Mold Town Plan Consultation report

Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners January 2016

Contents

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Creating an attractive and thriving centre
- 3. Strategy for housing growth
- 4. Enhancing spaces and connections
- 5. Empowering communities and enhancing services
- 6. Other comments
- 7. Site-specific comments
- 8. Conclusions

Appendix 1: Exhibition

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

1. Introduction

Mold Town Plan is being drafted by Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners in partnership with Mold Town Council, and will set out the vision for the town for the next 10-15 years. The plan builds upon previous consultations and studies including key principles identified in the Sense of Place Study, Mold Action Plan and Cittaslow goals. An important part of the process is the ongoing community engagement which will help inform the plan. Two consultation events were facilitated to give local people in Mold the opportunity to share their ideas for the future of Mold. These events were held on Saturday 7th November, from 11am-4pm and Tuesday 17th November, from 4pm-8pm. Both exhibitions were displayed in the Daniel Owen Centre.

The exhibitions presented the main principles of the plan and gave people the opportunity to complete questionnaires covering a number of themes relevant to the future of Mold. People also had the opportunity to e-mail their ideas and comments if they were unable to attend the events. A copy of the exhibition and questionnaire is provided for information in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. This report summarises the feedback received at the events, structured around the four themes introduced at the exhibition events and which formed the structure of the questionnaires. These are:

- Creating an attractive and thriving centre
- Strategy for housing growth
- Enhancing open spaces and connections
- Empowering communities and enhancing services

The exhibition also outlined a number of specific sites that could be allocated to different landuses, such as housing, new open spaces and schools. Consultees were encouraged to write comments about specific sites on post-it notes and place them on a map of Mold. These are summarised in the report.

Overview of feedback

- The exhibition events were well attended with approximately XXX people attending the exhibition over its two days.
- In total, 61 people gave feedback on the Town Plan: 52 people filled in questionnaires at the consultation events, 2 people filled in a Mold Town Partnership Form and there were 7 written submissions. These responses have been summarised and grouped together by the above themes.
- 50% of respondents were male and 50% of respondents were female.
- Of the 42 respondents who gave their age, 45% were over 65, 33% were aged 51-65 and 19% were aged 36-50.











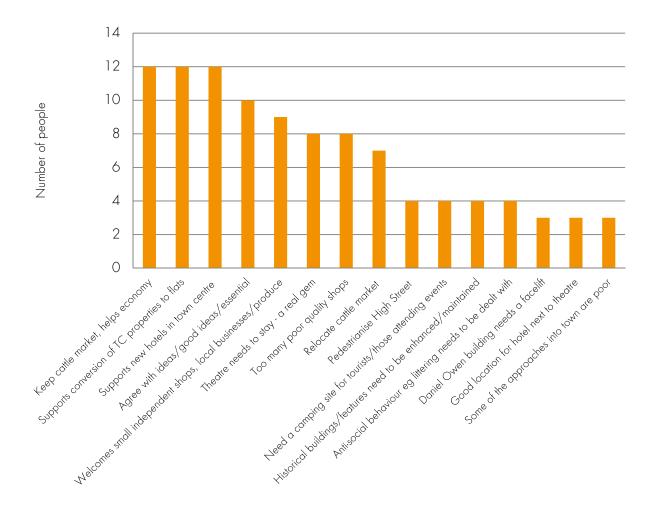


Those who attended were asked to annotate a map of Mold, suggesting changes that they would like to see in their area.

2. Creating an attractive and thriving centre

88% of questionnaire respondents answered question 1, which asked people what they thought about the ideas for creating an attractive and thriving town centre in Mold. Across all feedback, a total of 172 comments were made relating to this theme.

The comments that were made by three or more people are shown in the graph below:



- 20% of respondents commented that the cattle market should stay in its current location it is part of the identity of Mold, helps the local economy, and supports local businesses and residents. However, on the contrary, 11% of respondents wish to see the cattle market re-located, as it is currently in a prime central location that could be used for other purposes. Ideas included more retail, a hotel, or craft and food markets.
- 20% of respondents give their support for turning vacant town centre properties above shops, into flats, to encourage town centre living.
- 20% of respondents give support for a new hotel in the centre of Mold. A number of
 respondents felt this should be a budget hotel to boost tourism and help grow the
 economy. Three people commented that a new hotel should be situated next to the

