

Wrexham Gateway Eastern Zone, Wrexham

Heritage Assessment

July 2025

PREPARED FOR

Wrexham County Borough Council



Heritage Assessment

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Front Cover	Photograph of Wrexham General Train Station looking towards the east site boundary

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	1
1. Introduction.....	3
1.1. Site context.....	3
1.2. Study area	12
2. Methodology.....	14
2.1. Heritage significance and impact assessment methodology	14
2.2. Research sources.....	14
2.3. Site visit	15
3. Planning Policy.....	16
3.1. Introduction.....	16
4. Historical background.....	19
4.1. Introduction	19
4.2. Prehistoric (pre-10,000 BC to AD 43).....	19
4.3. Roman (AD 43 – AD 410)	19
4.4. Medieval (AD 410 – AD 1540).....	20
4.5. Post-medieval (AD 1540 – c AD 1750)	21
4.6. Industrial (c AD 1750 - 1914)	21
4.7. Modern (post-1914).....	22
4.8. Development of the Site	23
5. Assessment of Significance	33
5.1. Introduction.....	33
5.2. Heritage Assets within the Site.....	34
5.3. Built Heritage within the study area.....	37
5.4. Conservation Areas	40
5.5. Statement of Significance.....	41
6. Proposed Work.....	42
7. Historic Impact Assessment.....	47
7.1. Introduction.....	47
7.2. Potential impact of change	47
7.3. Tree cover	48
7.4. The Permanence, Longer Term or Consequential Effects of the Development	48
7.5. Predicted Visual Impact Assessment.....	49
8. Conclusions.....	50
Appendix 1	53
Appendix 2 - Figures	57

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cushman and Wakefield on behalf of Wrexham County Borough Council have commissioned Civic Heritage to undertake a Heritage Assessment of the land at Wrexham General Station, to inform an Outline Planning Application. This assessment of the built heritage in close proximity to the site, was intended to establish, as far as possible, the character of the historic built environment within the vicinity of the proposed development site and to provide a description of significance in order to understand the potential impact of the proposals, including the potential impact on the setting of any nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets.

The application site contains the Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station, the projected route of Wat's Dyke, and the former goods shed (not listed), of historic interest which survives as an earthwork and Scheduled Monument a short distance to the north and south of the site. The Listed Building will be retained within the scheme.

A review of the Historic Environment Record data recorded several designated assets within the vicinity of the site. Within a 200m study area of the site, the designated heritage assets assessed in order to consider the potential impact of the proposed works upon those assets includes:

- Wrexham General Station: Entrance Buildings, Grade II Listed Building
- Wat's Dyke, Scheduled Monument and projected route of Wat's Dyke
- The Former Mines Rescue Centre, Grade II Listed Building
- Offices and Lodge to Wrexham Brewery, Grade II Listed Building
- Adult Education Centre, University College of North Wales, Grade II Listed Building
- Former Wrexham Infirmary, Grade II Listed Building
- No.1 Grosvenor Road (NW Side), Grade II Listed Building
- Grosvenor Road Conservation Area
- The former goods shed (not listed), of historic interest

The heritage impact assessment finds that the current proposals will result in Moderate, Slight and Neutral (beneficial) impacts upon the significance of the heritage assets, except for one instance of Moderate (adverse) impact on the projected route of Wat's Dyke. The impact assessment is consistent with recognised criteria as defined within ICOMOS Guidance.

The setting of Wrexham General Station is currently negatively impacted by vacant land and modern development that is in poor condition and has no functional or physical relationship to the Listed Building. The redevelopment of land opposite the station provides an opportunity to enhance the setting through the creation of public realm, landscaping and new and appropriate street furniture. Improvements to the accessibility of the station will increase communal value but should be sensitively designed to respect the historic fabric of the station in order to protect its evidential value, architectural interest and significance.

The projected line of Wat's Dyke may be directly impacted by a potential pedestrian link bridge (proposals currently not included in the Outline Planning Application). Preservation of Wat's Dyke is recommended, although harm may be offset by archaeological monitoring and recording will be required in order to mitigate the impact of the proposals on any surviving buried remains. Should significant archaeological remains be encountered during the archaeological evaluation, further excavation may be required to offset the harm of the development to the buried archaeological resource, in line with the guidance provided by the Planning Policy Wales. Full details of the proposals will be required in order to inform the decision.

The proposed scheme will result in no change and negligible to minor visual changes within the setting of heritage assets within the study area. The high-quality design of the commercial office building and better

pedestrian links to the city centre are likely to have a positive impact on the built environment within the setting of the heritage assets and the scheme includes several public benefits.

Several recommendations for offsetting harm to the aforementioned heritage assets are presented in the final section of this document.

1. Introduction

1.1. Site context

1.1.1. Purpose and nature of the proposal

This Heritage Assessment has been prepared in support of an Outline Planning Application for new commercial office building, creation of public realm and landscaping, conversion of existing buildings to brewery, with associated museum and taproom/restaurant, accessibility improvements including new highway infrastructure and pedestrian footbridge, including parking facilities and coach/taxi drop off, with all matters reserved except for access (identified in Section 1.2 below, herein referred to as 'the Site').

This Heritage Assessment appraises the identified features of the historic built environment within the context of the application site, providing a description of their significance in order to understand the potential impact of the proposals, both positive and negative. The Heritage Assessment includes a physical impact assessment and predicted visual assessment based on the current proposals. This will require updating once plans have been finalised.

1.1.2. Location

The proposed Site (centred on NGR 333004, 350855) lies to the north-west of Wrexham town centre and is bounded by houses on Spring Gardens to the north, houses off Gerald Street to the east, Regent Street to the south and the railway line to the west. The Site comprises Station Approach and associated hard-standing car parking. The Site also encompasses the former goods shed, Cambrian Works (former Jewsons warehouse) a vacant plot of hard-standing ground in the north, a parcel of vacant brownfield land in the east, together with two modern buildings in the south-east that are currently functioning as guide and scout huts and Wrexham General Station (a Grade II Listed Building).



Plate 1 Recent satellite image of the site, showing the red line development boundary

1.1.3. Site walkover and character

A Site walkover took place in February 2025. The Site comprises the Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station, accessed from Station Approach that leads to associated hard-standing car parking. Pedestrian footpaths border the approach to the north-west and south-west. Landscaping bordered by a stone wall is along the south-west edge of the area, separating the Site from Regent Road which sits in slightly elevated position affording access over the railway lines to the south of the Site. The land at Station Approach gradually decreases towards the south-east and towards the railway station. A bus stop and mini roundabout are also within this area.



