retail-led development scheme viable. The study recommends that a centrally located development scheme be progressed to attract new, high-quality retail and leisure outlets of the type that are currently missing from Mold's offer.

Relocation of the Cattle Market would release a highly accessible parcel of land in the heart of the town centre. New retail-led investment in this central location would create more jobs in the town centre and strengthen the town's retail offer. The impacts associated with the generation of additional traffic would need to be carefully managed.

However, in view of the concentration of public sector owned land immediately to the east, a larger scale phased regeneration of the town centre could conceivably come forward. When combined with the opportunity presented to reintroduce into the town centre significant numbers of County Hall staff in purpose built or refurbished town centre office accommodation, the benefits and implications of the relocation of the Cattle Market site should be considered in greater detail as they could be shown to be very significant.

Progress is currently being made on delivering public realm improvements to Daniel Owen Square. This investment is important for the town given the scarcity of formal public spaces in the town centre. It is also important to improve the links between the town's retail streets and the shopping centre. The redevelopment of the Cattle Market site in tandem with the sites east of the bus station (redevelopment

of the Police Station site and sensitive reuse and redevelopment of the sites around Terrig House) also presents an exciting opportunity to provide high quality public space appropriate for this town centre location.



Existing cattle market

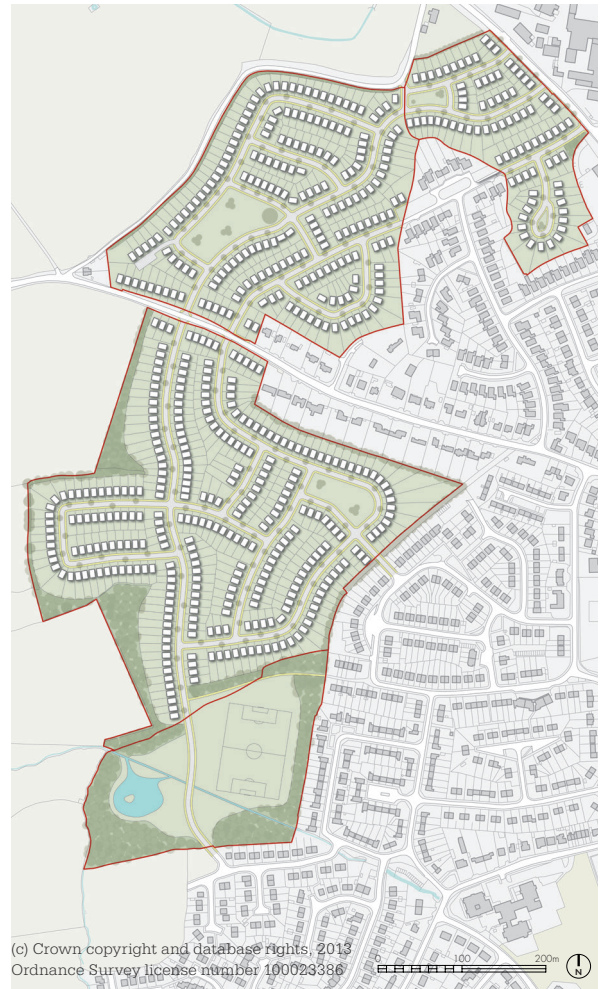
5.5 STRATEGIC HOUSING GROWTH

The suitability, availability and viability of strategic sites in and around Mold to accommodate a significant phase of housing growth has been central to the study. At a strategic level, all the town's principal corridors have been considered in terms of their respective suitability to accommodate this growth.

The north-west corridor centred on Denbigh Road and Gwernaffield Road is identified as the most appropriate location to accommodate the bulk of this growth, with other corridors playing a significant role in providing a Green Barrier which prevents coalescence with other nearby settlements.

Further more detailed studies will be required to understand more fully the issues associated with this growth, but it is considered that strategic growth of Mold in appropriate locations has the potential to help strengthen the economic vitality of the town centre as well as providing much needed new homes of all tenures, types and sizes.

