



GRAEME IVES
HERITAGE PLANNING

Heritage Impact Assessment

Land off Rhos Street, Ruthin, Denbighshire

On Behalf Of: Medra (Tia) Cyfyngedig

December 2021

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared on behalf of Medra (Tia) Cyfyngedig in respect to an application for full planning permission for the demolition of the existing school buildings and the erection of 20 residential dwellings with associated access and landscaping (the 'proposed development') on land to the east of Rhos Street in Ruthin (the 'application site').
- 1.2 From a heritage perspective the application site is located opposite Rose Cottage (Grade II* Listed). A further listed building is distanced to the east of the site, while the Ruthin Town and Llanfwrog Conservation Area is located to the west. The application site is currently occupied by Rhos Street School. The school buildings remain vacant following the relocation of the school in 2018 and have been identified as a 'local historic asset' during pre-application consultations with the Local Planning Authority, Denbighshire County Council.
- 1.3 In determining the proposals, the LPA has a 'statutory duty' under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest that they possess.
- 1.4 Planning Policy Wales, Chapter 6 The Historic Environment (November 2016) states that:
- "Decisions on planning applications and listed building and conservation area consents must be based on adequate information provided by the applicant and any action must be in proportion to the impact of the proposals, and effect on the significance of the assets and their heritage values."*
- 1.5 Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Note 24, the Historic Environment (May 2017) (TAN) advises that:
- "Conservation Principles should be used by others (including owners, developers and other public bodies) to assess the potential impact of a development proposal on the significance of any heritage asset / assets and to assist in decision making where the historic environment is affected by the planning process."*
- 1.6 TAN 24 further recommends that *"Applicants and other organisations are strongly encouraged"* to make use of The Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Development of the Historic Environment (CADW, 2011) when considering development proposals and other works to a historic asset.
- 1.7 In providing guidance regarding the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), CADW emphasises:
- "Understanding your heritage asset and its significance is the foundation for sound decision-making. Once you understand its significance, you can assess the potential impact of any proposed"*

changes and adapt your proposals to find the best way to meet your needs and those of the historic asset.”

- 1.8 Therefore, Chapter 2 of this HIA identifies the relevant historic assets and Chapter 3 summarises the historic development of the application site and adjoining area. Chapter 4 provides a description of the significance of the historic assets, informed by the ‘heritage values’ set out in Conservation Principles and in proportion to the likely impact of the proposals on the significance of the heritage assets.
- 1.9 Chapter 5 provides an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development in accordance with that legislation, policy and guidance. A series of conclusions are provided in Chapter 6.

2.0 The Relevant Heritage Assets

Introduction

2.1 TAN 24 defines a historic asset as follows:

“An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important assets will normally be designated” (TAN 24, paragraph 1.7, Welsh Government, 2017)

2.2 TAN 24 also confirms that the setting of a historic asset includes:

“The surroundings in which it is understood, experienced and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape.”

2.3 TAN 24 emphasises that *“setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset.”*

2.4 The following historic assets are relevant to the consideration of the proposed development:

Listed Buildings:

2.5 Listed buildings are designated for their special architectural or historic interest in accordance with the DCMS Principles for

2.6 Selection of Listed Buildings (2018). The listed buildings identified in Table 2.1 are relevant to the application site:

Table 2.1: Listed buildings relevant to the application site:

Listed Building:	Grade:
Rose Cottage, 15 Rhos Street	II*
Stansty Cottage including attached farm buildings and front retaining wall	II

2.7 While Rose Cottage is located opposite the application site, Stansty Cottage is located well to the east. The application site is largely screened from the Stansty Cottage, with only an oblique view being available of the site frontage. Therefore, Stansty Cottage has been included for completeness.

2.8 Two further listed buildings, comprising the Lodge at Brynhyfryd School (Grade II Listed) and the Sixth Form Centre at Brynhyfryd School (Grade II Listed) are located east of Stansty Cottage but are separated from the application site by intervening buildings, tree cover and the curving alignment of Rhos Street, and have therefore been discounted from this Heritage Impact Assessment.

Conservation Areas:

2.9 Conservation areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to

preserve or enhance (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

- 2.10 The boundary of the Ruthin Town and Llanfwrog Conservation Area is located approximately 150 metres to the west of the application site. Views westwards along Rhos Street towards the conservation area are largely obscured by the alignment of the street and the enclosing buildings. A further block of buildings orientated north-south between Wernfechan and Station Road also helps obscure the conservation area from the application site.
- 2.11 However, views are gained from the southern part of the application site across parts of the roofscape of the conservation area and therefore the character and appearance of the conservation area has been summarised for completeness.

Local Historic Assets:

- 2.12 TAN 24 defines Historic Assets of Special Local Interest as follows:

“Local historic assets which are not already designated as scheduled monuments, listed buildings or conservation areas, or registered historic parks and gardens which make an important contribution to local distinctiveness and public knowledge. Their selection should be based on sound local evidence and consultation and may be maintained on a list by the local planning authority.”

- 2.13 The existing school building was identified as a local historic asset during pre-application consultations with the LPA.

- 2.14 Denbighshire County Council has not published a list of local historic assets. The Denbighshire Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted on 4th October 2021. The search considered a study area of 250 metres radius from the application site. Most of the potential historic assets identified in the search related to artefacts, buildings that were no longer extant or archaeological investigations. However, the extant buildings, in Table 2.2 were identified and have been included in this HIA:

Table 2.2: Extant buildings identified in the HER

Building:	HER Reference:
Rhos Street School	PRN142207
Ruthin Community Hospital	PRN166816

3.0 The Historic Development of the Application Site

Introduction

- 3.1 The wider context of the application site has evolved over time and this process of change is summarised below to help gain an understanding of the current setting of the heritage assets.

Historic Map Regression

- 3.2 The historic core of Ruthin clearly has early origins, with the Castle dating from 1277 and medieval structures being evident in various town centre properties. Rose Cottage, located opposite the application site, dates from the late medieval period, however development on the eastern edge of the settlement appears to have been sporadic until the early C19th.
- 3.3 A Commissioner's report concerning the boundaries and wards of boroughs and towns in 1837 indicates that the western end of Rhos Street was quite well enclosed with terraces of properties at that time, while the properties at Brynhyfryd remained in a more isolated position further to the east. The Tithe Map of 1839 provides little information about specific building forms along Rhos Street, but suggests that the street was generally enclosed. At that time the application site included part of Field No. 175, which was used for pasture and owned by Sir Robert Vaughan.

