

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/25/0197
Site Address:	Prince Charles Hospital Gurnos Road Gurnos Merthyr Tydfil CF47 9DT
Development:	Retention of unit 3
Case Officer:	Gareth Davies
Site Visit:	23rd July 2025
Application Expiry Date:	11th September 2025
Consultation reply date expired:	7th August 2025

APPLICATION SITE

The application site in this instance comprises an established portacabin like structure that is located within the boundary of Prince Charles Hospital to the south of the main hospital building. The property occupies an area of 0.14 hectare and is of two storey construction with grey composite walls and a flat roof. The application building is currently used as a multi-disciplinary training unit within the wider hospital function.

Other than for the hospital itself the immediate locality is residential in character with the recently improved A465 Head of the Valleys Road to the north.

The application property lies within settlement limits as defined in the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission for the building was originally granted for a temporary period of six years in 2019. The current application seeks planning permission to retain the building on a permanent basis. The building provides approximately 983sqm of floorspace over two floors and is made up of three sections, namely, the main building and two smaller stair circulation/lift buildings all serviced by link corridors at ground and first floor level. The building measures 36m x 19.4m and stands 7.5m tall.

PLANNING HISTORY

The following planning history is recent and relevant to this site:

P/19/0196 - erection of temporary two storey portacabin to provide multi-disciplinary training unit – Approved 8th November 2019

- P/19/0197 – Construction of steel gantry structures to provide cable routes – Approved: 23rd August 2019
- P/19/0025 - Discharge of condition 3 (material details) of application P/17/0286 – Approved: 19th February 2019
- P/17/0348 - Discharge of condition 1(Landscaping) of planning permission P/17/0136 – Approved: 8th December 2017
- P/17/0347 - Discharge of conditions 4 (Structural Design Certificate) and 5 (Landscaping) of planning permission P/17/0086 – Approved: 8th December 2017
- P17/0299 - Non material amendment to planning application P/15/0414 to omit roof cowls and erect two louvres – Approved: 24th October 2017
- P/17/0286 - Proposed entrance lobbies, extensions to Hydrotherapy pool, plant rooms, MRI building, double height atrium space and trauma lift – Approved: 20th December 2017
- P/17/0094 - Discharge of conditions 4 (structural design certificate) and 9 (type of lighting and degree of lighting) – Condition discharged: 12th April 2017
- P/17/0086 - Temporary kitchen unit (with plant above). Road works to include re-configuration to parking, road alignment, landscaping, and footways – Approved: 31st May 2017
- P/15/0414 - Extension to existing switch room building at the rear of Cynon Block, erection of a new air handling unit on the roof of the existing McMillan Unit, installation of ventilation items to include 2 roof cowls and five new intake louvres, to support the provision of new maternity neonatal services unit, installation of ventilation items to include 2 roof cowls and five new intake louvres, to support the provision of new maternity neonatal services – Approved: 28th May 2015
- P/15/0114 - New entrance lobby to the existing hospital's main entrance with associated hard landscaping – Approved: 28th May 2015
- P/14/0162 - New multi-disciplinary training unit, relocated helicopter pad, relocated playground with new play equipment, extensions to medical records, and bulk store, new secondary ambulance drop off and canopy, reconfigured site car parking (requiring some demolition works of temporary buildings) and installation of new lighting and CCTV – Approved: 18th September 2014
- P/13/0001 - Outline application for the refurbishment of hospital building, extensions to hospital, creation of detached building, relocation of helicopter landing pad, creation of new car parking and associated external works – Approved: 30th May 2013.

- P/10/0371 - External works to the main entrance area to hospital, including a new ambulance route, revised car parking layout and associated landscaping, and the addition of two entrance canopies to the Emergency Care Centre building – Approved: 10th February 2011.
- P/10/0314 - New cladding to existing theatre plant room and re-fitting of extended louvres – Approved: 16th December 2010.
- P/10/0313 - Extension of first floor extension to Day Surgery – Approved: 16th December 2010.
- P/10/0241 - Erection of single storey extension to Women's Royal Voluntary Services shop – Approved: 20th October 2010.
- P/10/0235 - Erection of Renal Dialysis building, re-configuration of internal access roads and parking areas, creation of ambulance drop-off points and creation of new car parking area – Approved: 18th April 2011.
- P/10/0077 - Creation of day surgery unit involving the erection of first floor extension with plantroom above and associated re-configuration of part of ground floor Emergency Care Centre –Approved: 3rd June 2010.
- P/10/0046 - Erection of a temporary single storey building – Approved: 30th April 2010.

CONSULTATION

Head of Engineering & Highways – No objections

Council Ecologist – No objections

Environmental Health Manager – No objections

Natural Resources Wales – No objections

Mining Remediation Authority – No objections

South Wales Fire & rescue Service – No objections

Welsh Government Highways – No objections

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 site notices were displayed in the vicinity of the site on 23rd July 2025.

No objections or observations have been received as a result of the publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021):

Future Wales provides guidance on matters relevant to this application, including, but not limited to:

Policy 1: Where Wales will grow.

Policy 2: Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking

Policy 33 – National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport, and the Valleys

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 12, February 2024:

Planning Policy Wales provides guidance on matters relevant to planning decisions seeking to ensure the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of Wales.

The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-20231:

Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries

Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking

Policy SW12- Improving the Transport Network

Policy SW13 – Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This application seeks consent to retain the existing building at this location on a permanent basis, consent having previously been granted for its presence for an initial period of six years. The key considerations in the determination of this application are the requirements of planning policy, the concerns in respect of impact on character and appearance, residential amenity, parking and highway safety and ecology.

Planning Policy

Firstly it is worth noting that the building subject of this application lies within the settlement limits as defined by Policy SW4 of the LDP. Within defined settlement limits the principle of development is acceptable subject to compliance with other LDP policies and any planning considerations that might be material to the sustainable and inclusive design. Policy SW11 of the LDP supports sustainable design and placemaking requiring development to create attractive and sustainable places through high quality sustainable and inclusive design. The building is sustainable given its location and whilst its outward appearance might be considered utilitarian, it serves its purpose in the day to day running of the hospital and is designed to be fully accessible by all. Further, allowing the development would assist in the continued functioning of the hospital itself thereby protecting it to the benefit of the community in accordance with the aims of LDP Policy SW13. As such there is no conflict with planning policy in the broadest sense subject to there also being compliance with topic specific policy requirements.

Character and Appearance

The building was initially installed during a period where substantial works were being undertaken to the main hospital building and it replaced a redundant building on the same plot. Whether or not the building is on site permanently or temporarily makes no difference to its acceptability in planning terms. As it is, the building sits centrally within the hospital estate and is one of several such buildings present within the curtilage. Consequently, the proposed permanent retention of the building would be read as part of the general arrangement of hospital facilities and as a part of its character and appearance rather than alien to it. As such the proposals are compliant with the requirements of LDP Policy SW11 as far as it relates to this issue.

Residential Amenity

The development is not adjacent to any residential property and is in the same location as that when the initial temporary consent was granted. The nearest residential property lies on Willow Road approximately 130m distant from this building with other more substantial hospital buildings lying closer. The proposed development would continue to have no adverse impact on the amenity of the nearest residential properties and whether the building is permanent or temporary that fact remains. As such the proposal satisfies the requirements of LDP Policy SW11.

Parking and Highway Safety

The building was initially erected to help facilitate the refurbishment of the hospital and consequently the development would not have resulted in any increase in staff or visitor numbers or any loss of car parking. Moving forward that would remain the case into the future should the building remain on site. The Head of Engineering and Highways raised no objection to the temporary consent application and holds no objection to the building remaining on site permanently. The proposal complies with the requirements of LDP Policy SW12.

Ecology

At the time that the application for temporary consent was first submitted, there were some concerns over the potential for the original building to host bats. These concerns were addressed during the determination of that application. The Council's Ecologist has raised no objection to the current submission of the retention of the building subject to a condition being included on any consent that might be issued to secure net biodiversity benefit in accordance with national planning policy.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of planning policy and in terms of how planning policy is applied to specific topics. There are no material considerations that would weigh against the granting of a permanent permission in this instance and as such a positive recommendation is made.

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 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 in 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.

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

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Site Location Plan Drawing no. P003/BRA/V05/XX/DR/A/900501 Rev 2
- Ground Floor Plans Drawing no. P003/BRA/V05/00/DR/A/010501 Rev 2
- First Floor Plans Drawing no. P003/BRA/V05/01/DR/A/010502 Rev 2
- Roof Plan Drawing no. P003/BRA/V05/02/DR/A/010503 Rev 2
- Drainage Layout Drawing no. P003/OC/V00/Un/DR/C/910118 Rev 2
- Elevations & Sections Drawing no. P003/BRA/V05/XX/DR/A/020501 Rev 3

Reason - To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

2. **Within 3 months of the date of this permission** a scheme for biodiversity enhancement including a timescale for its implementation shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approve details and retained in perpetuity thereafter.

Reason - Future Wales and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12 February 2024) requires all development to maintain and enhance biodiversity and to accord with Policy EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1. This planning permission does not provide consent to undertake works that require a European Protected Species (EPS) licence. All bats and their roosts are protected under UK and European legislation. It is an offence to deliberately kill, injure, capture or disturb a bat or to recklessly damage or destroy their breeding sites or resting places.

If works are planned on a building/tree in which bats are found to be roosting, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) must be contacted. on 0300 065 3000 or at <https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/species-licensing/apply-for-a-protected-species-licence/bat-licences/?lang=en>.

If work has already commenced and bats are found, or if any evidence that bats are using the site as a roost is found, work should cease and NRW should be contacted immediately.

Under these circumstances, an EPS licence is likely to be required to undertake the works within the law.

2. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding.

If works to any trees, hedgerows and/or other nesting bird habitat (including buildings with suitable features) are to be undertaken, they will take place outside of the bird nesting season. If the works must be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a breeding bird survey will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any active nests identified will be protected until the young have fledged.

Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1>) is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, will be devised and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 19.08.2025