However, with only very few exceptions, the sites considered in this study are not currently allocated for development. As things stand, development proposals on these sites would therefore be contrary to the development plan. In light of work undertaken during this study and any further work on the sites identified, appropriate new site allocations should be progressed through the development plan process.



Strategic housing growth - Mold's north-east corridor

5.6 FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

The highway network impact assessment shows that there is a good level of capacity provision on the existing highway network to accommodate future development growth.

Highway capacity hotspots that have been identified from the traffic model assessment are as follows:

- A541 Lead Mills / A5119 King Street Roundabout;
- A541 Lead Mills / Chester Street Roundabout;
- High Street / Chester Street traffic signal junction
- High Street / King Street traffic signal junction;
- A541 / A494 (T) Roundabout; and
- A5119 Main Road / King Street traffic signal junction.

Over the short (five years) to medium (ten years) time frame, the network in general is shown to be able to operate with sufficient levels of capacity, although it is observed that the following known hotspots are showing increasing signs of stress during the peak hours:

- A541 Lead Mills / King Street roundabout;
- A541 Lead Mills / Chester Street roundabout;
- High Street / Chester Street traffic signal junction;
- A5119 Main Road / King Street traffic signal junction; and
- A541 / A494 (T) roundabout.

Moving forward to the medium to long term (15 years) time frame it is evident that some of these junctions will be operating over capacity and as a result excessive queues and delays will form on some of the junction approaches. This may have severe implications on the operation of the A541 Chester Road corridor and the A5119 King Street corridor.

The next key steps leading on from the traffic modelling assessment will be to give consideration to the following:

- Detailed analysis of highway impacts relating to specific major developments such as County Hall,
- Testing of mitigation options to relieve capacity hotspots on the highway network; and
- Development of a future year Car Parking strategy connected with development opportunities.

5.7 NEXT STEPS

The study demonstrates how Mold is potentially well placed to accommodate both significant housing growth and major new commercial investments in the town centre. The new Local Plan is already underway and this will play an important role in articulating a new strategy for Mold. Whilst some key stakeholders have been engaged, this is a technical study and has not had the benefit of public consultation. The benefits and issues associated with the growth of the town should be tested and considered further through the planning process. The traffic and movement implications of such investments should also be considered both strategically and locally as each of these studies are progressed.

Key next steps are considered to include the following:

Progress the release of the County Hall site and the associated relocation of Council staff to office space in Mold town centre

A more detailed feasibility and options studies is required which considered the full range of opportunities associated with the sites either side of the existing bus station. The Police Station site, land around Terrig House and the Love Lane car park all potentially have a major role to play in facilitating the provision of new Council office accommodation which has the scope to deliver very significant benefits to the town centre economy. In addition, the potential of the County Hall site should be explored to better understand the level of development this prominent site could deliver.

Take a plan-led approach to potential strategic housing growth around the town

With work now underway on the new Flintshire Local Plan, further, more focussed, studies on the issues associated with strategic housing growth considered in this report should be undertaken and public reaction to such options sought and assessed. The issues associated with the scale of change envisaged in this report in terms of strategic housing growth are complex and multifaceted and further more detailed work is required in this regard. The preparation of the Local Plan should take the lead in this process.

Explore the relocation of the Cattle Market to an edge of centre location with good access to the strategic road network

Discussions with key stakeholders should continue on the potential for a new purpose built cattle market facilities being delivered on a new site on the edge of Mold. This would release land in the heart of the town centre which could help attract significant new retail-led investment. The provision of new purpose built facilities would also help to secure the economic future of Mold Cattle Market itself as it facing increasing competition from other nearby markets several of which have received major investments.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