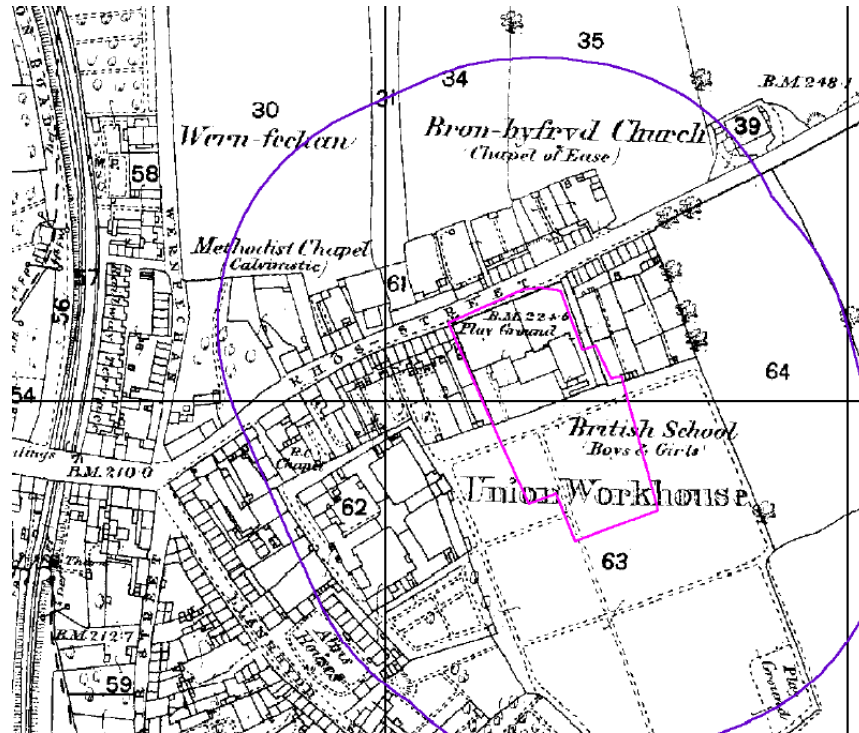
Figure 3.1: Tithe Map (1839) (<https://Places.Library.Wales>)



- 3.4 The eastern side of Ruthin was subject to relatively extensive change during the mid C19th. The Ruthin Union Workhouse was developed to the west of the application site in 1837-38 and the original school buildings were constructed as the British School on the site itself in 1848. The Denbigh, Ruthin and Corwen Railway

was constructed between the site and town centre during the early 1860s.

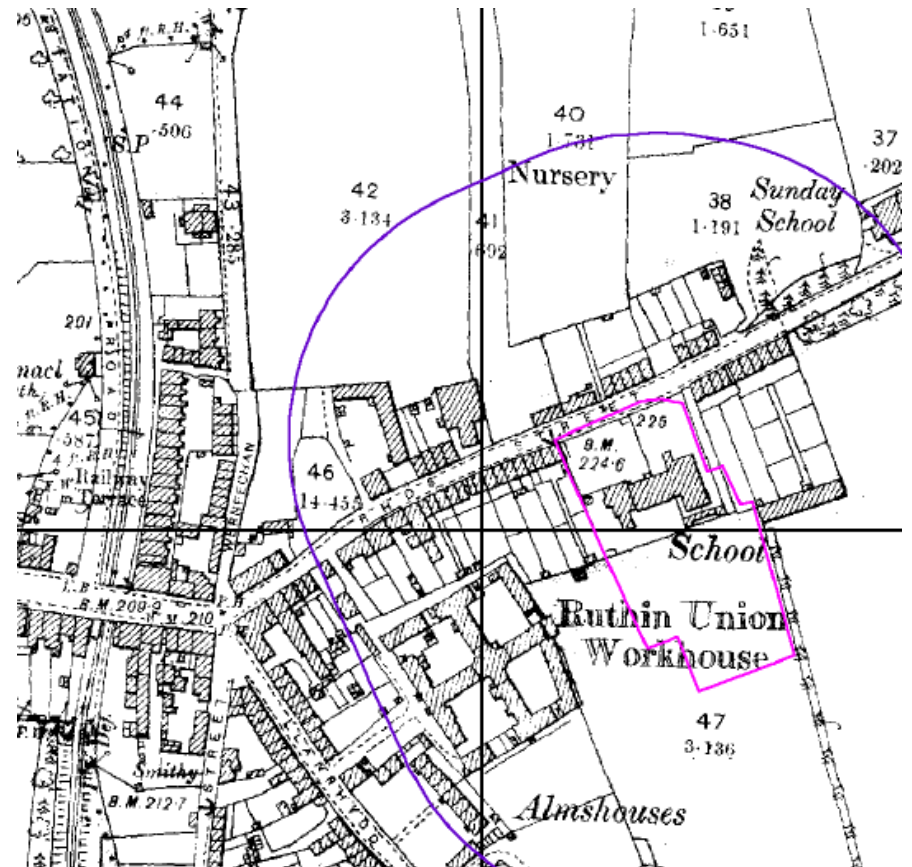
Figure 3.2: Ordnance Survey Map (1875) (1:2,500)



3.5 The play ground of the British School was subdivided in 1875, presumably for boys and girls. Opposite the school, a linear building form appears to extend to the west of Rose Cottage, towards the Methodist Chapel, although it is not subdivided with a fine grain of frontages in common with the adjacent residential terraces.