- theatre. 13% of people recognised the Clwyd Theatr Cymru as a key cultural asset of Mold and a real gem which needs to stay.
- 13% of respondents mentioned the current lack of suitable shops. Specifically, some felt there are too many charity shops, building societies, pubs, hairdressers and beauticians.
- 15% commented that they would like to see smaller, high quality, independent shops and restaurants, which support local businesses and produce. Some felt this could be encouraged through beneficial business rates for start up businesses and more flexible contract/lease arrangements for shorter term rents for business in the town centre.
- Historical buildings and features should be enhanced and maintained.
- Litter, dog-fouling and vandalism need to be addressed more efficiently.
- A camping site for tourists should be considered. Land by Maes Gwern could be used for this and money could be generated from this to fund public services.
- Some of the current approaches to the town give a bad first impression e.g. the main road leading from County Hall to the large roundabout. Chester Road has some poor quality buildings - the derelict petrol station, Bridge Inn at Leadmills and the Old Chapel.

Additional comments

Daniel Owen Centre

A small number of people would like to see the Daniel Owen building improved. It needs to be a community centre for everyone and better managed to be friendly and welcoming. People suggested alternative uses for the square outside the building, including using the space for music, the arts, and open air films.

Mold as a Market Town

A number of people are keen for Mold to keep the ethos of a 'market town' and retain its historic market town character. The twice weekly market should be preserved or perhaps increase in frequency. Signage should be improved for the indoor market. A small number of consultees gave suggestions for other types of markets and events that they would like to see. These include a craft market in the summer, music and arts events and a Sunday fleamarket.

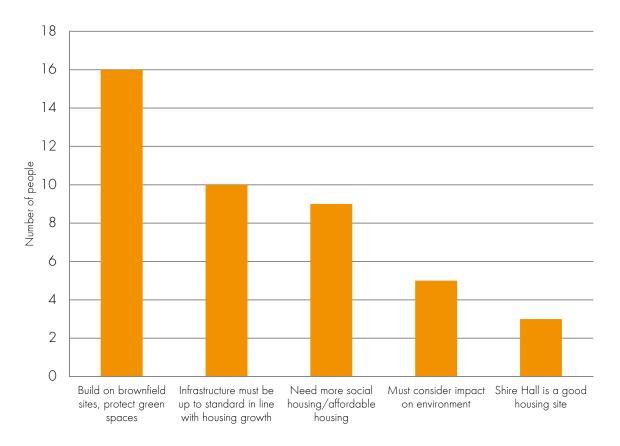
Improving the public realm

- The town centre requires higher quality street maintenance.
- Buildings in town need redecorating/removal of weeds in gutters.
- Ensure a variety of shops on the High Street and less empty ones.

3. A strategy for housing growth

Question 2 asked respondents about the ideas for creating a strategy for housing growth in Mold. 81% of questionnaire respondents commented on the question. Across all feedback, a total of 90 comments were made relating to this theme.

The comments that were made by three or more people are shown in the graph below:



- 26% of all respondents gave support for building on brownfield sites first and protecting green spaces.
- 16% of respondents made a comment about the need for good quality infrastructure to support the increase in housing. Reference was made to the increase in traffic and therefore the need for better public transport and highway maintenance. A number of people mentioned the need for better schools, drainage and water systems.
- 15% commented on the need for more social and affordable housing.
- Five people felt a key priority of the housing growth strategy is to ensure sustainable development and to consider the impact of new housing on the environment.
- Three people specifically commented on the good suitability of the Shire Hall site for housing development.

Additional comments

General housing

Housing will lead to more congestion on already hazardous roads;

- Plans for housing growth should be reviewed to concentrate on infilling;
- Any growth should be minimal 1%-2% only;
- Do not want to see a 'commuter belt' town;
- May not be enough housing we still need more;
- Supports less zoning more mixing between housing and commercial; and
- Support strategy as long as it does not change positive nature of town.

