

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/26/0038

Site Address: Plot 2
Pengarnddu Industrial Estate
Dowlais
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 2TA

Development: Non-material amendment to planning permission P/21/0164 to change the battery storage units and increase the number of containerised battery storage units from 12 to 16.

Case Officer: David Cross

Application Expiry Date: 17th April 2026

Consultation reply date expired:

APPLICATION SITE

This application relates to an area of land located within the northern section of Pengarnddu Industrial Estate (Plot 2). The site has historically been used in connection with past mining activities and industrial uses and is currently used to accommodate a number of 'Short Term Operating Reserve' (STOR) power plants, which are connected to the National Grid (Western Power Distribution) to provide additional electricity during periods of stress on the National Grid.

The site is bounded to the north and west by land used for industrial purposes and to the east is another power plant facility. The primary means of access into the site is via a gated entrance to the south off the main highway serving the wider area of Pengarnddu Industrial Estate.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission was originally granted for the replacement of the existing 52 diesel generators within containerised battery storage units with associated inverters. This involved the installation of 12 containerised battery storage units, each measuring approximately 12m in length, 2.5m wide by 2.6m high. The containerised units would be located on the existing foundations within the acoustic compound.

Whilst some works have been undertaken to remove the diesel generators, the containerised battery storage units have not yet been installed. The applicant has indicated that the equipment in the original scheme is now dated and there is a need to

utilise up-to-date technology. Accordingly, a non-material amendment is now sought to planning permission P/21/0164 to change the battery storage units and increase the number of containerised battery storage units from 12 to 16.

Whilst there is a slight increase in the number of battery storage units, it is noted that the size of the containerised battery units would overall be reduced, with each unit measuring approximately 6.1m in length by 2.5m wide and 2.9m high.

The battery units would be positioned in a similar position to that previously approved, with the transformers/inverters and switch room repositioned within the same compound. The welfare building and compound fencing would remain as existing. There are no other changes to the extent of the facility or the access arrangement serving the development.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/21/0164 - Replace 52 diesel generators with low carbon battery storage Technology.

Permission GRANTED on 29.06.2021

P/12/0265 - Erection of Western Power Distribution substation with associated access (minor revisions to planning application P/12/0135).

Permission GRANTED on 14.11.2012

P/12/0135 - Erection of standby embedded STOR power plant with associated transformer/generators and connection to national grid. Erection of switchrooms, welfare office, bunded fuel tanks and security/acoustic fencing and other associated engineering works.

Permission GRANTED on 19.09.2012

CONSULTATION

No consultation exercise was required to be undertaken.

PUBLICITY

No publicity exercise was required to be undertaken.

POLICY CONTEXT

The Future Wales – the National Plan 2040

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 11, February 2021:

Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

- Policy SW4 - Settlement Boundaries
- Policy SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- Policy EnW1 - Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

- Policy EnW4 - Environmental Protection
- Policy EnW5 - Landscape Protection
- Policy EcW2 - Protecting Employment Sites

Welsh Government Planning Guidance: *Approving Non-material Amendments to an Existing Planning Permission* (July 2014)

The guidance advises that a non-material amendment will depend on factors such as the context of the overall scheme, the amendments being sought to the original planning permission, the specific circumstances of the site and the surrounding area, which will vary from one application to another.

In deciding whether or not a proposed change is non-material, consideration should be given to the effect of the change, together with any previous changes made to the original planning permission. The guidance also identifies four tests, which local planning authorities may wish to consider when assessing and determining whether a proposed change would qualify as a non-material amendment. These are as follows:

- is the scale of the proposed change great enough to cause an impact different to that caused by the original approved development scheme; and,
- would the proposed change result in a detrimental impact either visually or in terms of local amenity?
- would the interests of any third party or body be disadvantaged in planning terms; or,
- would the proposed change conflict with national or development plan policies?

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main consideration of this application is whether the proposed changes to the approved development would represent a non-material amendment.

Whilst there would be a slight increase in the number of containerised battery storage units, the size of these units would overall be reduced. As such, this would not give rise to a material change in the overall character or appearance of the development. Similarly, the changes to the siting of these battery storage units and other elements within the facility would have negligible impact on the approved scheme, which would continue to be contained within the existing consent compound.

Additionally, it is noted that there are no conditions on the original planning permission that would prevent the approval of the proposed amendments. There have not been other non-material changes to the consented scheme, nor were there any concerns raised as part of the consultation/publicity exercise in the original application that may otherwise conflict with the proposed amendments.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would amount to a non-material amendment to the originally approved scheme. Therefore, the following recommendation is made:

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

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

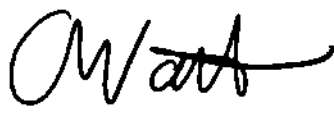
- Dwg No. DOW/LP/003 - Wild Seed Mix Location, received 21.05.2021
- Dwg No. P2154.PP.01 Rev A - Proposed Site Layout Plan
- Dwg No. P2154.TI.02 - Transformer / Inverter Plan and Elevations
- Dwg No. P2154.SC.03 - Switchroom Plan and Elevations
- Dwg No. P2154.SC.02 - General Storage Container Plan and Elevations
- Dwg No. P2154.SC.01 - Spare Parts Container Plan and Elevations
- Dwg No. P2154.SB.01 - Solbank Batteries Plan and Elevations

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

INFORMATIVES

1. This non-material amendment shall be read in conjunction with planning permission P/21/0164

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED

p.p. 
Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 20th March 2025