Plate 2 Station Approach from Regent Street, with Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station in the background, facing north-west



Plate 3 View showing the northern end of Station Approach, with Wrexham General Station to the right, facing south

In total, two modern two-storey buildings are currently functioning as scout and guide huts. Foundation stones state that they were established in 1964 and 1968. The buildings are accessed from Station Approach and yield no historic interest (Plate 4). Hard-standing car parks are to the south and west of the buildings (Plate 5). An area of landscaping with trees and vegetation borders the area between the car park off Station Approach and the scout and guide huts area, showing the change in elevation. Vegetation is to the north-west of the modern buildings. Soil beds border this area to the north, with evidence of tree cutting. Red bricks indicating possible demolition material were visible within the borders. The north of this area is bordered by metal fencing that is in poor condition, with footpaths, one of which provides access to Grosvenor Gardens to the east of the Site.



Plate 4 View showing entrance from Station Approach to the guide & scout huts to the south-east, facing east



Plate 5 View showing hard-standing surface and the guide & scout huts, facing north-east

Land to the south of Cambrian Works (the former Jewson's warehouse) currently comprises a vacant plot of brownfield land, bordered by metal fencing on all sides, which was formerly the location of a saw mill and timber yard before it was redeveloped in the second half of the 20th century into a modern warehouse/factory associated with Cambrian Works (Plate 6 and Plate 7). The vacant plots consisted of demolition material, small spoil heaps and gravel likely used to level the Site (Plate 8 and Plate 9).



Plate 6 General view showing the north-eastern area, taken from the entrance to the plot, facing north-east



Plate 7 General view showing the north-eastern area, facing south-west



Plate 8 View showing border of the vacant plot adjacent to Wrexham General Station, facing south-west



Plate 9 View showing northern boundary of the unoccupied parcel of land, facing west

Station Approach continues between the former good's shed and Cambrian Works (the former Jewson's warehouse) and was accessed via metal gates on Station Approach (Plate 11). A small section of stone wall borders Station Approach and additional car parking spaces to the south of Cambrian Works (the former Jewson's warehouse) (Plate 10). Station Approach and the hard-standing area in the north of the Site comprise block paving (Plate 11 and Plate 12).



Plate 10 View showing stone wall bordering Station Approach and vacant land, facing east



Plate 11 View of continuation of Station Approach, showing the former Jewson's building on the right and the former goods shed on the left, facing north



Plate 12 Vacant land comprising block paving in the north of the Site, facing east

A long narrow building borders lies within the west of the Site (Plate 13 and Plate 14). The building aligns with a former goods shed shown on historic mapping (Fig 2 and Figs 4-9) and consists of a rectangular building of multiple phases, comprising a brick range, a stone single-storey range, a further brick single-storey range and a red brick two-storey range. The windows on the eastern and northern elevation of the building are boarded up and holes are evident in the roof of the single-storey ranges. Loading doors are visible throughout the west-facing elevation of the building, which directly adjoins the railway line. Several parts of the range have been filled with modern brick and breezeblocks. The building is of historic interest and may be considered to be of low (local) significance.



Plate 13 View showing the 19th-century goods shed, facing south-west



Plate 14 View showing the east-facing elevation of the 19th-century former goods shed, taken from platforms 2/3, facing east

Cambrian Works (former Jewson's warehouse) lies in the east of the Site, opposite the former goods shed. The building seemingly comprises a modern orange/red-brick warehouse with grey cladding (Plate 15). The west face of the building is mostly open, providing double-height access into a covered bay for loading and unloading goods. This building has no heritage interest and is not considered within this assessment.



Plate 15 View from the entrance to Site B, showing the former Jewsons building on the right and the goods shed on the left, facing north

The stone-built Grade II Listed Wrexham General Railway Station (Plate 16) occupies land in the southern part of the Site, to the west of Station Approach. A red brick extension is to the south with the station entrance situated between the stone and brick buildings (Plate 17).



Plate 16 Grade II Listed Wrexham General Railway Station, taken from Station Approach, facing north-west



Plate 17 View showing later extension to the Grade II Listed Wrexham General Station, facing west

The north-west part of the Site includes an area of vegetation that includes the projected route of Wat's Dyke (see Plate 17, p13).

The setting of the Site consists of mixed development with the Site being bordered by modern two-storey residential properties at Spring Gardens and late 19th-century terraces at Gerald Street. Modern single-storey

retail units lie immediately to the south the Site, whilst the Royal Mail depot and five- and four-storey modern, brick-built apartment blocks lie to the east, together with Grosvenor Road Conservation Area. The wider setting includes further residential development, Wrexham AFC football club and racecourse stadium, a four-storey Premier Inn Hotel and eight-storey Wrexham University building.

1.2. Study area

1.2.1. Determining the Study Area

Due to the scale of the proposed development and existing intervening development, a 200m radius study area has been chosen in order to assess the impact of the proposed development on the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets in short-to-long-range views across the townscape. The study area is based on professional judgement and was informed by a comprehensive survey of the surrounding area. Factors such as the degree of intervisibility between heritage assets and the proposal site, the contribution of setting to an asset's significance and historic and functional relationships between the Site and assets has been taken into account (Cadw, 2017).

1.2.2. Designations

The Site contains Wrexham General Station that is a Grade II Listed Building, the projected route of Wat's Dyke and the former goods shed (Table 1). The Listed Building and former goods shed will be retained within the scheme.

Description	Designation	Record Number	National Grid Reference
Wrexham General Station: Entrance Building	Grade II Listed Building	1855	332963, 350796
Projected route of Wat's Dyke	Heritage Asset	-	332931 350814
The former goods shed	Historic interest	104152	333001, 350932

Table 1 list of heritage assets within the Site

The Site is located within 200m of a further five Listed Buildings, a Scheduled Monument and Grosvenor Road Conservation Area (Table 2; Plate 17). The proposed development will not have a physical impact on these designated heritage assets however, it may have an indirect impact on the setting of the designated heritage assets.

Description	Designation	Record Number	National Grid Reference
Wat's Dyke: Section SSW of Wrexham Station, 130m Long / at Crispin Lane, Wrexham	Scheduled Monument	600 / DE191 / 3946 / DE286	332883, 350665 / 332998, 351188
The Former Mines Rescue Centre	Grade II Listed Building	87623	332811, 350744
Offices and Lodge to Wrexham Lager Brewery	Grade II Listed Building	1765	332985, 350501
Adult Education Centre, University College of North Wales	Grade II Listed Building	1805	333053, 350560
Former Wrexham Infirmary	Grade II Listed Building	1805	333080, 350517
No.1 Grosvenor Road (NW Side), Clywd	Grade II Listed Building	1830	333162, 350560
Grosvenor Road Conservation Area	Conservation Area	141587	

