

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/20/0216

Site Address: Cyfarthfa Park
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8RE

Development: Patio / terrace decking extension to Canolfan Building and Splash pad plant room extension, new changing room pod, bin store, footpaths and bridge

Case Officer: Caroline Pulley

Site Visit: 22nd September 2020

Application Expiry Date: 5th November 2020

Consultation reply date expired: 5th October 2020

APPLICATION SITE

This application relates to land within Cyfarthfa Park which is designated as a Grade II* Historic Park and Garden. Specifically, the site relates to the Canolfan building and the playground/splashpad area, which is located to the north-east of the Grade I Listed Cyfarthfa Castle. The area is well screened by the surrounding woodland and gently sloping hills and can be accessed via numerous footpaths. There is a service road to the west of the application site, running along the rear of the castle. The site generally slopes down gently from north to south.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission for a number of works focussed around the Canolfan building and the adjoining playground/splashpad area. The proposed works are detailed as followed:

- Create an extension to the decking/patio seating area positioned to the front of the Canolfan building. The proposed works would result in the eastern corner of the decking being extended by 11.5m in length. The decked area would as a result protrude 2m beyond the eastern side of the Canolfan building and would be raised by approximately 1.1m above ground level. The surface of the existing decking and would be removed and replaced with grey Millboard composite boards (Burnt Cedar). The retaining wall supporting the new section of decking would be clad with stone. All new handrailing, balustrading and guarding would match the existing.

- Create an extension to the splash pad plant room building to provide a unisex disabled toilet and a storage area. The proposed works would entail the end elevations being extended by 3.2m in length and the roof canopy being extended to suit. The resulting building would as a result be curvilinear in form. The external walls would be constructed from 25mm hardwood vertical boarding fixed to 18mm plywood sheeting. This is to match the existing building. The plans also detail two of the existing steel doors being relocated and a new steel door being fitted to serve a disabled toilet.
- Construct a new changing room pod building next to the existing splash pad plant room building. The proposed building would be curvilinear in form and has been designed with an overhanging roof canopy. The walls of this building would measure 7.3m in length by 4.3m in width. The roof would measure 2.9m in height and would be covered in Sika Sarnafill pvc roofing membrane (to match the finish of the adjacent plant room building). The external walls of the building would be clad with hardwood vertical boards (again, to match the adjacent building). The doors serving the three changing room cubicles would be constructed from hardwood timber and would be painted with an eggshell finish. The two remaining doors serving a unisex disabled changing room and store room would be constructed from steel to match the adjacent plant room building.
- Provide a bin store enclosure to the rear of the Canolfan building. The proposed bin store would form a timber enclosure measuring 2.7m by 2.5m and 1.8m high.
- Construction of a bridged walkway to the east of the Canolfan building. The bridged walkway would measure 2.2m wide by 7.3m in length and would be enclosed by a 1.2m high timber balustrade. It would form part of a proposed footpath, which would provide a route between the Canolfan building and the existing footpaths situated within the woodland area (to the east).
- Construction of a 2m wide red asphalt path between the western elevation of the Canolfan building and the existing footpath which is positioned to the south of the adjoining car park (to the north-west of the splashpad/playground area). This aspect of the proposal includes the construction of new set of access steps to suit the new footpath. The plans detail a bow top fence and a retaining wall (max 2.7m in height) being positioned along the edges of the new footpath.
- Other works include the replacement of the existing rubber chip surfacing within the play area and surfacing repairs.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/10/0009	Variation of Condition 1 of planning consent P/09/0167 (erection of Woodland Centre) relating to amended materials Approved – 11.03.2010
P/09/0167	Proposed Woodland Resource Centre, terrace cafe, wet and dry play areas and landscaping Approved – 26.10.2019
P/09/0343	Toilet and plant room building (associated with the Woodlands Centre and splash play pad)

CONSULTATION

Head of Engineering:	No objection.
Planning Division's Ecologist:	No objection.
Planning Division's Landscape Architect:	No objection.
Cadw:	No objection.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site

No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 10 (December 2018) sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government. The most relevant sections are:

Paragraphs 3.3 – 3.16 set out the principles of good design in new development proposals, which should take into account its relationship to its surrounding context.

Paragraph 6.1.10 advises that for any development proposal which affects the setting of a listed building, or its setting, 'the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

Paragraph 6.1.14 states 'There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas or their settings'.

Paragraph 6.1.15 advises that there is a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level.

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TANs to this application are as follows:-

TAN 12 - Design advises that the Assembly Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

TAN 24 - The Historic Environment (May 2017) - Paragraph 1.25 states '*The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and*

appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape.' Paragraph 1.28 explains that there will be cases where a proposal will enhance the setting of a historic asset and this will be treated as a benefit resulting from the development'.

Local Policy

As highlighted earlier, the application site forms part of a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden. It also has an open space designation.

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031 are considered to be of relevance:

Policy SW4 – Settlement boundaries

Policy SW10 – Protecting and Improving Open Spaces

Policy SW11 – Sustainable design and Placemaking

Policy SW13 – Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities

Policy CW1 - Historic Environment

Policy CW2 – Cyfarthfa Heritage Area

Policy EnW1 – Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Policy EnW2 – Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species

Policy EnW3 – Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species

Policy EnW4 – Environmental Protection

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Note No. 4 – Sustainable Design

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Note No. 5 – Nature and Development

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The primary considerations in the determination of this application are visual amenity and the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area, highway safety and biodiversity.

