



NOMS Prison Map

A Prison in North Wales

The Next Generation of Prison Places

May 2013
Bulletin 1

Welsh Government's First Minister Supports North Wales' Leaders in Backing the Wrexham Bid for a Prison

The First Minister, Carwyn Jones, speaking during First Minister's Questions on 16 April, has announced that the Welsh Government regards the Former Firestone Site in Wrexham as 'the main candidate' for a prison in North Wales from the sites submitted to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ).

The site has been put forward - along with Kingmoor Park - by Wrexham County Borough Council. Wrexham is the only local authority in North Wales to nominate sites for a prison further to the MOJ's recent call.

As the only region in the UK without a prison and one of the three MOJ priority geographical areas in England and Wales for the proposed prison, finding suitable sites has been a high priority for North Wales' key agencies and authorities who have continued to lobby the Prisons Minister for a prison in North Wales.

The First Minister's announcement has been widely welcomed across North Wales. **The North Wales Regional Leadership Board (NWRLB)** - comprising leaders of each local authority, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales and North Wales Fire and

Rescue Authority - has commissioned a pan-Public Sector Group to prepare a business case in support of a prison in the region. This work will now be tailored to Wrexham.

Wrexham: A Strategic Location

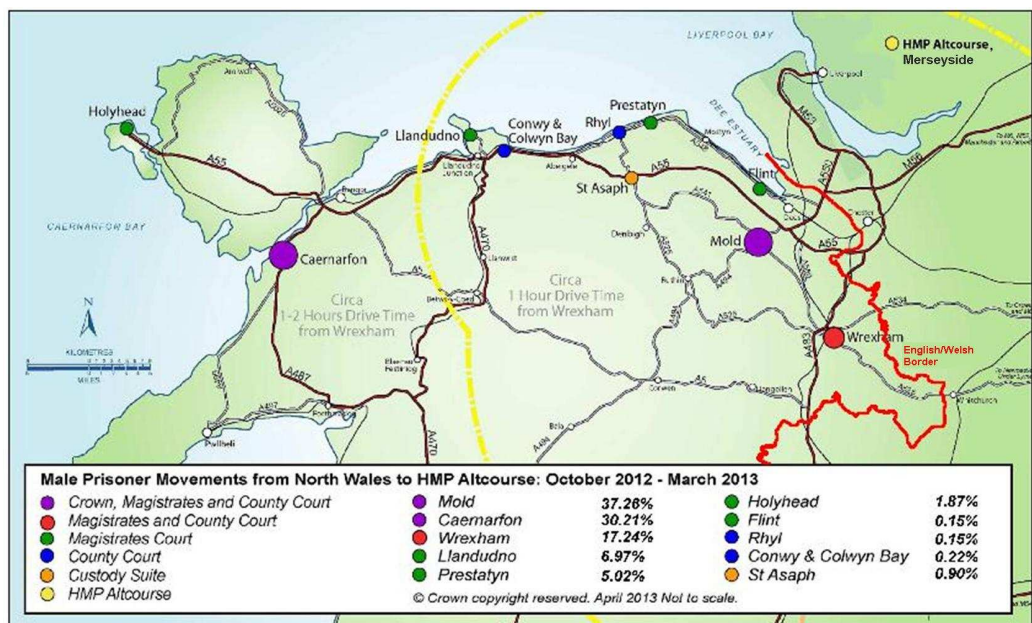
Situated on the Cheshire border in North East Wales, Wrexham has significant locational advantages for the siting of the new prison. It also has the potential to serve as a prison for the North West as well as helping to mitigate against changes to the existing custodial estate ie the closure of HMP Shrewsbury.

Currently, over 1,000 prisoners from North Wales are serving their sentences outside the region. Of the male offenders, on average 95% are sent to HMP Altcourse on Merseyside. According to the latest statistics, 1,333 prisoners from North Wales have been sent to this prison in the last 6 months (Oct-March).

"I am excited by the prospect of securing a prison in North Wales. We need the investment and the jobs but we also need to have a prison where the Welsh Language Act applies so that Welsh culture can be recognized in the prison system. A prison in North Wales...will give better access for family and professional support workers to prisoners from North Wales which will result in reduced re-offending and safer communities on offender release. There is a strong public service efficiency argument for a prison in North Wales."