MOLD TRANSPORT REVIEW

APPENDIX 2

OPPORTUNITY SITES HIGHWAYS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

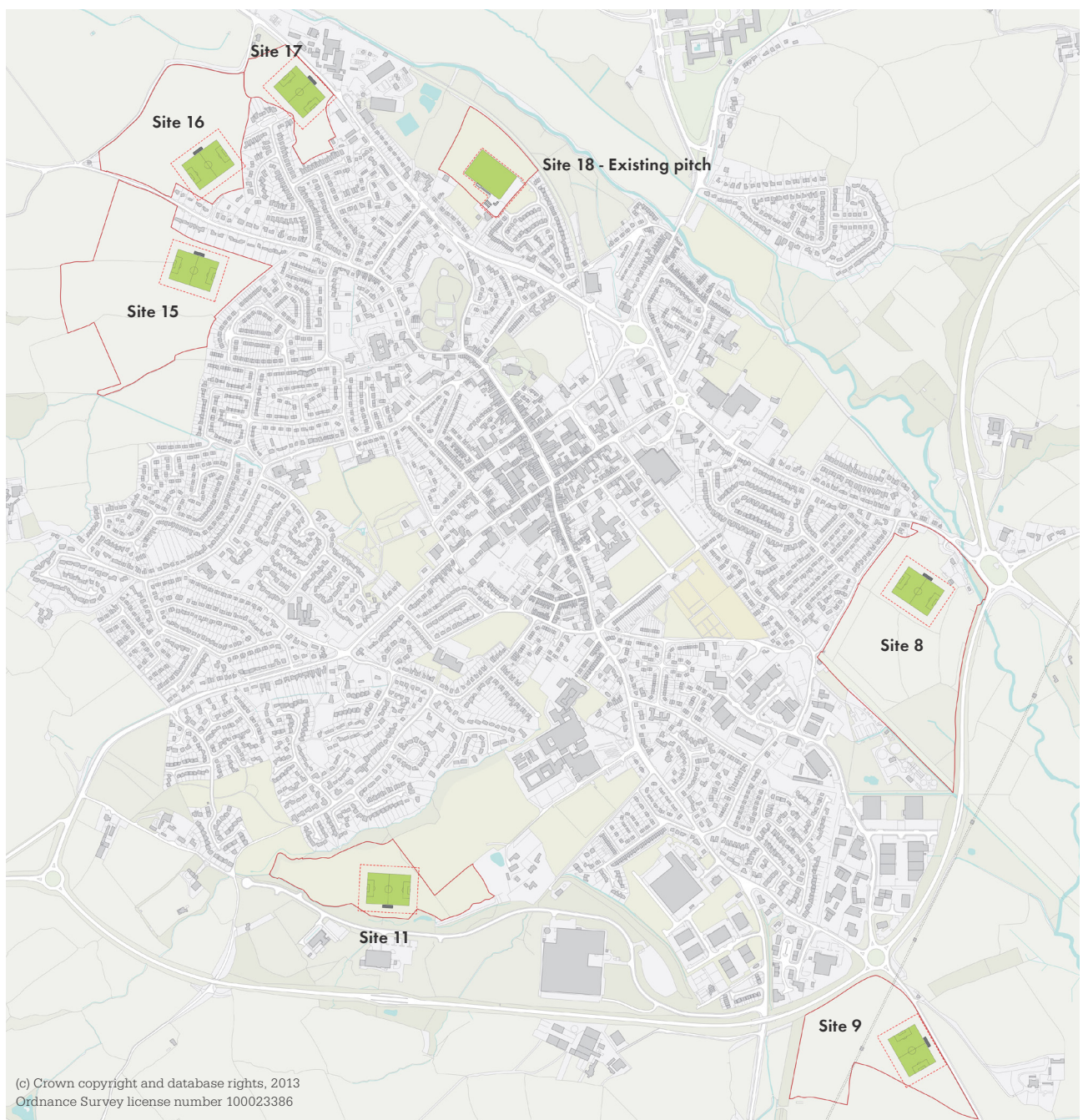
APPENDIX 3

FOOTBALL PITCH OPTIONS

A.3 FOOTBALL PITCH OPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Potential sites for the relocation of the existing football pitch and facilities from site 18 are shown in the map below. When assessing the appropriateness of each potential site, key consideration will need to be given to topography, access, impact on open countryside and the potential for other uses.