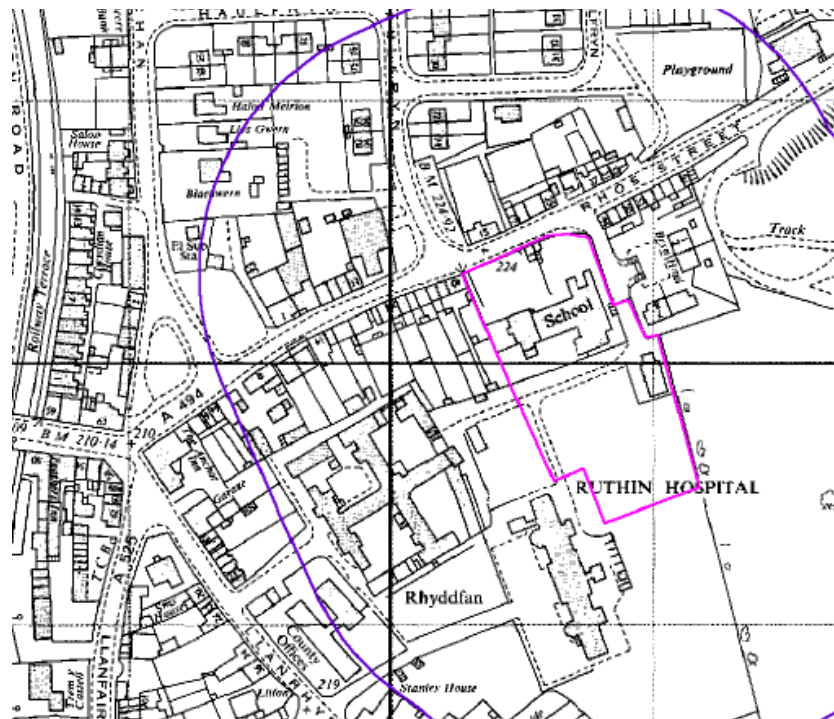
3.6 The Ordnance Survey map of 1900 confirms that the existing single storey entrance porch to the school had been constructed by that time. The linear building adjoining Rose Cottage had been truncated to leave a gap in the street frontage next to the Methodist Chapel.

Figure 3.3: Ordnance Survey Map (1900) (1:2,500)



3.7 The 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey maps of 1953 and 1963 confirm that the alignment of Haulfryn and the associated housing area had been constructed during that time, creating the junction immediately to the west of Rose Cottage that is found today. By 1969, Ruthin Hospital had been built to the south-west of the application site.

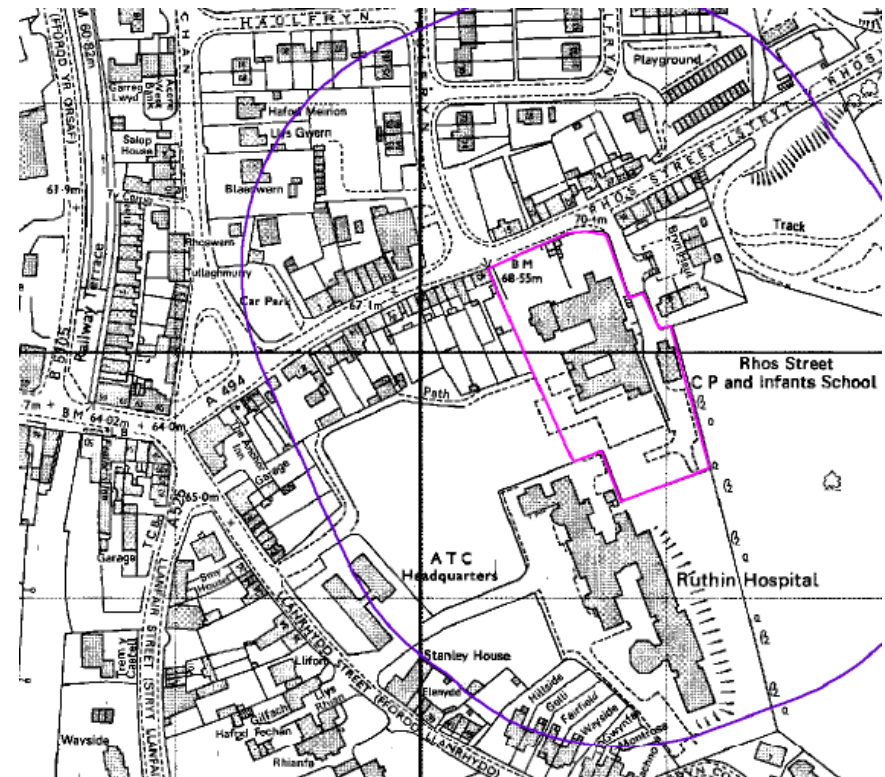
Figure 3.4: Ordnance Survey Map (1969) (1:10,000)



3.8 The Ordnance Survey Map of 1969-1986 confirms that the Union Workhouse complex had been demolished during this time, while

the Ordnance Survey Map of 1975-86 confirms the construction of the large extension to the rear of the original school buildings. By that time the hospital had been extended to the south of the site and a small cluster of dwellings had been built just behind Rhos Street on the eastern side of the application site.

Figure 3.5: Ordnance Survey map (1975-86) (1:2,500)



3.9 By 1988 the residential area of Stryd Y Brython had been developed to the east of the school.

Summary

- 3.10 In summary, the application site originally formed part of a largely agricultural landscape on either side of Rhos Street. By the early to mid C19th the western end of Rhos Street was partly enclosed with terraces of houses. The site was then developed with the British School in 1848 and became part of a cluster of public buildings that included the Union Workhouse and Hospital.
- 3.11 During the mid to late C20th the school and hospital were extended, the workhouse was cleared, and further residential properties were introduced to the spaces on the eastern side of the school.

4.0 The Significance of the Historic Assets

Introduction

- 4.1 TAN 24 defines 'significance' as follows:

"The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, often set out in a statement of significance."

- 4.2 CADW published guidance regarding the preparation of HIAs in May 2017. The guidance advises that a HIA must be submitted for applications for listed building consent or conservation area consent and while they are not required for development within the setting of a listed building or Registered Historic Park and Garden, it is 'good practice' to adopt the principles of the HIA process in those circumstances.

- 4.3 The guidance advises that a HIA should include:

"... a brief description of [the] historic asset and a summary of its overall heritage value. It should make specific reference to those aspects of its significance that will be most directly affected by [the] proposals and the contribution to the whole. Focusing on the heritage values of your historic asset will help you to analyse its significance:

Evidential Value: *The extent to which the physical fabric tells how and when your historic asset was made.*

Historic Value: *The historic asset may illustrate a particular past way of life or be associated with a specific person or event.*

Aesthetic Value: *The design, construction and craftsmanship of the historic asset, including setting and views to and from it.*

Communal Value: *A particular significance to people for its commemorative, symbolic or spiritual value or role in local cultural or public life."*

- 4.4 TAN 24 defines 'setting' as follows:

"The setting of a historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced and appreciated, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Setting is not itself a historic asset, though land within a setting may contain other historic assets."

- 4.5 The description of the significance of the heritage assets, provided below, is proportionate to their importance and the likely impact of the proposed development on their significance, including their setting.