Cllr Dyfed Edwards, Leader, Gwynedd Council

Creating a Modern Prison Estate



Data Source: HMP Altcourse, Merseyside

A NORTH WALES PRISON : TRANSFORM REHABILITATION - UPDATE THE ESTATE - FULFILL STRATEGIC NEED

North Wales Partnership to Prepare Strong Business Case for Prison

The pan-Public Sector Group commissioned by the NWRLB to prepare the business case for North Wales is confident of a strong evidence base. North Wales believes that it can compete vigorously with London and the North West based on the following summary grounds.

1. Fundamental & strategic need - as the only area in the UK not to have a prison in the region
2. A prison in North Wales that can serve two of the three geographical areas identified by the MOJ
3. Improved prisoner resettlement, better rehabilitation outcomes and reduced re-offending rates - from enabling closer contact between families/prisoners/support professions by reducing travel distance to the prison
4. Efficiency in public services and the operation of the criminal justice system - through reduced distance from the courts and

associated services to prison

5. Economic efficiency through reduced re-offending rates and decreased costs to the public purse
6. Reduced construction and running costs - through lower land values and the quality and competitiveness of the local workforce
7. Culture and Welsh language provision - by securing a prison subject to the provision of the Welsh Language Act, where prisoners can use their first language
8. Excellent transport/accessibility within the region and to other regions of the UK
9. Capable of assisting with other changes to the custodial estate by taking capacity from prisons scheduled to close ie HMP Shrewsbury
10. A significant economic impact on the North Wales economy - a much needed economic development opportunity for one of the more deprived regions of the UK
11. Sites that are capable of

meeting the MOJ's requirements

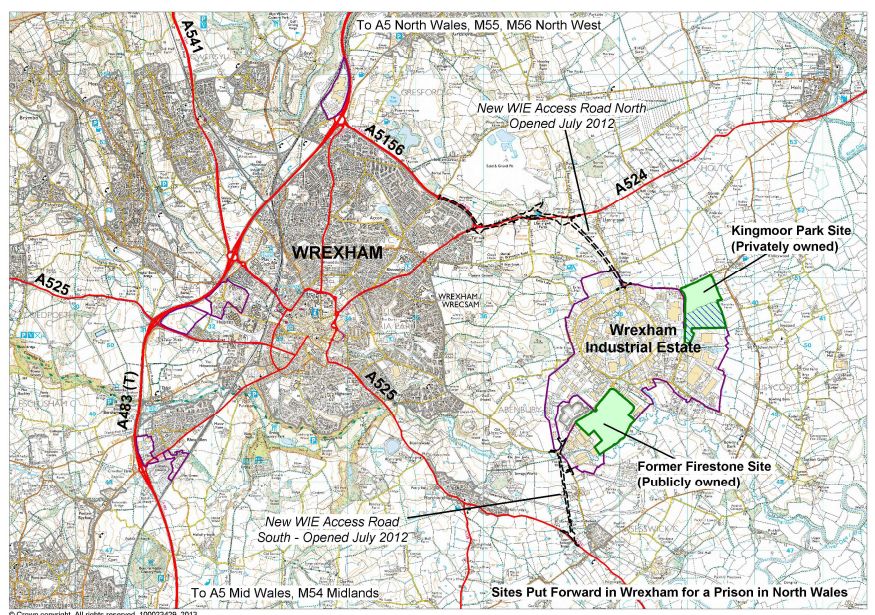
12. Excellent linkages with local business which can help the development of work opportunities and skills development for prisoners in custody and those due for release
13. A strong commitment to sustainable development
14. Political commitment to a prison in North Wales at all levels

Business Case Group Composition:

- Isle of Anglesey County Council
- Conwy County Borough Council
- Denbighshire County Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Gwynedd Council
- Wrexham County Borough Council
- Betsi Cadwaladr Univ. Health Board
- North Wales Police
- Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales
- Welsh Government
- Welsh Local Government Association

The Wrexham Sites: The Former Firestone Site and Kingmoor Park, Wrexham Industrial Estate

- Within North Wales and circa 5 miles from border with North West England
- Good accessibility/transportation links
- Possible to connect to services with no unreasonable costs identified
- Sufficiently flat developable areas of requisite size with adjoining uses that are unlikely to compromise security
- The Former Firestone site is brownfield, in public sector ownership, with no known planning impediments to achieving planning permission for a prison/no abnormal costs attached to ground conditions



This document was produced by Wrexham County Borough Council on behalf of the Members of the North Wales Regional Leadership Board.