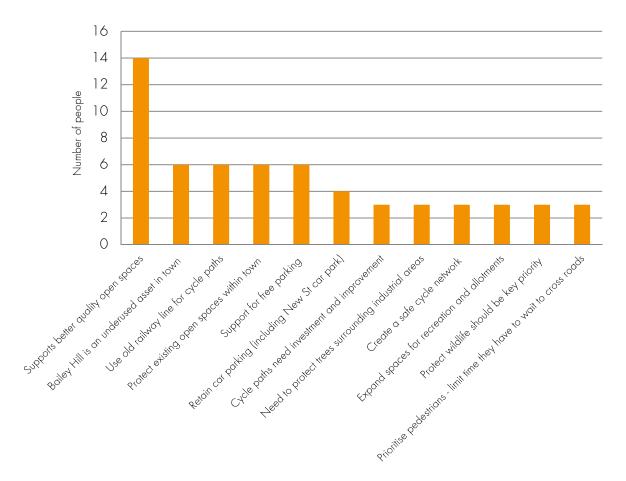
Housing type

- Ensure that the character of the town does not change;
- Houses that reflect the landscape should be encouraged;
- More provision for elderly sheltered housing;
- Housing development needs to be based on local need;
- Concern over the amount of housing built for young people need to ensure enough;
- Too many apartments; and
- There should be mixed housing.

4. Enhancing open spaces and connections

87% of questionnaire respondents answered question 3, which asked people about the ideas for enhancing open spaces and connections in Mold. Across all feedback, a total of 120 comments were made relating to this theme.

The comments that were made by three or more people are shown in the graph below:



- 23% of people said they supported better quality open spaces. 10% of respondents commented that existing open spaces within the town and in the surrounding areas (e.g. playing fields) should be protected. A small number of people would like to see spaces expanded for recreation and allotments.
- Six people mentioned Bailey Hill as an underused asset in town which could be enhanced and promoted as a historic site.
- 10% of respondents give support for the old railway line to be used for cycle paths. A number mentioned the need to improve and invest in new cycle paths and routes. Three people supported creating a safe cycle network, linking up with existing routes such as Deeside and the Sychdyn cycle route.
- Protecting wildlife and protecting trees in surrounding industrial areas is a key concern for a small number of consultees.

• 10% commented on their support for free parking in the centre to compete with other local towns such as Broughton, and three people specifically mentioned their support for retaining the car park at New Street.

Additional comments

Open spaces

People suggested encouraging greater use of existing open spaces by:

- Making existing spaces feel safe;
- Reintroducing the employment of a Park Attendant to make spaces more accessible;
- Committing resources to make existing spaces the best they can be;
- Improving Maes Bodlonfa Recreation Ground (remove hedge to open up space); and
- Protecting community orchard sites.

Ideas for new open space were:

- A small rest garden within town would be good (e.g. by Hammersleys); and
- Each area of housing should have a small open space for fitness/reflection.

Prioritising pedestrians and cyclists

There is a concern that pedestrians are not being prioritised at certain junctions, for example, the Cross Junction on the High Street. A pedestrian crossing is also needed near Wood Green/Fford Pentre. Other comments relating to pedestrians and cyclists are:

- Improving the path at the south end of Gas Lane;
- Resurfacing Milford Street adjacent to Lidl;
- Improving pavement on High Street;
- Path too narrow on Clayton Road alongside Dolphin Hotel;
- Provision to safely link Mynydd and Mold for non-car traffic is needed; and
- Great idea to have more walking routes in and around the town.

Vehicular flows

- Wider roads are needed;
- Quarry lorries or HGV vehicles should not be allowed to use town centre;
- Suggestion to make a roundabout of the whole site at County Hall so traffic goes along Raikes Lane one way, across and behind the theatre and round A5119 into Mold; and
- Improve the Ruthin Road main junction (currently very congested).

Public transport

- Need to improve transport services buses take long routes;
- Create a bus link from Buckley to Mold and link up services so you can go to Wrexham and Liverpool (and back at night);
- Essential that Mold retains bus terminus and that it develops as a hub for the area.

- Support for a free shuttle bus operating in and around Mold;
- Consider Park & Ride from County Hall on market days; and
- Bring back a good railway.

