

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/25/0234
Site Address:	O P Chocolate High Street Dowlais Merthyr Tydfil CF48 3TB
Development:	Erect information sign on grassed land at the front of the building
Case Officer:	Marlene Ferreira
Site Visit:	18th September 2025
Application Expiry Date:	23rd October 2025
Consultation reply date expired:	19th September 2025

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to the OP Chocolate factory, located off High Street in Dowlais. It is positioned to the south of the residential area of Dowlais and to the east of Goat Mill Road, which is characterised by a number of industrial sites. Access to the factory is provided off the main highway A4102 (Dowlais High Street) located to the northeast of the site.

The site is bound to the south by an area of open landscaping and woodland, and the A4060 beyond, to the west by an area of vacant land and woodland and Dowlais Conservation Area beyond, and to the east by a Grade II* Listed Building – Dowlais Works Blast Engine House and the car park serving the factory.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks advertisement consent to remove the existing signage at the front of the factory building and erect a new 'welcome sign'.

The proposed 'welcome sign' would be erected on a small triangular area of land to front (northeast) of the factory building. The single sign would contain combined information in respect of pick-up and delivery, staff parking and customer parking, previously found on the other signs (which would be removed). The black and white aluminium sign would not

contain internal or external illumination and would measure 1.2m wide, 2.5m high and 0.1m deep.

PLANNING HISTORY

The following planning history is relevant to this site:

P/19/067 – Erection of two signs – Approved: 26th July 2019

P/10/0195 – Erection of machine store building – Approved: 14th September 2010

P/10/0174 – Erection of rear warehouse extension – Approved: 30th July 2010

P/07/0319 – Erection of extension and canopy – Approved: 5th July 2007

P/06/0168 – Extension to existing factory and new canopy to front elevation –
Approved: 31st May 2006

P/96/0325 – External refurbishment of centre block and silos and re-roofing of oven
Block – Approved: 27th September 1996

CONSULTATION

Head of Engineering and Highways	No objection.
----------------------------------	---------------

Environmental Health	No response.
----------------------	--------------

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to nearby occupiers, and a site notice was displayed near the site. No letters of representation were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021) sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

National Planning Policies

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)

Technical Advice Note 7 – Outdoor Advertisement Control (1996), with particular regard to:

Section 6 - which notes that the general approach to dealing with advertisement applications is similar to the process of dealing with planning application. The display of outdoor advertisements can only be controlled in the interests of amenity and public safety.

Section 10 – which notes that in assessing an advertisement's impact on public safety, local planning authorities should have regard to its effect upon the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport, including the likely behaviour of vehicle drivers who will see the advert and possible confusion with any traffic sign or other signals.

Local Planning Policies

There are no specific policies contained within the adopted Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016 - 2031 with regards to this nature of development. As such, the application will be assessed having regard to the advice contained in TAN 7, as discussed above.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to consider under the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed advertisements are acceptable in respect of their impact upon amenity, given its location adjacent to a listed building and conservation area, and public and highway safety.

The proposed welcome sign, as explained earlier, would be located to the front of the building within a small, grassed parcel of land. Whilst it is acknowledged that in this location, forward of the factory building, the proposed welcome sign would appear prominent and clearly visible on approach to the factory, this is the intended purpose of the advertisement. A sign of this scale in this location would allow visitors to clearly identify the staff and/or customer parking areas and the pick-up and/or delivery areas. Indeed, it would be of a similar scale to the existing welcome sign which it seeks to replace and would result in a reduced number of signs overall, given that other signs are also proposed to be removed, thus reducing ad-hoc signage and visual clutter on the factory building, its enclosures and in the vicinity. In addition, it should be noted that the proposed welcome sign, which would be constructed in an appropriate material and comprise a modest facade, would be free of any illumination and would be orientated so that it would be seen against the backdrop of the existing factory building and the perimeter wall/enclosure. As such, the signage as proposed, would relate well to the factory and would not be overly conspicuous when viewed in relation to the Engine House which is located on the opposite side of the entry access lane. The proposal would therefore be considered acceptable and would not be deemed to cause any significant adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the area or the adjacent conservation area or listed building.

With regards to impact of the sign upon public safety, it should be noted that the proposed advert would not have any significant adverse impact in this respect. Furthermore, it is not considered that they impinge upon highway safety or result in a distraction to highway users. Thus, no objection has been raised by the Head of Engineering and Highways.

Having taken account of the siting of the signs, it is not considered that this form of advertisement, in this location, would have any adverse impact upon public amenity. In this regard, it should be noted that Environmental Health have not submitted any comments or raised any objection to the proposal.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set out above, the proposed advert is considered acceptable and accord with the relevant policies.

Finally, the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

None

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED - *G. Davies*

PP. Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 21st October 2025