As detailed earlier, the proposal would involve a decked area to the front of the Canolfan building being extended to provide a larger seating area. The design, scale and height of the proposed deck would be in keeping with the existing structure and it is noted that the retaining element would be suitably finished in stone which would in keeping with the character of the historic park. It is also noted that while the surface of the deck would be covered with a composite material, its finish is very much akin to natural timber boards and is considered acceptable. Other aspects of the development include an extension to the existing plant room building and the siting of a new changing room building adjacent to this structure. These two buildings would be finished in hardwood timber which in keeping with the character of the existing building and park. It should be noted that the proposal also includes some minor engineering works, the erection of new bow top fence and the construction of new retaining walls. These works are considered acceptable. However, it is considered prudent to attach a condition requiring details to be provided to demonstrate the engineering works that would be required to facilitate the siting of the bin store to the rear of the Canolfan building are acceptable. Overall, the proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of its siting, design and visual appearance. It should also be noted that Cadw has not raised any objections to the scheme stating that *'the proposals will not have an adverse impact on the registered historic park and garden'*. Taking this into account, as well as the nature of the works, it is considered that the

proposed development would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area.

In terms of highway and pedestrian safety, the park by its very nature gives priority to pedestrians, and is linked by numerous footpaths throughout. Vehicular access around the park is restricted. Parking provision is adequately catered for by the existing area to the front of the castle, and there will be a drop off area for disabled users adjacent to the playground, which is served by the single track access road which runs to the rear of the Castle. The Head of Engineering has raised no objection and as such, the proposal is considered acceptable in highway safety terms. Given the location of the proposed development, the scheme would not have any adverse impact on residential properties and is also considered acceptable in this regard.

Turning to ecology and biodiversity, it is noted that an Ecological Impact Assessment Appraisal has been carried out to determine any potential impacts on protected species or habitats. This highlights that no further surveys are required regarding the Common Dormouse, European Otter, Great Crested Newt and Reptiles. In regard to Bats, the report advises that a Precautionary approach is required and advises that the existing pod building will need to be checked again by a licenced bat ecologist prior to any works occurring. Also, if habitats are to be removed, this should take place outside of the bird nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August). A number of onsite enhancements measures are proposed within the report. These measures include the siting of bird nesting boxes and bat roosting boxes within the woodland to the north-east of the proposed footbridge. Having regard to the enhancements and mitigation measures being put forward with this application, the Council's Ecologist raises no objection to the scheme.

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

CONDITIONS:

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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

Drawing number CRG-MTC-TCE-00-GA-S-002 REV C01 RETAINING WALL
DETAIL received on 11.11.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-TCE-00-GA-S-001 REV C01 PROPOSED TERRACE EXTENSION received on 11.11.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-RW-00-GA-S-001 REV C01 PROPOSED RETAINING WALL PLAN received on 09.11.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-XX-00-GA-C-006 REV P01 PROPOSED DRAINAGE LAYOUT received on 09.11.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-XX-00-GA-C-004 REV P01 PROPOSED RETAINING WALL PLAN VIEW received on 09.11.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-XX-00-GA-C-002 REV C01 PROPOSED SITE PLAN SHEET 1 OF 2 received on 09.11.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-XX-00-GA-C-003 REV C02 PROPOSED SITE PLAN SHEET 2 OF 2 received on 11.11.2020

Drawing number TS1260/IT08 PROPOSED BIN STORE received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/IT07 REV A CHANGING PAVILLION PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATIONS & SECTIONS received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/IT06 REV A CHANGING PAVILLION PROPOSED FRONT & REAR ELEVATIONS received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/IT05 REV A CHANGING PAVILLION PROPOSED PLAN received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-CHR-00-GA-S-001 PROPOSED CHANGING ROOM received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-BLR-00-GA-S-001 REV P01 PROPOSED BOILER ROOM REFURBISHMENT received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/IT03 REV A PLANT ROOM MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED PLAN received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/IT04 REV A PLANT ROOM MODIFICATIONS EXISTING/PROPOSED ELEVATIONS received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/CT05 CAFE MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED INTERNAL FINISHES received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/CT08 CAFE MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED INTERNAL WALL ELEVATIONS C-C received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number TS1260/CT07 CAFE MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED INTERNAL WALL ELEVATIONS B-B received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number CRG-MTC-XX-XX-GA-C-007 REV P02 RETAINING WALL SECTIONS received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number 0005 REV P01 PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE STRUCTURAL SECTIONS & ELEVATIONS received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number 0004 REV P01 PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE STRUCTURAL FRAMING received on 10.09.2020

Drawing number 0006 REV P01 PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE 3D VIEWS received on 10.09.2020

Recommendations set out in Section 5 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (Document Reference WWE20333 ECIA REV D) received on 26.01.2021 and carried out by Wildwood Ecology.

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

3. **No engineering works shall take place** until details, including structural calculations and facing materials, of any retaining wall which exceeds 1 metre in height have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include existing and proposed sections of the area

proposed for the bin store to the north (rear) of the Canolfan building. The walls shall be completed in accordance with the approved details before the development hereby approved is brought into beneficial use.

Reason - In the interest of safety and visual amenity in accordance with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan .

4. Prior to the construction of the patio/terrace decking extension and new footpaths, a sample of the natural stone together with details of the coursing and pointing to be used to face the boundary walls and retaining walls shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and such details shall be demonstrated by the prior construction of a sample panel. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved materials.

Reason - To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area and adjoining buildings in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policies SW11, CW1 and CW2 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1. The developer/applicant should note a precautionary approach regarding the works to the existing pod is recommended within the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (Document REF: WWE20333 ECIA REV D) carried out by Wildwood Ecology. The approach should include supervision of partial dismantling of any PRF's on the elevations of the pod to be extended. If bats or signs of bats are encountered, all works will need to cease until such a time as a license is granted by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to allow works to continue legally.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

4/2/21