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Potential football pitch locations

SITE 18 - EXISTING FOOTBALL PITCH



Site 8 - existing pitch

SITE 8



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Site 8 - relocation option

SITE 9



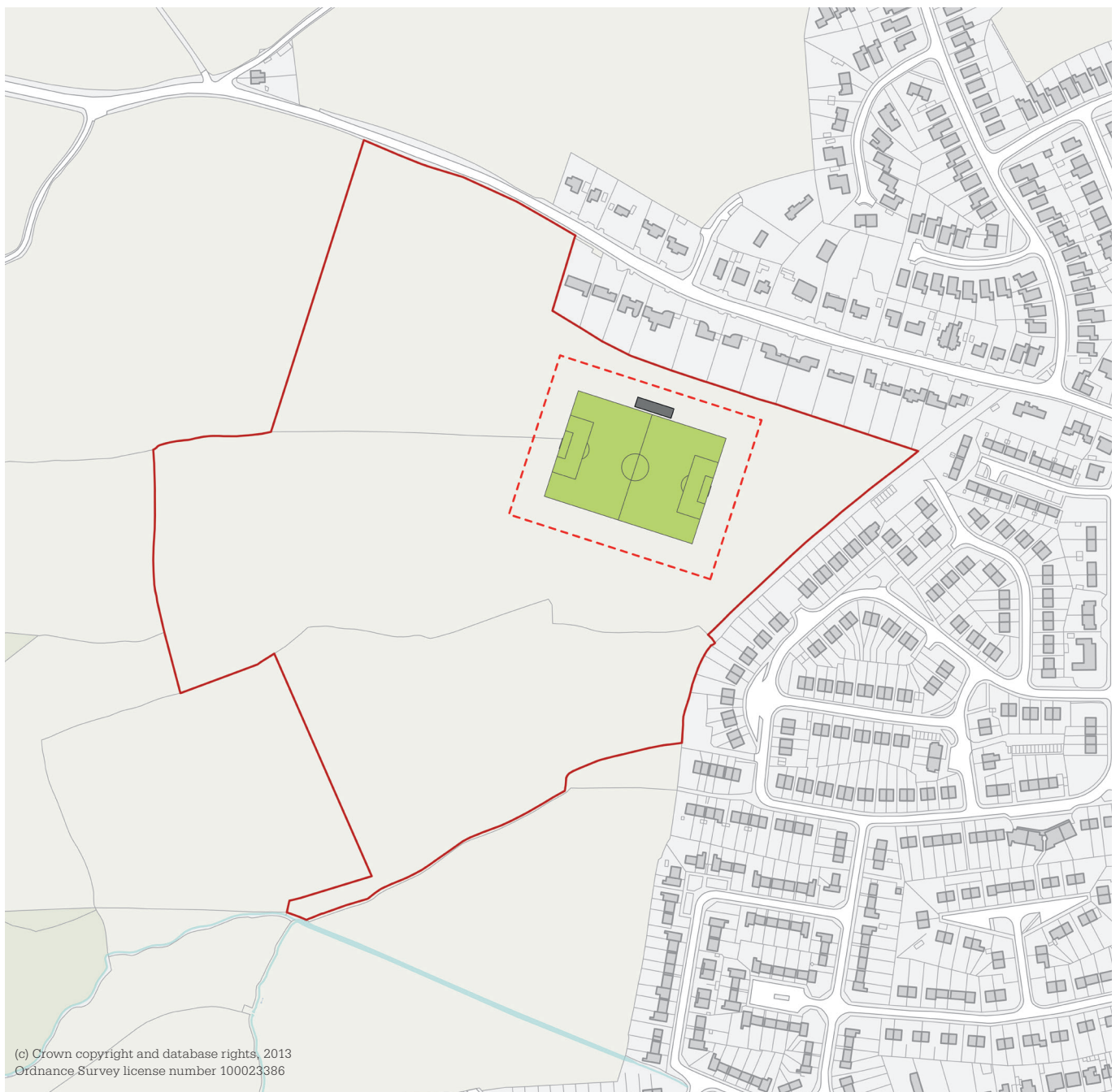
Site 9 - relocation option

SITE 11



Site 11 - relocation option

SITE 15



Site 15 - relocation option

SITE 16



Site 16 - relocation option

SITE 17



Site 17 - relocation option