Listed Buildings

Rose Cottage, No. 15 Rhos Street (Grade II* Listed)

Heritage Value

- 4.6 The CADW list entry describes the history of Rose Cottage as follows:

“A late medieval cruck-framed 3-unit hall-house, with single-bay open-hall flanked by inner room to L. and outer room to R. The original cross-passage was either in the location of the fireplace, or on the L side of the current outer room; the dais partition was between hall and inner room. In the early C17th, a timber-framed chimney breast was inserted R of centre, making a lobby-entrance; the outer room to the R was rebuilt, probably in the C18th; it was originally longer. The cottage was in a neglected condition in the mid-late C20th. It was restored c.2000, the thatch was renewed, the windows replaced, and a kitchen wing added to the rear, in place of a corrugated lean-to structure. Photographs before the work show a rendered front, the thatch covered in corrugated iron sheeting, and slightly projecting 2-light casement windows. During the restoration work, mortices of the original 3-light timber-mullioned windows were found; also some painted plaster, probably C18th or early C19th, where charcoal and red ochre were used for a floral design in a geometric border.”

- 4.7 The timber framed building had been adapted as tastes and the use of the building changed over time, which adds to the evidential value of the fabric of the building. Given the neglected condition of

the property and the loss of the adjoining cottages and Old Ship Inn, at the corner of Rhos Street and Wernfechan, it is perhaps fortunate that Rose Cottage survived.

Figure 4.1: Rose Cottage and the adjoining single-storey cottages that were cleared to make way for the junction into Haulfryn c.1870 (<https://facebook.com/ruthun/photos>)



- 4.8 Given the loss of other timber-framed buildings from the eastern edge of Ruthin, the significance of the building is partly derived from the communal value attributed to the efforts made to repair and safeguard the property and its valued contribution to the history of the town. The communal value of Rose Cottage is commemorated with a local ‘green plaque’ that celebrates its repair and historic value.

Figure 4.2: The green plaque, celebrating the heritage value of Rose Cottage



4.9 The list entry describes the exterior of Rose Cottage as follows:

“Single-storey 3-unit cottage with lobby-entrance to R of centre. Timber framed. Mostly box framing with square panels infilled with wattle and daub on a high rubble stone plinth, but including one cruck truss. Thatched roof; small red brick ridge stack. The front has 2 tiers of framing on a timber sill; the later R-hand bay is slightly set back with a lower ridge height. Entrance with boarded split doors to R of centre, reached by 3 stone steps bounded by upright wooden railings. To the L, 2 irregular 2-light wooden casements, renewed

c2000; to the R, a slightly bowed, fixed 20-pane window. The W gable end has a cruck-truss, with tie beam and collar against its external face. The plinth has been heightened and widened; plain C20th barge boards. E gable end is box-framed, with tie-beam truss supporting slightly curved rafters and struts. Rear, partly seen, has a single wooden light to R of wing, and 2 small 2-light casements to L of wing, in same style as front. The L bay is slightly set back with a higher plinth. To centre, a rear wing of c2000, rendered on a brick plinth under a thatched roof with small 2-light wooden casements.”

Figure 4.3: The front elevation and west gable of Rose Cottage



4.10 The west gable appears to have been re-rendered, concealing the cruck frame since the list entry was last amended in July 2006. However, the timber-frame structure remains legible to the eastern gable. The stepped ridge, that drops slightly to the later, right-hand, bay remains evident within the renewed thatch, allowing the phasing of the building to be appreciated. The fact that it has survived as a ‘workers cottage’, which would have been a comparatively low status building in the context of the grander timber-framed buildings in the historic core of Ruthin, is an important part of the historic value of the building.

Figure 4.4: The eastern gable of Rose Cottage



4.11 The list entry summarises the ‘reason for designation’ as:

“Listed grade II as an exceptional survival of a medieval cruck-framed hall-house of relatively low status, retaining its plan-form, character and detail. The preservation of the early C17th timber-framed chimney, representing a transitional phase between open-hearth and full fireplace, is of additional special interest.”*

The Contribution of Setting and the Application Site to Significance

- 4.12 The importance of setting lies in what it contributes to the significance of a historic asset (Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, CADW 2017).
- 4.13 Rose Cottage is best appreciated from Rhos Street, in which the building has an intimate relationship with the back-of-pavement building line and contributes to the tight sense of enclosure within the western part of the street.
- 4.14 However, the setting of Rose Cottage has been subject to relatively significant change. The adjoining, stone-built, terraced houses are considerably later than the medieval timber-framed building.
- 4.15 The single-storey thatched cottages that extended from the western gable of Rose Cottage, and may have been broadly contemporary (Figure 4.1), were removed during the mid C20th and replaced with the junction that leads into Haulfryn. The rear of the property, in views from Haulfryn is partly concealed by the modern rear extension.

Figure 4.5: The view westwards towards Rose Cottage in comparison to the late C19th view (Figure 4.1)



Figure 4.6: The rear of Rose Cottage from Haulfryn



Figure 4.7: Rose Cottage helps terminate views eastwards along the original curved alignment of Rhos Street and is appreciated through a sequence of kinetic views that allow the timber-framed and thatched cottage to be seen against the contrasting stone terrace



Figure 4.8: The open junction of Haulfryn to the west of Rose Cottage



Figure 4.9: The view westwards along Rhos Street



Figure 4.10: Rose Cottage viewed from Rhos Street School playground



- 4.16 Rhos Street School was set back behind the original playground to contrast with the enclosure of the adjoining residential properties. In views eastwards and westwards along Rhos Street, the school is largely obscured and does not contribute to the ability to appreciate the listed building, this experience is also accentuated by the slight curve in the street alignment.
- 4.17 The open aspect across the playground does allow Rose Cottage to be appreciated, albeit through the modern fencing that encloses the playground.

- 4.18 In this context, whilst the original school building has remained a consistent part of the setting of Rose Cottage since the mid C19th, it is considered to make a neutral contribution to the actual significance of the listed building.

Stansty Cottage, including attached farm buildings and front retaining wall (Grade II Listed)

Heritage Value

- 4.19 The list entry summarises the ‘reason for designation’ as follows:

“Listed for its architectural interest as an early C19th house retaining good gothic character, its highly retained position contributing to this gothic feel.”