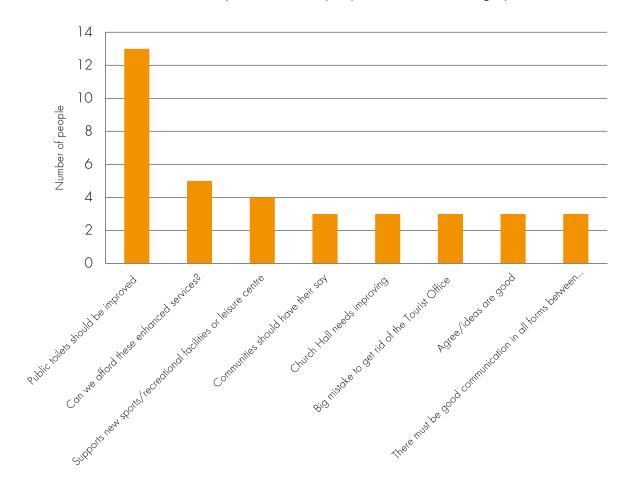
Car parking

- Remove the cars parked on pavements;
- Need more disabled bays for parking;
- Parking is sometimes a problem on market days ease parking pressure by reintroducing parking on the High Street;
- Have free parking days;
- Car park revenue should go to the Town Council;
- Less car parking; and
- Daniel Owens car park should be for disabled parking only.

5. Empowering communities and enhancing services

Question 4 asked people to comment on the ideas for empowering communities and enhancing services in Mold. 63% of questionnaire respondents answered this question. Across all feedback, a total of 72 comments were made relating to this theme.

The comments that were made by three or more people are shown in the graph below:



- 21% of respondents commented on the need to improve public toilets in Mold. These
 included toilets at the bus station, in the centre of Mold, at the indoor market, in the
 Daniel Owen building and at New Street car park. There is also a need for better
 disabled toilet facilities. It was also suggested that a small car-parking charge could be
 collected to go towards public toilets.
- Five people commented that they were unsure where the money for enhancing these services would come from. A few people suggested fundraising events to raise money for local improvement schemes and action groups to be set up to manage, maintain and apply for grants etc.
- Four people said they would like to see new sport and recreational facilities.
- There was general support that communities should be empowered to make change and that this requires good communication between the Town Council and residents.
- Some commented on the need to improve the Church Hall site.

• Some felt that getting rid of the Tourist Office was a mistake as this was the first point of call for many tourists visiting Mold.

Additional comments

Empowering communities

- People have motivation but no knowledge or skills to get involved in their community people need to be trained and supported to know what to do;
- More and larger public notice boards needed to advertise what's on;
- A community forum online should be started to encourage discussion about issues;
- The core principles of Cittaslow should be upheld for the good of the town they are currently not very well understood by the Mold population; and
- A number of comments were made about Mold's strong welsh identity. There is support to enhance Mold's identity as the gateway to Wales. It is important to remember the bilingual nature of Mold and the rich cultural heritage of the vibrant Welsh language community which is part of what makes Mold such a special place. All aspects of the Council's work should remember and reflect this intrinsically.

Enhancing services

- Ensure schools can meet demand Welsh Junior School is struggling for space;
- Council must keep control of services;
- Support facilities for children and young people, particularly ages 12-17 years old;
- Concern that the police service is not being enhanced if removed or relocated;
- A cinema would be welcomed;
- Would like to see the bus station information kiosk reopened; and
- A sub post office for Mold either on outskirts or in an empty shop would be beneficial.

6. Other comments

Question 5 gave people the opportunity to write any additional comments. 61% of survey respondents wrote comments, many of which have been incorporated into other more suitable themes above.

Additional comments

Comments regarding commercial units and businesses:

- A couple of medium-sized industries could be attracted as well as smaller firms;
- Take action to re-let or demolish the factory units on the Broomfield Commercial Park;
- Raikes Lane should be seen as a growth hub; and
- The plans for the County Hall complex need careful monitoring even if there is pull back on county administrators, it could be a major corporate centre. An extension of arts/media development could be part of this.

A couple of people are concerned with localised flooding in the area:

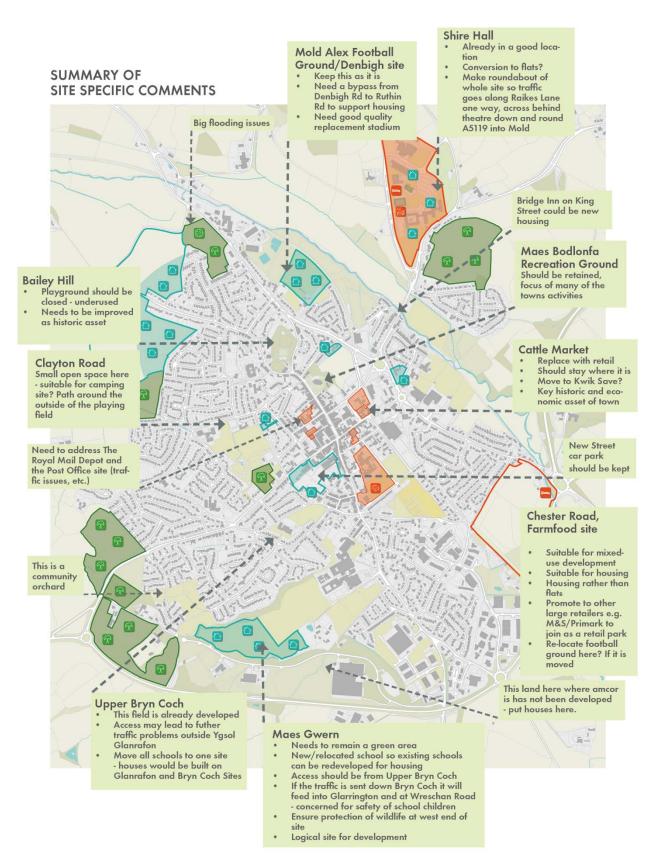
- Big flooding issues on the Denbigh Road Site; and
- Flooding requires attention as soon as possible.

Comments made in reference to the Town Plan process itself:

- Not enough detail, labelling and keys on the plan;
- The approach to the Town Plan needs to be more scientific, locally driven and 'Mold focussed';
- The opportunities for growth should be linked to plans for the North of England; and
- A Steering Committee should be set up to include representatives of adjacent and nearby community councils, Flintshire CC, major industrialist, Welsh Assembly and consultants to help input into the Town Plan.

7. Site specific comments

A number of site-specific comments were also made, mostly related to housing and open spaces. The map below shows the key comments made about specific sites.



8. Conclusions

The report has reviewed a number of themes that have emerged as a result of the consultation events. Five key summary points are made below:

1. Market Town character

Most people acknowledged and supported the view that Mold town centre should be a thriving place to live and work. To help achieve this, people are keen for vacant town centre shops to be redeveloped into housing and for a new hotel that could help support Mold's economy. Better quality small independent shops should be encouraged. The cattle market, theatre and Daniel Owen building are key local landmarks that need to be retained and improved. There is a general sense that Mold should protect its historic identity as a market town.

2. Appropriate levels of housing growth

People are generally supportive of the strategy for housing growth and the need to build new homes. There is strong support that these should be built on brownfield sites first and that they should be affordable for those who need them. There is concern that the current infrastructure does not have the capacity to support this new growth. Particular concerns are the need for good quality schools, improved highway maintenance, dealing with traffic congestion, better public transport services and improved water and drainage systems.

3. Improved network of green connections

People support better quality open spaces and connections. Existing spaces should be made to feel safe. Bailey Hill, in particular, is an underused asset which could be improved to encourage tourism. A significant number of comments related to improving the cycle network in the area to make cycling an easier and safer way to travel – people support the use of the old railway lines and support integrating existing cycle routes into a wider cycling network. Junctions and crossings should prioritise cyclists and pedestrians. Many felt parking should be cheaper (if not free) and that car parks should be retained, particularly the Co-op/New Street car park.

4. Town centre conveniences - key community asset

Many consultees mentioned the need to improve the public toilet facilities in Mold. These included toilets at the bus station, in the centre of Mold, at the indoor market, in the Daniel Owen building and at New Street car park. There is also a need for better disabled toilet facilities.

5. Local action, local voices

Many people agreed that communities should have their say in decision-making regarding the future of Mold. There were many positive comments about empowering the local community to be more involved in changes to their area but there is concern that people are not informed or

skilled enough to go about making change. People need to be trained and supported, requiring good communication between the Town Council and residents.

The recent consultation process has shown that people are generally supportive of the Town Council's ambition for a better, greener and more prosperous Mold. People support plans to increase sustainable housing growth and encourage a thriving town centre, so long as open and green spaces are protected and enhanced, and that Mold's identity as a market town is retained by supporting local shops/produce, keeping the existing Cattle Market and retaining Mold's strong Welsh heritage.

Appendices

Appendix 1



HAVE YOUR SAY!

What's your vision for Mold's future? What do you think of this emerging vision?