Table 2 Designated heritage assets within 200m of the Site

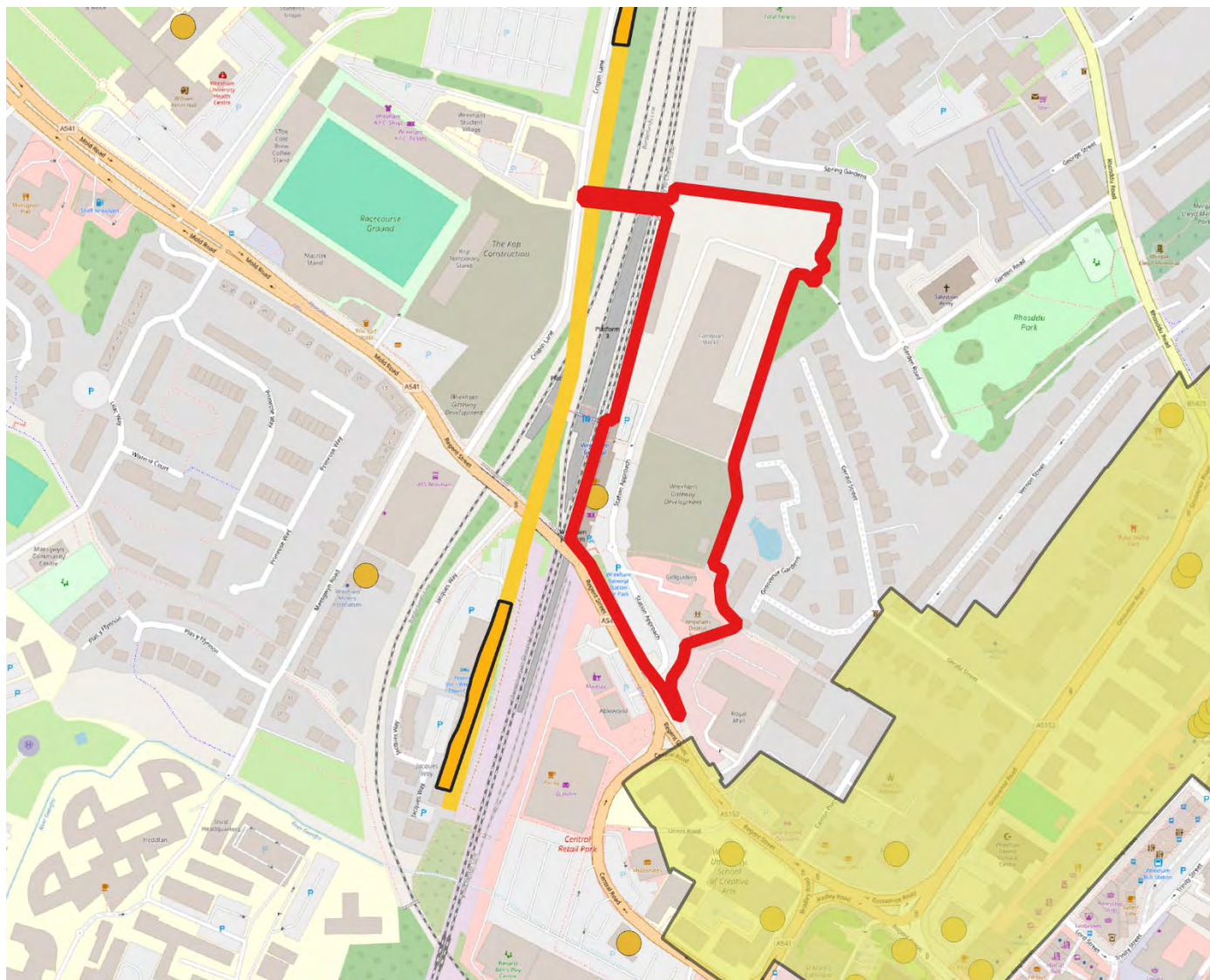


Plate 18 View of the Site superimposed onto OSM data, QGIS Geographic Information System, showing the location of Listed Buildings (yellow points), Grosvenor Road Conservation Area (shaded yellow) in the far right and Wat's Dyke Scheduled monuments (yellow line)

1.2.3. Consultation with Local Planning Authority

Wrexham County Borough Council is advised on proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets by the Council's Building Conservation Officer, Daniel Jones. The Council's Building Conservation Officer was contacted by email on 27th May 2025. It is anticipated that the scope of this assessment will be reviewed by Council's Building Conservation Officer on 13th June.

Wrexham County Borough Council is advised on archaeological matters by Heneb: Clwyd-Powys Archaeology. Heneb: Clwyd-Powys Archaeology were initially consulted in February 2025 and again on 20th June 2025 regarding the impact of the proposals on buried remains. Archaeology is covered in detail in an accompanying desk-based assessment (Civic Heritage, 2025).

2. Methodology

2.1. Heritage significance and impact assessment methodology

The aim of the Heritage Assessment is to assess the heritage interest of the Site and identify nearby designated heritage assets which have the potential to be affected by the development proposals. The analysis of heritage significance and impact within the Heritage Assessment follows guidance set out by Cadw's, including *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales* (Cadw, 2017), *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* (Cadw, 2017), *Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales* (Cadw, 2011) and Cadw's *Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment* (Cadw, 2017).

Guidance in *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales* (Cadw, 2017, p. 7) describes four groups of heritage 'values', which are referred to below:

- Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative.
- Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The significance of a historic asset is described in terms of the value of the historic asset because of its heritage interest (architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic) and is also described in relation to the asset's heritage values (evidential, historical, communal, and aesthetic). In addition, criterion provided by ICOMOS is used for assessing the value of heritage assets (ICOMOS, 2011), see Appendix 1.

The Heritage Impact Assessment (within Chapter 7) comprises an assessment of both the direct and indirect heritage impacts, defined as follows by ICOMOS in its 2011 guidance contained within '*Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*' (ICOMOS, 2011).

- Direct heritage impacts are a primary consequence of the proposed development resulting in the physical alterations to the fabric or character of the Site. They result in a degree of change to the Site, or alterations to its setting.
- Indirect impacts occur as a secondary consequence of the proposed development, and can result in physical loss or changes to the setting of a heritage asset beyond the development footprint.

The predicted significance of the impact of the proposed development is based on the value or sensitivity of the heritage asset and on the magnitude of the impact on that heritage asset (ICOMOS, 2011). These impacts may be positive, neutral or negative (Cadw, 2017, p. 9).

2.2. Research sources

The Heritage Assessment has examined a range of existing documentary, cartographic, photographic and electronic information including:

- National Library of Scotland historic maps;
- The National Library of Wales tithe maps;
- The Historic Environment Record supplied by Heneb (Received: 27/01/2025; Reference: E7006);
- Cadw designation data (downloaded 22/01/2025);
- Records held by National Monuments Record Wales;
- Google Earth;

- Welsh Government Aerial Photograph Archive;
- Reports of archaeological work carried out in the Study Area;
- LiDAR from DataMapWales; and,
- Historic Landscape and Cultural Landscape information through LANDMAP.

The Wrexham Archives and Local Studies online catalogue was searched for potential documents relating to the Site, however, no potential sources were identified.

2.3. Site visit

A Site visit was undertaken at the Site and in the surrounding area to identify key heritage assets and views within the locality, particularly those within Conservations Areas, and of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments.

3. Planning Policy

3.1. Introduction

This assessment accords with National, Regional and Local Planning Policies which relate to the historic environment. National planning policies relevant to heritage asset management are contained within the the Planning Policy Wales (Welsh Government, 2024).

3.1.1. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. The Site contains a Grade II Listed Building and is located within 200m of five Listed Buildings, a Scheduled Monument and a Conservation Area. Therefore, two sections of the act are relevant.

Section 66 (1) of the Act requires the Local Planning Authority to “have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses” when considering whether to grant planning permission.

Section 72 (1) states that in relation to Conservation Areas “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.

3.1.2. National Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

The Planning Policy Wales (Welsh Government, 2024) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government and is supplemented by Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: *The Historic Environment* and associated best practice guidance on the historic environment produced by Cadw. The primary objective of the PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Section 6.1 of the PPW deals specifically with conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paragraphs 6.1.1 – 6.1.32). The section states that ‘the historic environment can only be maintained as a resource for future generations if the individual historic assets are protected and conserved’ and that ‘the planning system must take into account the Welsh Government’s objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations’. Historic assets can range from World Heritage Sites to archaeological remains, to historic assets of special local interest.

Paragraph 6.1.6 sets out the Welsh Governments specific objectives for the historic environment, which seek to:

- protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Sites;
- conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and the economy;
- safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved;
- preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous;
- preserve the special interest of sites on the register of historic parks and gardens; and
- protect areas on the register of historic landscapes in Wales.

Paragraph 6.1.7 states that “it is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include a consideration of the setting of an historic asset which

might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way”.

Paragraph 6.1.9 states that “any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place”.

The PPW also sets out the Welsh Governments approach to the range of historic assets. Paragraphs 6.1.10 concern listed buildings and state that “there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses” (paragraph 6.1.10).

Paragraphs 6.1.14 - 6.1.17 concern conservation areas and state that “there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas or their settings” (paragraph 6.1.14) and “there is a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments, including advertisements, which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level” (paragraph 6.1.15).

Paragraphs 6.1.18 – 6.1.19 concern historic parks and gardens and state that “Planning authorities should value, protect, conserve and enhance the special interest of parks and gardens and their settings included on the register of historic parks and gardens in Wales” (paragraph 6.1.18).

Paragraphs 6.1.20 – 6.1.21 concern historic landscapes and state that “the Welsh Government seeks to protect areas on the register of historic landscapes in Wales” (paragraph 6.1.20) and that “planning authorities should protect those assets included on the register of historic landscapes in Wales”.

Paragraph 6.1.22 concerns the approach to World Heritage Sites and states that “the planning system recognises the need to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage Sites in Wales. The impacts of proposed developments on a World Heritage Site and its setting and, where it exists, the World Heritage Site buffer zone and its essential setting, is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application”.

Paragraphs 6.1.23 – 6.1.27 concern archaeological remains and state that “the planning system recognises the need to conserve archaeological remains. The conservation of archaeological remains and their settings is a material consideration in determining planning applications, whether those remains are a scheduled monument or not” (paragraph 6.1.23). Regarding undesignated archaeological remains “planning authorities will need to weigh the relative importance of the archaeological remains and their settings against other factors, including the need for the proposed development” (paragraph 6.1.25) and “where archaeological remains are known to exist or there is a potential for them to survive, an application should be accompanied by sufficient information, through desk-based assessment and/or field evaluation, to allow a full understanding of the impact of the proposal on the significance of the remains” (paragraph 6.1.26).

3.1.3. Local Development Framework

The PPW outlines the need for development plans to consider locally specific policies relevant to the historic environment. Wrexham County Borough Council adopted a Local Development Plan (LDP) in December 2023 and covers the period 2013-2028 (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2023). The LDP forms the basis for decisions on land use planning in the area. *Policy SP15: Historic and Cultural Environment* sets out the approach to the Historic Environment.

Policy SP15 states that:

“Development will only be supported where it conserves, protects, preserves or enhances the following cultural and historic assets of the County Borough and their setting:

- i. Listed Buildings;
- ii. Conservation Areas;
- iii. Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site;
- iv. Registered Historic Parks, Gardens and Landscapes; and
- v. Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Remains” (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2023, p. 67).

In relation to Listed Buildings, paragraph 3.100 states that “Listed buildings are valuable assets that cannot be replaced. Within Wrexham County Borough there are over 1040 listed buildings. Caring for listed buildings appropriately, and ensuring their sustainable use, enables their continued contribution to the cultural heritage of Wrexham and Wales. In considering works to listed buildings the emphasis must be on their sensitive repair and improvement using traditional materials and techniques. Any works to a listed building whether internally or externally or within its curtilage will only be supported where it is demonstrated that there will be no significant harm to its special historic or architectural significance and its setting. Demolition of listed buildings will not normally be permitted” (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2023, p. 68).

Paragraph 3.114 of the local plan also notes that “Offa’s Dyke and Wat’s Dyke are nationally important archaeological monuments, sections of which are designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments whilst other parts remain unscheduled. The safeguarding to be applied under policy SP15 in combination with the protection afforded to Scheduled Ancient Monuments at National level will serve to protect these assets and their settings whether scheduled or not” (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2023, p. 70).

4. Historical background

4.1. Introduction

The historical background provides context for the Site, as well as its significance and contribution to the surrounding historic environment.

4.2. Prehistoric (pre-10,000 BC to AD 43)

Archaeological evidence for human activity in North East Wales during the prehistoric period is limited. The earliest evidence of prehistoric activity dates to the Palaeolithic period, and evidence of early Neanderthals have been recorded at Pontnewydd Cave. Although throughout the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods, human presence was influenced by the glacial-interglacial cycle and accompanying climatic and environmental changes which has led to scant evidence of early human presence (A Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales: North East Wales: Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, 2001).

The earliest evidence of activity in the Wrexham area dates to the Mesolithic period. Tools made from flint have been discovered at Borrass, which is located to the east of the town. Although no evidence of permanent settlement has so far been discovered (NPRN 33102; <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/33102/>).

Evidence of settlement in Wales during the Neolithic and early Bronze Age periods is more common, with examples of well-preserved structural and associated artefactual and ecofactual domestic data identified. Less substantial but more prolific settlement derives from flint scatters from these periods. Upland areas within the region have a high potential for remains of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement due to the acid soils and areas of bog. Although, much of the structural data comes from protected contexts below later monuments so the good preservation of later documents contributes to the potential preservation of earlier domestic data. Within North East Wales, evidence of industrial sites comprising flint, stone and ore extraction sites have also been recorded. However, burial and ceremonial sites form the most archaeological visible remains of the period (Gibson, 2001).