- 4.20 The gothic emphasis is not immediately apparent, however Stansty Cottage has a curious relationship with Rhos Street, cutting into the steep embankment, at right-angles to the southern side of the road. The list entry includes the following description of the exterior:

“The house is built in 2 or 3 storey blocks into steeply rising ground, behind a high stone retaining wall. Constructed of cream-painted rubble stone, with brick wing to L, under slate roofs with projecting verges on brackets. Large brick ridge stack to rear, against outbuilding. The house consists of a wide 3-storey gable-fronted range, in front of which is a lower narrower gable-fronted range offset to the R. To the L of the main range is a 3-storey brick wing,

its gable end facing E, and attached to farm building range. The windows are mainly 2-light small-pane wooden casements with curved corners to lights, which replace margin-glazed casements. The entrance is to the E side of the narrow gabled range, and is reached by stone steps from the road. This elevation has a pair of 4-centred arches of stone voussoirs, that to the L containing a 6-panel door with narrow small-pane sidelights, under a fan-light with gothic glazing; the R-hand arch contains a large 2-light window under a similar gothic-glazed light. West elevation has casement to upper storey; tall gable-end fronting road has no openings. Front to main block, to L and at right-angles to entrance, has a large casement window under a 4-centred arch of stone voussoirs with gothic-glazed light under the arch. To 2nd floor, under gable, a small 2-light casement, formerly with gothic glazing, East side of main block has a small 4-pane window to 2nd floor, under a segmental head of stone voussoirs. The W side of main block has a 2-light casement to ground, 1st and 2nd floors. East wing is 3-storey, the front with a rendered lean-to under a slate roof, containing a large 2-light casement window; end of lean-to has French doors in same style as windows. To 1st and 2nd floors of wing, a 2-light casement under a chamfered brick head. E gable end of wing has a 2-light casement under flat head to lower R; the 1st and 2nd floors are 2-window with narrow single lights under flat heads.”

- 4.21 The heritage value of Stansty Cottage appears to be principally derived from its age, architectural interest and relationship with the topography of the plot in which it is located.

Figure 4.11: The two and three storey ranges that step back from Rhos Street behind the robust stone retaining wall



Figure 4.12: The largely blank roadside wing



The Contribution of Setting and the Application Site to Significance

- 4.22 Stansy Cottage has managed to retain a sense of its isolated position on the eastern edge of the town. This is partly a function of the distinctive relationship with the steep embankment and the mature tree cover. The immediate surroundings of the topography of the plot, the adjoining agricultural buildings and secure boundary to Rhos Street are all aspects of setting that make a positive contribution to the significance of the listed building.
- 4.23 The application site is located approximately 175 metres to the west of Stansty Cottage. The school building is obscured by intervening tree cover and buildings, with only the front boundary of the site visible from the listed building.

Figure 4.13: The view westwards along Rhos Street from Stansty Cottage



Ruthin Town and Llanfwrog Conservation Area

- 4.24 The Ruthin Town and Llanfwrog Conservation Area was first designated in 1975. The boundary incorporates the whole of the historic core of Ruthin, centred on the plateau of higher ground between the Castle and St. Peter’s Church, and extends westwards to include the properties that enclose both sides of Mwrog Street. A Conservation Appraisal does not appear to have been published for Ruthin and Llanfwrog, although the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust published an Historic Settlement Survey in 2014.
- 4.25 The application site is located outside, and to the east, of the conservation area boundary. It is separated from the conservation area by the block of buildings between Station Road and Wernfechan. The curved alignment of the western end of Rhos Street also prevents direct views towards the site. However, views are gained towards the roof scape of the eastern part of the conservation area from parts of the application site and so the conservation area is proportionately summarised, below, for completeness, with reference to the relevant ‘common themes’ set out in the CADW guidance on Managing Conservation Areas in Wales (2017).
- 4.26 The location and physical context of Ruthin play an important role in the historic development and character of the conservation area and is summarised in the Historic Settlement Survey as follows:

“The historic core of Ruthin occupies the east bank of the river on a low glaciated ridge running parallel to the river and isolated from a second ridge and the undulating vale to the east by a shallow and

largely dry dip in the landscape. The western ridge is utilised by the castle as the southern end and by the church at the northern tip. From this ridge settlement has spread out primarily to the east where modern estates are reaching towards the medieval church of Llanrhydd, and westwards across the Clwyd to link with the medieval village of Llanfwrog.”

- 4.27 The topography emphasises the character of two adjoining but distinct, settlements, Ruthin and Llanfwrog, as opposed to a single settlement that has simply extended across the river. Views from the elevated position of the Castle eastwards towards the application site are screened or filtered by intervening buildings and tree cover.

Figure 4.14: The view from an open vantage point just below the Castle Gateway looking eastwards towards the application site



4.28 The spatial form of the settlement provides a clear appreciation of the historic development of Ruthin, with the three focal points of the ridge of higher ground comprising the Castle (from 1277) and St. Peter's Church (founded 1282 and rebuilt in 1310) and the intervening Market Place (Clwyd and Powys Archaeological Trust, 2014).

4.29 Key routes leave Market Place in a radial pattern, including Prior Street, Well Street, Market Street, Clwyd Street and Castle Street. The view westwards into Clwyd Street provides an appreciation of the elevated position of the original historic core.

Figure 4.15: The view west from the Market Place (St. Peter's Square) into Clwyd Street



4.30 The organic street pattern that converges on the Market Place is characterised by a high sense of enclosure and the fine grain of multiple, narrow plots. Buildings within the original historic core around Market Place tend to be three storeys in height, while two storey buildings are more typical of the lower parts of Clwyd Street and Mwrog Street.

Figure 4.16: The view eastwards up Clwyd Street terminated by the Castle Hotel



4.31 The conservation area incorporates a high concentration of listed buildings, which are illustrative of the complex architectural history

of Ruthin. In addition to the Castle and St. Peter's Church, notable buildings include Nantclwyd House, which dates from the C15th, with possibly earlier fabric, while numerous buildings provide evidence of timber-frame structures from the C17th

Figure 4.17: Nantclwyd House, Castle Street



4.32 Many of the buildings in the conservation area contain fabric of earlier buildings and have been adapted over time, for instance the list entry for the Corporation Arms on Castle Street refers to C17th fabric or earlier, while the frontage was rebuilt during the late C19th.

Figure 4.18: The Corporation Arms, Castle Street



4.33 The western end of Clwyd Street is punctuated by the distinctive Gaol, which has a close juxta position with the commercial and domestic properties that enclose the street. Clwyd Street crosses the river and enters the Llanfwrog part of the conservation area, which is centred on the wider and more open aspect of Mwrog Street, which is predominantly enclosed with two storey properties.