Find out more about Mold Town Plan at a public exhibition on Saturday 7th November, from 11am to 4pm in the Daniel Owen Centre; or on Tuesday 17th November, from 4pm to 8pm in the Daniel Owen Centre.

Mold Town Plan is a community document and it is important that focal people are involved to help influence the future of our town. Early in 2016, once the detailed draft Mold Town Plan incorporating pub comments has been published, there will be a public launch event.

For further information or to make a comment plea contact Mold Town Council: Ernal: townclerkigmoldrowncouncil.org.uk Telephone of 1352 738532 Address: Mold Town Council, Town Hall, Earl Road, Mold, Flintshire CH7 1











WHAT PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY SAID

- MOLD'S ASSETS AND STRENGTHS
 Mold is easily accessible from large conurbations in
 north west England through the road network and
 also benefits from amployment proportinglies in the

- Mold had limited public transport provision with no train station. Some areas are poorly served by buses and cycle

AN ATTRACTIVE AND THRIVING

TOWN CENTRE GROWTH

A STRATEGY FOR HOUSING

ENHANCING OPEN SPACE AND CONNECTIONS



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES AND ENHANCING SERVICES



17





Dialch yn fawr i chi am roi'r amser i ddweud wrthym sut ydych yn barnu'r egwyddorion drafft ar gyfer Cynllun Tref yr Wyddgrug. Mae eich sylwadau'n wirioneddol bwysig wrth ffurfio'r syniadau ar ddyfodol yr ardal. I ddweud eich barn, llenwch y ffurflen ymateb hon y gallwch ei dychwelyd trwy e-bost neu drwy'r post i Gyngor y Dref yn y cyfeiriad ar ei chefn. Cofiwch sicrhau ein bod yn cael eich sylwadau erbyn dydd Gwener 27 Tachwedd 2015.

Thank you very much for taking the time to tell us what you think about the draft principles for the Mold Town Plan. Your views are really important in shaping the ideas for the future of the area.

To have your say, please complete this feedback form which can be emailed or posted back to the Town Council at the

	y syniadau ar gyfer creu canol tref sy'n ddeniadol a ffyni oout the ideas for creating an attractive and thriving town	
2. Beih yw eich barn c	r y syniadau ar gyfer æeu strategaeth ar gynnydd tai yn	yr Wyddgrug\$
What do you think	about the ideas for creating a strategy for housing growth	n in Mold?
	y syniadau ar gyfoethogi mannau agored a chysylltiada	n vu vi Myddainas







4. Beih yw eich barn ar y syniadau ar roi grym i gymunedau a gwella gwasanaethau yn yr Wyddgrug\$ What do you think about the ideas for empowering communities and enhancing services in Mold\$
5. Defnyddiwch y lle hwn i roi unrhyw sylwadau neu syniadau eraill
Please use this space to provide any other comments or ideas
6. Byddem yn ddiolchgar pe gallech ateb y cwestiwn gwirfoddol hwn. Byddwn yn dal i ystyried eich barn os penderfynwch beidio ag ateb y cwestiwn hwn: We would be grateful if you could answer this voluntary question. We will still take your views into account if you decide not to answer this question: Rhyw / Gender: Dan 21 / Under 21 Cod Post / Postcode: Gwryw / Male 21-35 Benyw / Female 36-50 Dros 65 / Over 65
Daw'r cyfnod ymgynghori i ben ar ddydd Gwener 27 Tachwedd 2015. The consultation period closes on Friday 27 November 2015. Gallwch bostio eich ymatebion i: / You can post your responses to:
Cyngor Tref yr Wyddgrug, Neuadd y Dref, Ffordd yr Iarll, Yr Wyddgrug, Sir y Fflint CH7 1AB Mold Town Council, Town Hall, Earl Road, Mold, Flintshire CH7 1AB
Gallwch hefyd eu hanfon trwy e-bost at townclerk@moldtowncouncil.org.uk You can also email them to townclerk@moldtowncouncil.org.uk
Fe welwch ragor o fanylion ynghylch drafft y Cynllun Trefol yn: / You will find more details about the draft Town Plan at: www.moldtowncouncil.org.uk
Cyngor Tref yr Wyddgrug, Neuadd y Dref, Ffordd yr Iarll, Yr Wyddgrug, Sir y Fflint CHZ 1AB Mold Town Council, Town Hall, Earl Road, Mold, Flintshire CHZ 1AB