Within Wrexham, evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age tools have been recorded which suggest that the area was exploited from these periods. Bronze Age burial mounds have also been identified at Fairy Road and Hillbury Road, to the south of the modern town, c. 1.1km south-east of the Site (NPRN 33102; <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/33102/>).

Evidence of Iron Age activity in North East Wales mainly comprises hillforts, although promontory forts, defended enclosures, enclosed settlements and huts have also been recorded (Gale, 2001).

No historic assets of this period are recorded within the study area.

4.3. Roman (AD 43 – AD 410)

There is a lack of evidence of settlement pattern, urban centres or *civitas* (small towns) in North East Wales, although evidence of military activity is more common. The region has the largest number of marching camps in Wales and all known auxiliary forts have been subject to some excavation, as well as several *vici* at fort sites. A Roman industrial complex was identified as Holt which served the needs of the legionary fortress at Chester and produced brick and tiles (Ref DE013). Holt is located c. 8.2km north-east of the Site. Remains of a Roman settlement were also discovered, at Ffrith, Llanfynydd, c. 6.2km north-west of the Site (Ref FL164).

The first evidence of permanent settlement in the Wrexham area dates to the Roman period. An excavation at the site of Roman farm at Plas Coch revealed evidence of buildings, agriculture, and trade (NPRN 33102; <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/33102/>). The site of the farm is c. 980m north-west of the Site. In total, two Roman coins were found in Wrexham in 1999 and 2000, approximately 342m east of the Site (HER 120206).

No historic assets of this period are recorded within the study area.

4.4. Medieval (AD 410 – AD 1540)

4.4.1. Early medieval (AD 410 – 1066)

The early medieval period in Wales begins with the end of Roman administration and ended with the Norman incursions of the 11th century. Placename evidence can provide an indication of possible settlement and land use during the early medieval period. The name Wrexham was first documented in 1161 as *Wristlesham* and derives from the Old English personal name and *ham*, meaning 'Wryhtel's water-meadow' (Mills, 2011). The area to the south of St Giles Church has been identified as the location of the original water meadow. The water meadow may have provided high-quality grazing for animals which would have likely fuelled the growth of the town during the medieval period (NPRN 33102; <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/33102/>). Church Street, High Street, Town Hill, and Hope Street in the modern town centre formed part of the historic core of Wrexham. The Site is located beyond the potential early medieval settlement.

Wrexham was also developing as a border town. The Scheduled Monument associated with Wat's Dyke lies to the west of the modern town centre. The dyke was constructed as an attempt to mark out and formalise the boundary between the Welsh Kingdom of Powys and the English Kingdom of Mercia in the 8th century. Wat's dyke mostly comprised an earthen bank with a ditch to the west and runs south from Holywell to the Morda Valley near Maesbury. The dyke survives as a Scheduled Monument in two sections within the study area, c. 62m south of the Site (DE191; HER 106675) and c. 118m north of the Site (DE286; HER 85247).

The location of the two areas, as recorded on the HER, would indicate that the line of the dyke runs through the south-west part of the Site. However, a section of Wat's Dyke was excavated in 1972, c. 30m west of the Site, suggesting that the route was further west of the Site, although many of the original site records were lost and details of the excavations have been confused. According to the Offa's Dyke Project archive, the original ground level was not reached, and no dating evidence was recorded. The bank was badly damaged but was recorded from layers of cobbles and pebbles. A further excavation was undertaken in 1977 but was abandoned due to bad weather. A final excavation took place in 1978, but the ditch could not be located due to past quarrying activity on the site.

Scheduled Monuments of Wat's Dyke (DE191 / HER 106675; DE286 / HER 85247) lie within the study area, whilst the projected route of the ditch falls within the north-west edge of the Site.

4.4.2. Late medieval (AD 1066 – 1540)

Wrexham was not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and the area was likely not yet dominated by the Normans. The princes of Powys conquered the area in the early 12th century which paved the way for Wrexham developing as a trading town (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009). Medieval development was likely centred around the church of St Giles which was established in the 14th century c. 840m south-east of the Site (Cadw Ref 1769).

Several markets were established in the town by the 14th century, and the area formed a significant local centre. The main medieval market occupied High Street to the north of the church. During the late medieval period, settlement spread from the first tenement plots close to the church in the centre of the town, northwards toward Lambpit Street, c. 630m south-east of the Site. The Site was located beyond the historic core of Wrexham, which was developing from the late medieval period, and likely lay within undeveloped land close to Wat's Dyke.

The prospering woollen and leather trade encouraged economic immigrants to the town and by 1391 over half of the inhabitants were economic migrants (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009). The advent of coal mining and iron working in the 15th century added to the town's importance.

Modern (Plate 1; Fig 2) and historic mapping (Figs 3-9) show a pond to the east of the Site. Local legend described the pond and the witch's or hag's pool, which is believed to be the place where ducking took place (HER 121772). This was an occurrence that took place throughout Britain from the medieval period to 18th century.

No historic assets of the late medieval period are recorded within the study area.

4.5. Post-medieval (AD 1540 – c AD 1750)

During the post-medieval period Wrexham continued to develop as an important regional market town that attracted travelling merchants and fairs from Yorkshire, Manchester and Birmingham. The markets and fairs made the town central to the North Wales economy. Poultry, eggs, butter and vegetable produce was sold on Hope Street, butchers traded on Abbot Street and craftsmen sold their goods on High Street (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009).

Purpose-built market courts were also established in Wrexham in the late 18th century, including Jones' Hall for linen and fancy goods on Queen Street, c. 610m south-east of the Site. Market Courts for cloth dealers, cattle drovers, and farmers were also established. In addition, many thriving workshops such as blacksmiths, braziers, tin platers, skimmers, tanners, curriers and leather sellers were located close to their suppliers and markets (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009). Wrexham became known for its leather-making and nail-making industries in the 18th century and by the mid-18th century, Wrexham was a small market town with a population of around 2000 people (NPRN 33102; <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/33102/>). The Site is located beyond known post-medieval activity, away from the historic core of Wrexham.

No historic assets of this period are recorded within the study area.

4.6. Industrial (c AD 1750 - 1914)

The population of Wrexham continued to grow throughout the industrial period, rising from 5,500 people in 1833 to over 15,000 people by 1900. New shops and businesses opened, catering to those who were employed through the local industry and markets. A purpose-built Butcher's Market was constructed in 1848, a Butter Market in 1879 and a Vegetable Market in 1910. In 1857, a charter of incorporation was granted, and Wrexham became a Borough (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009).

Traditional workshop industries which began in the 18th century in Wrexham, such as brewing, skinning, tanning and blacksmithing, expanded rapidly during the 19th century. The brewing industry also began to dominate the town's industry in the 19th century and by the 1860s there were 19 local breweries mostly located on the banks of the River Gwenfro, utilising the water source (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009), including a lager brewery established in 1882 (c. 220m south of the Site; HER 34389).