Figure 4.18: The view westwards along Mwrog Street



Figure 4.19: Railway Terrace viewed from Well Street



Figure 4.20: The terminated view at the eastern end of Well Street



- 4.34 The eastern edge of the conservation area is notable for Railway Terrace, which was constructed in 1864 and faced directly onto the railway line. The formality of the terrace is unusual in the context of the conservation area as a whole but helps to illustrate that period of the town's development.
- 4.35 Views eastwards towards Railway Terrace, along Well Street, which provides one of the few straight vistas within the conservation area are terminated by the buildings that enclose the more organic pattern of the junction of Well Street with Rhos Street and Llanrydd Road. This cluster of buildings obscures views into the western part of Rhos Street and towards the application site.

4.36 Evidence from Rose Cottage, the former adjoining single-storey cottages and the former Ship Inn indicates that the C17th townscape of Ruthin had extended into the western end of Rhos Street. However, the first significant development of the application site appears to have comprised the original phase of the school. The townscape of this eastern edge of Ruthin has been subject to considerable change, including the clearance of the Union Workhouse and development of the hospital adjoining the application site. In this context, whilst the site provided part of the educational infrastructure of the town as a whole, it is considered to make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Local Historic Assets

Rhos Street School (HER Reference: PRN142207)

- 4.37 Denbighshire County Council has not published a 'local list'. However, the LPA identified the existing school building as a local historic asset during pre-application consultations and the school is identified on the Denbighshire HER.
- 4.38 Rhos Street School was identified on the early Ordnance Survey maps as a 'British School'. British Schools were founded in 1810 by the non-denominational British and Foreign Schools Society (www.workhouses.org.uk) to advance the work of the Quaker Joseph Lancaster. They were based on a system of older children

teaching younger pupils under staff supervision. Approximately 1500 British Schools had been established by 1851.

4.39 The HER describes the establishment of the school:

"The core of the former Ysgol Stryd Y Rhos was designed by Richard Cash and erected in the fashionable Elizabethan revival style in 1848. The school was initially restricted to boys but girls were admitted in 1847 [it is understood that the school was established in 1840 and occupied premises elsewhere which may explain the disparity of dates] and by 1849 children from the adjacent Ruthin Union Workhouse were allowed to attend. The school and associated buildings were in use until 2018, when a new school was built."

Figure 4.21: The front elevation of Ruthin British School



4.40 The front elevation of the school has remained largely intact, with the exception of the single-storey porch, which was added between 1875 and 1900, and the upper parts of several of the taller windows, which have been blocked internally to accommodate internal subdivisions. All of the window frames have been renewed.

Figure 4.22: Detail of the front porch



4.41 The western elevation of the school is similarly intact, with the exception of the window frames and replacement stonework to several sills and arches. However, substantial extensions have been

added across the whole of the rear of the school, including the western gable.

Figure 4.23: The western elevation and associated extension



4.42 The main rear extension had been constructed by 1984, while the extension to the rear of the western wing was constructed between 1984-94.

4.43 The extensions are single-storey, and are constructed from concrete blockwork under a variety of slate clad roof forms, which overstate the proportions of the roof due to the depth of the building. However, externally, the phases of the building are clearly legible.

Figure 4.24: The south-western corner of the rear extension

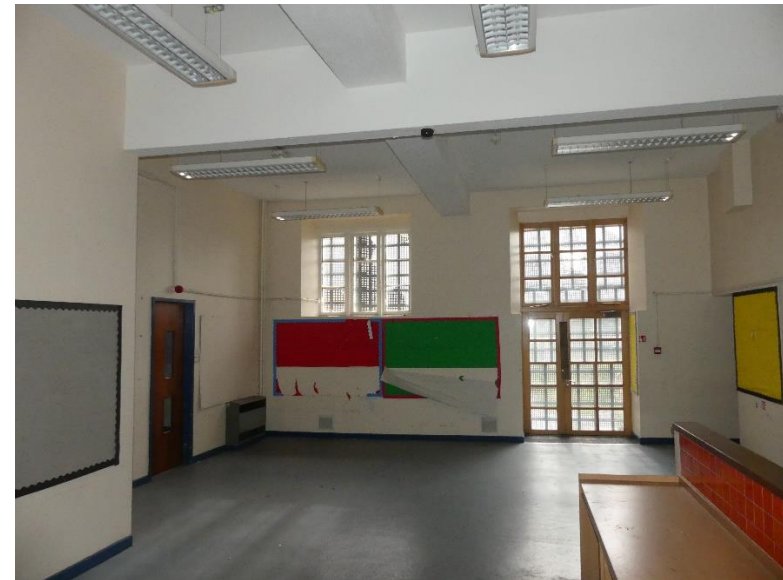


Figure 4.25: The southern elevation of the rear extension



- 4.44 The interior of the original school has been subject to considerable change, including amalgamation of rooms to form more open-plan spaces and the insertion of two modern staircases, at either end of the front range, to create access to a large first floor attic space.

Figure 4.26: Amalgamated spaces on the ground floor



- 4.45 The modern staircases are constructed with painted concrete blocks and cut across the taller panels of windows to the front elevation. The western staircase is constructed around a central column of blockwork, while the space containing the eastern staircase is narrower and it simply comprises two flights and a half-landing. An attic floor has been inserted, the queen post trusses remain exposed, while the upper part of the taller window to the central range is enclosed within the roofspace.

Figure 4.27: The western staircase

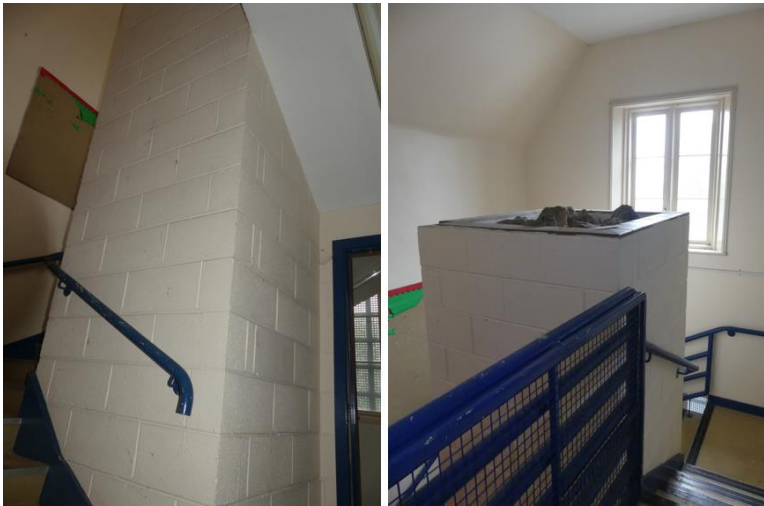


Figure 4.28: The eastern staircase



Figure 4.29: The first-floor space within the roof



Figure 4.30: A window head concealed within the roofspace



4.46 In summary, the heritage value of Rhos Street School is principally derived from its historic value as part of the British School movement and the aesthetic value of the front elevation and roofscape.