In the 19th century, Wrexham was developing beyond its historic core, westwards, towards the Site. Regent Street, immediately south of the Site, was established in the mid-19th century as a major axis route out of the west of the town. Important civic buildings were constructed along the road, including Wrexham Infirmary constructed in 1838-39 (c. 190m south-east of the Site; HER 32744). The Roman Catholic Cathedral of St Mary was also built in 1857, c. 280m west of the Site (HER 32743), along with several villas reflecting the Wrexham's late 19th-century development. King Street was laid out in 1828 as one of the first residential streets to be formally laid out in Wrexham, and between 1861-1881 Grosvenor Road and Grove Road were laid out as prestigious residential areas for the emerging middle class, located around 200m east of the Site. In the 1890s, Gerald Street was laid out immediately east of the Site and comprised high status semi-detached and terraced housing (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009).

Wrexham was made a municipal borough in 1857 and in 1878 was described as 'the chief market town of the (Denbighshire) county' that derived support from the numerous mining villages surrounding it (Eyre Bros

1878).

Advances in transport links spurred the expansion of the town. Stagecoaches initially connected Wrexham to London, Shrewsbury and Chester. However, it was accepted by industrialists in the early 19th century that the Denbighshire district would benefit from the railway. Attempts to gain approval for a proposed line from Wrexham to Chester in 1839, 1841 and 1842 failed due to opposition from the landed gentry. In 1843, a further attempt was made by railway engineer Henry Robertson and his partners, Roy, Betts, Ross and Mackenzie who formed the Brymbo, Mineral and Railway Co. However, this attempt also failed (Lloyd Jones, 2023).

In 1844, the North Wales Mineral Railway was incorporated. In 1845, a private Act of Parliament was authorised for the construction of the Shrewsbury, Oswestry & Chester Junction Railway. The line was originally intended to form a junction to the south-east of Chester that would bypass the North Wales Mineral Railway between Wrexham and Chester. However, in 1846, the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway (HER 119857) was formed by the amalgamation of the North Wales Mineral Railway and the Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Chester Junction Railway. A section of the line, between Chester and Rhosymedre opened in November 1846, bringing the railway to Wrexham (http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/features/shrewsbury_and_chester_railway/index.shtml). The line was located in the west of the Site.

In 1854, the Great Western Railway (GWR) took over the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway. In the early 20th century, a GWR station building was constructed, as a replacement for an earlier station building provided by Henry Robertson, for the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway Company. The station building currently survives as a Grade II Listed building within the Site, known as Wrexham General Station (Cadw Ref 1885; HER 32796).

In 1862, the Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay Railway (WM&CQR) Company was formed. The railway was to include a junction with the Shrewsbury and Chester line of the GWR at its Wrexham Station (Accounts and Papers: Thirty-eight Volumes, vol. II, 1862). The new line would connect Wrexham to the port of Connah's Quay, providing access to coastal markets and to the River Dee (Lloyd Jones, 2023). A station for the railway was opened at Wrexham in 1866 to the west of Wrexham General (formerly the GWR), where the Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay line terminated. The Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay Railway later became known as the Great Central Railway and is currently known as Wrexham Exchange (HER 144375).

In 1885, the WM&CQR was extended half a mile from Wrexham Exchange Station to a new station known as Wrexham Station. The work involved tunnelling under the GWR railway, and the train first ran in November 1888 (HER 119867). The line of the extension was around 300m south of the Site, with Wrexham Central located approximately 400m south-east (HER 70894).

The Site and study area mostly includes historic assets that date to this period. This includes Wrexham General Station, the former goods station, Offices and Lodge to Wrexham Lager Brewery, Adult Education Centre, University College of North Wales, Former Wrexham Infirmary, No.1 Grosvenor Road (NW Side) and Grosvenor Road Conservation Area.

4.7. Modern (post-1914)

Brewing remained one of Wrexham's main industries in the 20th century, although many closed in the late 20th century due a change in tastes and rationalisation of the industry. The larger brewery c. 220m south of the site remained open until 2000 (HER 34389). The Wrexham and Minera line remained as the main railway branch which supported the steelworks at Brymbo and the limeworks at Minera. Although the network of railway branch lines were torn up in the 1960s and '70s when a period of economic depression began in Wrexham (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009).

From the 1980s and 1990s, the Welsh Development Agency, with partnership with local authorities, attempted to improve the town through Town Improvement Grants and Environmental Improvement Grants to boost the area's employment prospects. In the early 21st century, improved railway links to Cardiff were established. Several retail and mixed-use developments have been established across the town (Wrexham County Borough Council, 2009).

4.8. Development of the Site

The 1846 tithe map of Wrexham is one of the earliest maps to show the Site (Plate 19; Fig 3). The map shows that the Site comprised enclosed undeveloped fields in the mid-19th century. Regent Street had been laid out to the south of the Site and the witch's / hag pool is shown adjoining to the east (HER 121772).

The tithe map apportionments reveal that the land within the Site was in use as hay / pasture and arable in 1846 (Table 3). The tithe map apportionments for the field in the north of the Site are not available. William Samuels occupied two of the pastoral fields, which were owned by 'Glebe'. In addition, plot 356 was also named 'part of glebe field'. A glebe field was a piece of land that provided additional income to support a parish priest and would be passed from vicar to vicar (Manley, Foot, & Davis, 2019).

Plot 356 was owned by the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway Company in 1846, although no details of the railway were provided on the tithe map. The plot was irregular in shape, with an elongated area to the south-east, roughly representing the route of Station Approach. Plot 250 was named 'gravel hole field' indicating that previous extraction had taken place within the field (Table 3). In addition, a land boundary was marked in red in the north of the Site, later labelled as a municipal boundary (Plate 21). The boundary within the north-west of the Site, likely contains the projected line of Wat's Dyke which is a Scheduled Monument to the north and south of the Site, if the route was constructed in a straight linear route.

Field No.	Field Name	Land Use	Occupier	Landowner
357	Part of Do	Hay, Pasture	William Samuels	Glebe
356	Part of Glebe field	Arable	Selves	Shrewsbury and Chester Railway Company
355	Pond Field	Hay, Pasture	William Samuels	Glebe
350	Gravel hole field	Arable	Meredith Jones	Foulkes Emma

Table 3 1846 Wrexham tithe map apportionments (courtesy of Tithe Maps of Wales)



Plate 19 Extract from the 1846 tithe map of Wrexham showing the Site boundary

The Shrewsbury and Chester Railway opened at Wrexham in 1846, with the railway line running through the Site. In 1866, the WM&CQR opened, terminating within the Site. The next map to capture the Site is the 1874 / 1884 Ordnance Survey map, which shows the developments of the railway in the Site in the mid- to late 19th century (Plate 21; Fig 4). The map was surveyed in 1872 and therefore shows the original Wrexham Station, before it was replaced with the GWR station building. The earlier station formed a long rectangular building, labelled for Passengers and Goods. A footbridge to the south, close to Regent Street, provided access to the western platform. The Wrexham, Mold & Connah's Quay Railway Station was also within the Site, to the west. The station was likely built between 1846-55 (HER 32796).

A photograph was taken of Wrexham Station in 1869, showing the passengers waiting on the platform of the railway (Plate 20). The station was a two-storey building with a balcony on the second first floor and single-storey flat-roofed building adjoining. Steps leading to the footbridge were to the right of the station on the image, reflecting the footprint shown on the 1974/84 OS map (Plate 21).



Plate 20 Photograph showing the original Wrexham Station c. 1869 (courtesy of Peter Chadwick/ Clwyd Family History Society)

In 1872, a goods shed was established to the north of Wrexham Station, with a railway line running directly into the shed (Plate 21). A line also passed to the east of the shed, heading south to a turntable that was situated between Wrexham Station and the goods shed. Several lampposts labelled 'L.P' were scattered throughout the railway yards and several areas of hachured lines indicated a change in topography throughout the Site. The municipal boundary ran through broadly the centre of the Site.

A steam saw mill had also been established within the east of the Site by 1872. The mill comprised a series of narrow rectangular buildings with a timber yard to the south, which lay within the Site boundary. A row of smaller buildings to the south may have been associated with the timber yard. The works were established by at least 1860, when William Thomas was advertised as a timber merchant in Wrexham (*Wrexham Advertiser* 23rd June 1860). William Thomas was also recorded as the proprietor of the steam saw mill at 'railway station' in Wrexham in 1880 (Slater 1880).



Plate 21 Extract from the 1872-84 Ordnance Survey map with Site boundary. The map was surveyed in 1872, and was published in 1874, before being reprinted in 1884

In 1875, the Great Western Station was described as 'by no means a convenient one or in any way adequate to the important of the town, its platforms especially being narrow and somewhat dangerous. The Station of the Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay line stands adjacent' (The Penny Guide to Wrexham and Surrounding District, 1875, p. 4). This may explain why a new GWR station was eventually constructed within the Site (HER 32796). The HER and CADW Listed Building report for the station building states that the GWR station building was built in 1875 as a replacement to the original, and that later extensions and enlargement of platforms took place in 1909-12 (<https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=1855>). Western General Station building is a Grade II Listed Building and currently remains in use as a railway station. Conversely, a plaque on the stone phase of Wrexham General Station building states that the present buildings were constructed between 1909-1912.

In 1895, Arthur Edgcumbe was the station manager of the Great Western Railway line. George Weston was the goods agent and J. B. Murless was the carrier. George Jones was the station master central at Exchange station and Tom Johnson was recorded as the 'master'. Slater's directory records that Thomas William remained at the saw mill as a timber merchant (Slater 1895).

The 1900 Ordnance Survey (OS) map is the next map to capture the Site, which shows the railway station comprising two rectangular buildings to the east and west of the railway line, with a connecting bridge (Plate 22; Fig 5). In addition, the 1900 OS map shows the line of the WM&CQ Railway had been moved further west than the 1872 map (Plate 21). This may have been due to the 1885 extension of the line, or the expansion of the GWR.

By 1900, the timber yard had been extended with a long narrow building constructed within the south of the Site (Plate 22). In 1890, a fire broke out at the timber yard of William Thomas. The fire was at a stable described in the centre of the yard. The stable building formed 'part of a chain of erections, near which are the engine house and steam saw mills. Above the stalls for the horses is the hay-lost where the chaff-cutting is done' indicating that the stable formed part of the new range shown on the 1900 OS map (*Wrexham Advertiser* 16th August 1890).

The 1900 OS map shows that a further building had been constructed in the south-east of the Site, which was likely associated with the nursery that is annotated on the plan and lay beyond the south-east boundary of the Site. Cambrian Iron Works was also shown on the 1900 Ordnance Survey map, to the north of the saw mill (Plate 22). The works comprised several buildings adjacent to a line of the GWR railway. Cambrian Iron Works was established by the Powell Brothers in 1876, originally under the company name of Messrs Powell and Whitaker. The company was described as 'iron and brass founders and agricultural and general engineers'. The works produced a variety of agricultural machinery and implements (<https://archives.library.wales/index.php/powell-brothers-limited>).

The Powell Bros & Whitaker were recorded as engineers and Strachan & Evans were recorded as nurserymen in the site in 1895 (Slater 1895).

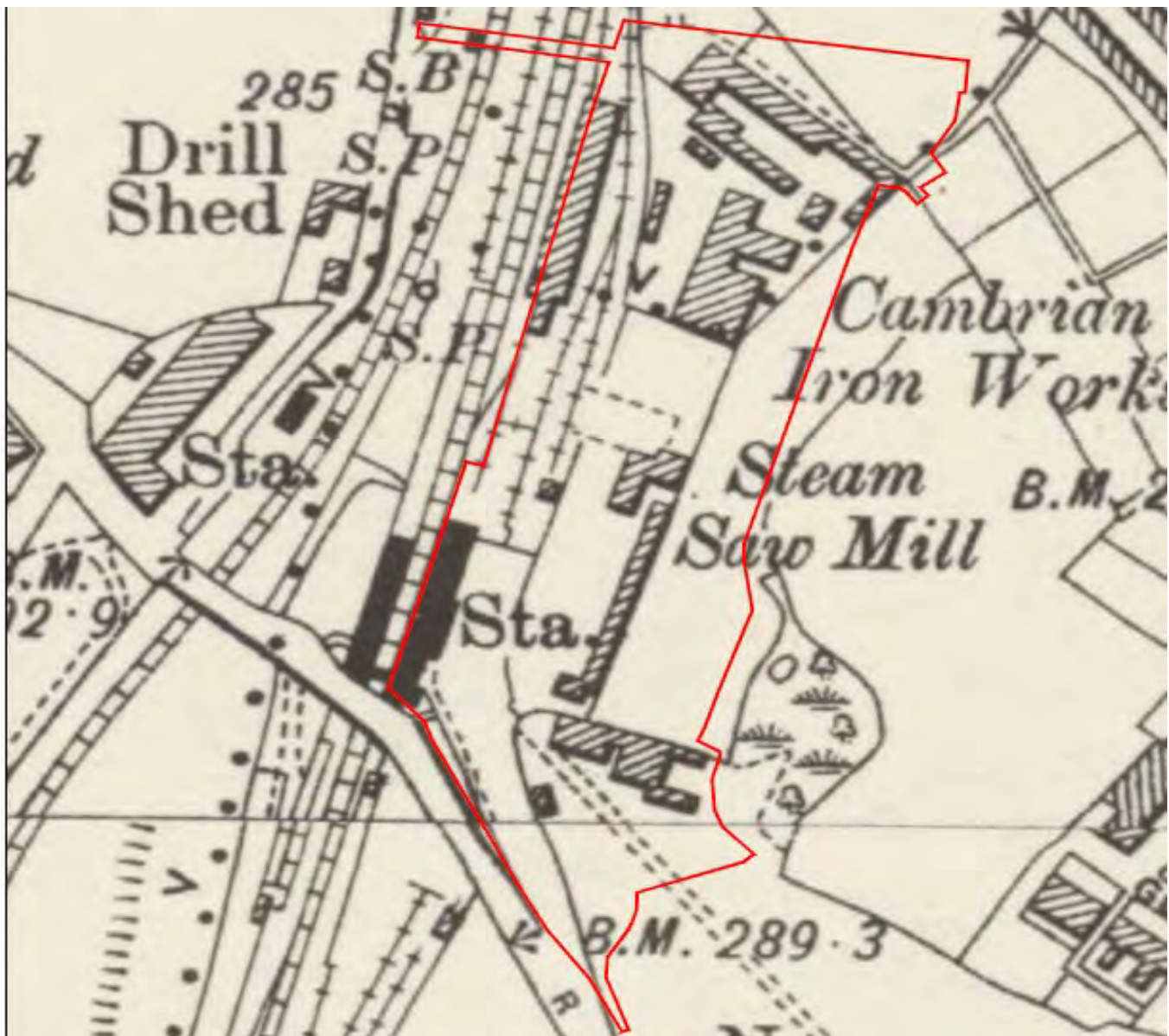
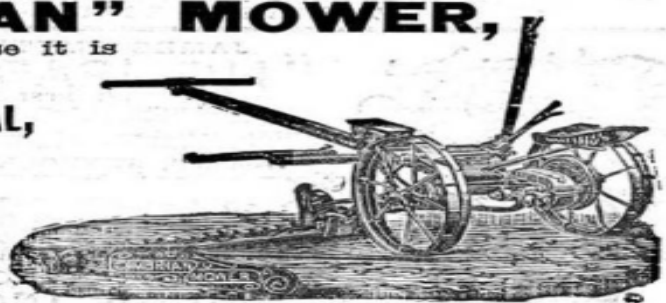


Plate 22 Extract from the 1900 Ordnance Survey map with Site boundary

MOWING MACHINE BUYERS

Should obtain
THE "CAMBRIAN" MOWER,
Because it is

- ☛ LIGHT IN DRAUGHT,
- ☛ MADE OF BEST MATERIAL,
- ☛ EASILY MANAGED,
- ☛ FREE FROM BREAKAGES,
- ☛ AND ONE OF THE CHEAPEST
- ☛ IN THE MARKET.



1-Horse, £15; 2-Horse, £17 10s.; 2-Horse Mower and Reaper, £20 6s.

USERS SAY:—

"It is a most useful machine—simple, and does its work well."

USERS SAY:—

"It can be used on the roughest land without the least injury, being light and strong."

USERS SAY:—

"It gives the greatest satisfaction in corn and hay."

POWELL BROTHERS & WHITAKER, CAMBRIAN IRON WORKS. WREXHAM.

Plate 23 Image advertising the 'Cambrian' mower, produced at the Cambrian Iron Works (The Ironmonger Universal Engineer Metal Trades Advertiser, 1896)

The next map to capture the Site is the 1912 Ordnance Survey map (Plate 24; Fig. 6). The map shows Wrexham General Station comprising several adjoining buildings along the railway platform. These likely include the covered platforms and footbridge that are currently extant. The footbridge to the south of the station and the building to the east had been removed. Between 1872 and 1912, the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway/ GWR line had expanded to the west, with a platform constructed between the eastern lines and the lines of the WM&CQ Railway. A footbridge had been constructed to the north of the station, with a platform canopy/cover connected to the station and footbridge, and the eastern platform. The footprint on the 1912 map reflects the modern-day footprint.

The buildings in the south-east of the Site were shown as glasshouses/ hothouses in 1912, likely associated with the nursery to the south-east of the Site (Plate 24). No further development had taken place within the Site.



Plate 24 Extract from the 1912 Ordnance Survey map with Site boundary

In 1914, Messrs Powell Brothers and Whitaker of the Cambrian Iron Works became known as Powell Brothers Ltd. Between 1914-1918 the company shifted towards the production of munitions to assist with the war effort and during this period, J. E. Powell's sons, J. W. Powell and R. Glyn Powell were in partnership with their father (<https://archives.library.wales/index.php/powell-brothers-limited>). In 1915, a shell factory was proposed at the existing Powells agricultural engineering in the north of the Site. The munitions factory opened in 1916. The factory produced 10,000 high-explosive shells and manufactured 1500 trench mortar bombs a week, with steel provided from Brymbo and picric acid from Monsanto at Cefn. Coal was provided from local collieries. The factory also had its own railway sidings running off the GWR mainline. In total, over 500 women were employed at the factory as munition workers, although in 1918 the female workforce was laid off (HER 142605).

During the 1920s the Powell Brothers experimented with the Powell Motorcycle but were unsuccessful (Graces Guide 2013) and in 1927, the Powell Brothers Limited were described as ‘furnishing ironmongers, iron and steel merchants and cycle agents’. That same year the Cambrian Iron Works were acquired by Rogers and Jackson Limited, a subsidiary of the Rubery Owen group of companies. They became engineers’ merchants, and R. J. Glyn Powell, the grandson of Evan Powell became one of the company’s directors (<https://archives.library.wales/index.php/powell-brothers-limited>).

Historic mapping indicates that the Wrexham General Station was extended between 1912-1944 (Fig 7). No further developments took place in the rest of the Site. William Thomas and Sons were still recorded as timber merchants at Wrexham in 1958 indicating that the saw mill remained with the same family (*Cheshire Observer* 27th September 1958).

The next map to capture the Site is the 1964 Ordnance Survey map which shows that Exchange Station, General Station, the goods shed, and Roger and Jackson Limited works remained within the Site (Fig 8). A further building had been built to the west of the former iron works complex. The steam saw mill appears to have been demolished and modern warehouse/ factory constructed over the footprint by 1964.

The 1974 Ordnance Survey map shows that no further development took place at the Site, except for the construction of the guide and scout huts in the south-east of the Site in 1964 and 1968 (Fig 9).

Aerial imagery of the Site indicates that the former iron works complex has been demolished and replaced with a modern warehouse/ industrial facility, also known as Cambrian Works by 2006 (Plate 25). The facility is still currently within the Site and was formerly occupied by Jewson. The image also shows a modern structure adjoining to the south, which was a country store and has since been demolished. Exchange station was also removed between 1974 and 2006. In addition, two modern buildings currently occupied by girl guides and scouts were constructed in the south-east of the Site which also remain upstanding along with the Grade II listed Wrexham General. The former goods shed is also visible within the photo, to the west of Cambrian works, which currently also remains upstanding within the Site.



Plate 25 Aerial photograph of the Site, taken in 2006, showing partial Site boundary (courtesy of Google Earth)