Ruthin Community Hospital (HER Reference: 166816)

4.47 The Community Hospital is located just to the south of the application site. The Hospital is recorded on the HER as follows:

“Ruthin Community Hospital was built in 1914 as a Poor Law Infirmary for Ruthin Union Workhouse. The original building was extended through the 1970s and 1980s.”

Figure 4.31: The western elevation of Ruthin Community Hospital



4.48 The original hospital building adopted a linear, broadly north-south, form, with a symmetrical plan centred on a principal western elevation that is framed with outer pavilion bays. The hospital is

constructed from red brick, in a stretcher bond, under a slate roof with corbelled axial stacks. The windows have been replaced, however the openings retain their gauged brick heads and stone sills.

4.49 The hospital formed part of a cluster of public buildings, including the former British School, which functioned in association with the adjoining Union Workhouse.

4.50 A linear extension was added in parallel to the rear of the hospital during the 1970s-80s.

4.51 The heritage value of the hospital is principally derived from its association with the Union Workhouse and the restrained architecture of the symmetrical plan form of the original hospital building.

5.0 Impact Assessment

Introduction

- 5.1 The proposed development has been assessed in accordance with the relevant legislation, national and local planning policies.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 5.2 The 1990 Act incorporates several 'statutory duties' for decision-makers, including the following:

"S. 66 (1): In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall 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."

- 5.3 Case law has determined that 'preserve' means 'to do no harm'.

Planning Policy Wales: Chapter 6 The Historic Environment

- 5.4 The Welsh Government objectives in relation to the historic environment, include:

- *"conserve and enhance the historic environment, which is a finite and non-renewable resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales;*
- *Recognise its contribution to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life, and its importance as a resource to be maintained for future generations;*
- *Base decisions on an understanding of the significance of Wales' historic assets;*
- *Contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the past by making an appropriate record when parts of a historic asset are affected by a proposed change, and ensuring that this record or the results of any investigation are securely archived and made publicly available;"*

- 5.5 There are no specific objectives in respect to local historic assets.

- 5.6 In respect to the role of local historic assets in the Development Plan process:

"6.4.11 Undesignated historic assets of local importance need appropriate consideration in the formulation of development plans. Local planning authorities may determine that a historic asset is of special local interest and may develop and publish lists of local historic assets of special local interest that do not have statutory protection, but which make an important contribution to local distinctiveness and have the potential to contribute to public knowledge. Where a local planning authority chooses to identify

historic assets of special local interest, policies for their conservation and enhancement must be included in the development plan.”

- 5.7 With reference to local historic assets and development management, Planning Policy Wales states:

“6.5.25 Where a local planning authority has identified historic assets of local interest or produced a list of historic assets of special local interest and included a policy in its development plan for their preservation and enhancement, any supporting supplementary planning guidance will be a material consideration when determining a planning application.”

- 5.8 In respect to the setting of historic assets, Planning Policy Wales states: *“... For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”*

Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment

- 5.9 For historic assets of special local interest, TAN 24 states:

“8.1 Historic assets that the local planning authority may consider to be of special local interest are not accompanied by any additional consent requirements over and above those required for planning permission. However, if such assets are to contribute

successfully to the conservation or enhancement of local character their status needs to be clear in the development management process. If a local planning authority chooses to identify historic assets of special local interest, it must include policies for their preservation and enhancement in the local development plan.”

- 5.10 TAN 24 advises that *“... it is for the Local planning authority to consider the effects of proposed developments within the settings of listed buildings, conservation areas, unscheduled monuments of national importance and other undesignated historic assets.”* In doing so, it advises that:

“1.25 The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. Setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of the historic asset.”

“1.26 For any development within the setting of a historic asset, some of the factors to consider and weigh in the assessment include:

- *The significance of the asset and the contribution the setting makes to that significance.*
- *The prominence of the historic asset.*
- *The expected lifespan of the proposed development.*
- *The extent of tree cover and its likely longevity.*

- *Non-visual factors affecting the setting of the historic asset such as noise.*

Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (CADW 2011)

- 5.11 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been informed by a consideration of the four heritage values of Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales (CADW, 2011) as required by national planning policy and guidance.
- 5.12 TAN 24 advises that *“Applicants and other organisations are strongly encouraged to make use of these Conservation Principles when considering development proposals:”* Based on the above assessment the proposed development can be considered against the six ‘Conservation Principles’ as follows:
1. Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values
 2. Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital
 3. The historic environment is a shared resource
 4. Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment
 5. Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent
 6. Documenting and learning from decisions is essential

Denbighshire Local Plan (2006-2021)

- 5.13 The current Local Plan was adopted in 2013. With respect to the historic environment, the plan includes the following policy:

Policy VOE1 – Key Areas of Importance

“The following areas will be protected from development that would adversely affect them. Development proposals should maintain and, wherever possible, enhance these areas for their characteristics, local distinctiveness, and value to local communities in Denbighshire:”

- *Statutory designated sites for nature conservation;*
- *Local areas designated or identified because of their natural landscape of biodiversity value;*
- *Sites of built heritage; and*
- *Historic Landscape, Parks and Gardens.”*

The Proposed Development

- 5.14 The proposed development would comprise the following:

Demolition of all existing buildings, structures and site clearance; erection of 20 no. dwellings and associated infrastructure works comprising access, drainage and public space provision.

- 5.15 The proposed layout would follow the linear form of the site. The existing vehicular access would be adapted with the driveway re-aligned to form a central spine through the development.

- 5.16 All of the proposed dwellings would be two-storeys in height with a traditional pitched roof. Most of the dwellings would be render clad, above a low stone plinth, however the semi-detached property adjoining the site entrance, enclosing Rhos Street, would be entirely stone clad.
- 5.17 The remainder of the Rhos Street frontage would comprise a landscaped amenity space and the existing stone boundary wall would be retained.

Impact Assessment

Impact on the Setting and Significance of nearby Listed Buildings:

- 5.18 The proposed development would cause a moderate magnitude of change within the setting of the grade II* Rose Cottage, which is located on the opposite side of Rhos Street from the application site. The existing school building and front school yard have formed part of the setting of the cottage since the 1840s. However, there is no known association between the cottage and school. The cottage pre-dated the school by approximately 250 years and the setting of the cottage has evolved over time.
- 5.19 The existing open aspect of the site frontage to Rhos Street would be partly retained by the proposed open space, while the scale and materiality of the semi-detached dwelling adjoining the site entrance would complement the wider character of Rhos Street. The rest of the scheme would be set back from the listed building.

- 5.20 The proposed development would therefore represent a change in the setting of the grade II* listed cottage. However, TAN 24 is clear that setting is not a heritage asset in its own right and its value is derived from what it might contribute to the significance of a heritage asset.
- 5.21 The proposed development would be largely set back, much as the existing school building is currently set back behind the school yard, and would not impact on the prominence of the listed cottage. The stone clad semi-detached houses proposed next to the site entrance would contribute to the sense of enclosure and intimacy in the lower part of Rhos Street and would be consistent with the wider setting of the listed building. However, in oblique views along Rhos Street most of the proposed houses would be set back and screened from the road frontage, much as the school is today.
- 5.22 In this context the proposed development is considered to sustain the significance of Rose Cottage.
- 5.23 Stansty Cottage (grade II listed) is more peripheral to the application site and the sense of separation is accentuated by intervening trees and houses. The prominence and distinctiveness of Stansty Cottage is partly derived from its relationship with the steep embankment it occupies and the relative sense of separation from other buildings due to the adjoining tree cover.
- 5.24 The contribution of those aspects of setting to the special interest of the listed building would not be harmed by the proposed development, which would be located well to the west. The proposed stone clad dwelling and open space to the front of the site would represent a careful response to the character of Rhos

Street and the special interest of Stantsy Cottage would be sustained by the proposed development.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Ruthin Conservation Area:

- 5.25 Within the immediate vicinity of the application site the conservation area would be well separated from the proposed development. This is due to the alignment of the street pattern, as Rhos Street joins Well Street, and also by virtue of the enclosing buildings and underlying topography.
- 5.26 Longer views from the southern part of the site allow a glimpse of Ruthin Castle amongst the roofscape and within the mature tree cover of the castle grounds. However, in views back towards the site from the castle the existing school building is barely visible. The proposed houses would sit comfortably within the townscape eastern part of Ruthin that lies outside the conservation area and the impact on the setting of the conservation area would be de minimis.
- 5.27 Therefore, the proposed development would not affect the ability to appreciate the conservation area or the contribution of setting to its character and appearance.

Impact on the Heritage Value of Heritage Assets of Special Local Interest:

- 5.28 The proposed development would include the demolition of the existing school buildings, which has been identified as a local

heritage asset. The school has been vacant for several years and the proposed demolition is required to enable the redevelopment of the site.

- 5.29 The proposals would lead to the loss of the local heritage asset, although the heritage value of the school buildings is variable. Externally, the 1840s gabled frontage of the school is largely unchanged, other than the front entrance extension and the window frames. However, the interior of the front range has been comprehensively adapted. A first floor has been inserted with staircases, constructed with concrete blocks, formed to the eastern and western ends of the floorplan. The first-floor cuts across the original full-height window openings of the front elevation. The original room plan has been remodelled and no original fixtures or fittings survive inside the building. The rear of the building has been extensively extended.
- 5.30 In this context the loss of the heritage value of the school building should be considered in the context of the benefits to be derived from the proposed development of the site.
- 5.31 The proposed development would cause change within the setting of the Community Hospital, which is identified on the HER. The hospital formed part of a cluster of community services located just outside the town centre, including the former Workhouse, with which it had a functional association. The Workhouse was demolished in the 1970s, at which time the hospital was extended. The hospital is experienced in a largely suburban context, amongst a diverse range of house types and periods and the proposed development would sustain its heritage value.

Legislative and Policy Context

- 5.32 In the above context the proposed development would be consistent with the 'statutory duty' of S.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 by preserving the settings of the listed buildings located near to the application site.
- 5.33 Planning Policy Wales reiterates the above 'statutory duty' with respect to the setting of listed buildings.
- 5.34 TAN 24 requires the status of local heritage assets to be made clear in the development management process. In this respect the LPA has not published a 'local list' and the Local Plan does not contain a specific policy in respect to local heritage assets, however the existing school building is recorded on the HER and Local Plan Policy VOE1 makes a generic reference to 'sites of built heritage'.
- 5.35 This HIA has therefore been prepared to ensure that the historic environment impacts of the proposed development are considered in association with the other impacts and planning benefits that would be derived from the scheme, as set out in the accompanying Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The proposed development comprises the removal of the existing buildings at the former Rhos Street Primary School, which has remained vacant since the relocation of the school in 2018, and their replacement with a residential development of 20 dwellings and associated access and open space.
- 6.2 In respect to the historic environment the application site is located opposite Rose Cottage, which is grade II* listed. The site is more peripheral to the setting of Stansty Cottage, listed in grade II, and the Ruthin and Llanfwrog Conservation Area.
- 6.3 The application site incorporates the original Rhos Street School building, which dates from 1848. The LPA has not published a local list, however the school is recorded on the HER. While the external frontage of the school is largely complete, the rear has been extended and the interior has been thoroughly adapted thus removing the potential heritage value of the internal floorplan.
- 6.4 The proposed development would cause change within the setting of Rose Cottage. However, given the special architectural and historic interest of the building, especially related to its age and timber-framed structure, and the contribution of setting to that interest, the proposed development is considered to sustain its significance. The proposal is therefore in accordance with S.66 of the 1990 Act.
- 6.5 This HIA has been prepared to ensure that historic environment considerations can inform the decision-making in respect to the proposed development. The proposals would have a neutral impact on the significance of the listed buildings and conservation area located near to the site. It would, however, result in the replacement of the current school buildings. The heritage value of the original school building is variable, given the adaptations that have taken place over time. However, the loss of that heritage value should be balanced by the benefits to be derived from the proposed development, which are set out in the accompanying Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement.