

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/19/0331

Site Address: 74 Pontmorlais
High Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8UN

Development: Refurbishment works to include new roof, reinstate chimney, new shopfront with curved corner and other external alterations

Case Officer: Marlene Ferreira

Site Visit: 23th December 2019

Application Expiry Date: 28th January 2021

Consultation reply date expired: 13th January 2020

APPLICATION SITE

This application site relates to a three storey end of terrace property, 74 High Street, located in the Pontmorlais area of Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre. The building has been altered overtime by unsympathetic alterations, which include the removal of the shopfront, replacement of timber windows and stone cills with UPVc windows, the addition of timber decorative detailing, the removal of chimneys, the replacement of slate roof tiles with concrete roof tiles and the replacement of a curved corner with a squared corner, etc. This combined with the fact that the building is vacant and has been left unmaintained for some time, has contributed to its untidy and poor appearance.

The application site adjoins an attached three storey property, 73 High Street, to the north, Tramroadside to the east, a highway to the south (which provides access to the side and rear of the property) and Pontmorlais High Street to the west. It lies within the settlement boundary, Town Centre Conservation Area, Pontmorlais Article 4 Area and a C2 Flood Zone, as designated within the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development (LDP) 2016-2031.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to refurbish the existing building, reinstate historic features and remove inappropriate alterations as follows:

- Reinstatement of curved wall corner detail to replace square corner of the building;
- Construct two new brickwork chimneys (to the side and rear of the property);

- Install a new natural slate roof to include modification of the roof to match historic details (and allow for the incorporate new curved wall corner detail);
- Install new cast iron rainwater goods and fascia boards;
- New lime render throughout to replace pebbledash finish and timber decorative detailing;
- Install new timber frame sash windows (with horn detailing) and stone cills throughout;
- Install new hardwood shopfront with timber pilasters and decorative timber console brackets either side and a hardwood fascia and cornice decorative timber feature above;
- Install new stone stall riser.

PLANNING HISTORY

The council's records do not indicate any other recent or relevant planning history for this property.

CONSULTATIONS

Planning Division's Conservation Officer	No objection, subject to conditions.
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Planning Division's Ecology Officer	No objection, subject to conditions.
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PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order (Wales) 2012, nearby properties were consulted and a site notice was displayed within the vicinity of the site. To date, no letters of representation have been received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

Local Planning Policies

- Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031

SW4 - Settlement Boundaries

SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking

CW1 - Historic Environment

EnW1 - Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

- Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

SPG Note 3: Shopfront Design (May 2013)

Paragraphs 4.1 and 5.5 of the SPG refer to the principles of good shopfront design and encourage the use of traditional shopfronts and traditional style windows.

- Other Guidance:

Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Conservation Area (June 2009)

The property is recognised as a key building in the conservation area appraisal.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to consider under the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed external alterations to the premises would be acceptable in respect of their impact upon the appearance of the building and the character of the conservation area. The impact of the proposal on residential amenity is also a primary consideration.

Character and Appearance

The application site, as noted above, is a three storey building prominently located along Pontmorlais High Street, within a designated conservation area and Article 4 Area. However, as existing, the premises appears dated, in a poor state of repair and fails to make a positive contribution to the vitality of the town centre. The proposed development therefore seeks to revive the dilapidated appearance of the premises.

The external alterations to the property, particularly to the front elevation, would result in the introduction of important detailing and the reinstatement of historic features, such as a traditional shopfront with timber pilasters and timber console brackets either side as well as a new hardwood fascia and cornice above. This important feature is reflective of its historic appearance and provides an attractive feature framing the entrance into the premises. Other alterations include new lime render, new timber windows and new cast iron decorative brackets throughout, etc. These alterations essentially seek to enhance the appearance of the building in line with its historic appearance and preserve its character for the future. It is therefore considered that these alterations would not only revive the appearance to the building, but would also serve to retain interest and character, particularly to its primary frontage. The existing vacant unit, once renovated, would also appeal to the business rental market and could contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of the Town Centre's Conservation Area and the overall shopping environment.

The proposed development, when viewed individually or as part of the wider street scene would therefore be considered to enhance and positively contribute to the character and appearance of the building and conservation area and would therefore accord with LDP Policies SW11 and CW1.

Residential Amenity

The proposed works to the property relate to the refurbishment of the building which includes the reinstatement of historic features and the installation of new windows (within existing openings), etc. As such it would not include any external alterations which would have an adverse impact on the privacy or amenities of nearby occupiers. Thus, given the nature of the proposal, the proposed alterations would not be deemed harmful to the amenities of nearby occupiers and would therefore comply with SW11.

Ecology

Given the extent of the works, which includes the installation of a new slate roof, as well as the state of repair of the building, the property has been identified as having potential suitability for bats and nesting birds, which could be impacted, if present on-site during these works. Thus, a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was requested in support of

the application to investigate the impacts of the proposed works on protected species and inform whether any further surveys would be required.

A PRA report was received on the 10th December 2020. This has been reviewed by the Council's Ecologist who has agreed with the recommendations of the report provided that these are conditioned as part of any planning permission. As such, a condition to state that the works shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the PRA report shall form part of any planning permission granted. The proposed development would therefore comply with LDP Policy EnW1.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set out above, the proposed development is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the property and the conservation area, and would therefore comply with the relevant policies.

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.

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **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:

- Proposed Elevations & Plan, Drawing no: PL 003, received: 19th December 2019;
- Proposed Shopfront Elevation, Drawing no: PL 004, received: 19th December 2019;
- Hawkeswood Ecology, Preliminary Roost Assessment, 74 Pontmorlais, Merthyr Tydfil, Ref: HE/47/2019, Issue 4, received: 10th December 2020.

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

3. **Prior to the commencement of development** the following samples/details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- slates;
- lime render;
- sliding sash windows (to include section details);
- cast iron rainwater goods;

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained as such thereafter.

Reason - To ensure that the external appearance of the property will be in keeping with the character of the area in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policies SW11 and CW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES

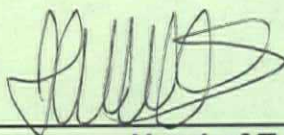
1. All bats and their roosts are protected against disturbance under UK and European legislation. If works are planned on a building/tree in which bats are found to be roosting, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) must be contacted. They must be given reasonable time to advise as to whether the works should be carried out and, if so, the method to be used.

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.

2. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding. Works to any trees, hedgerows and other suitable nesting bird habitat which are to be removed or pruned as part of the proposal should only be carried out outside the bird breeding season. The bird breeding season typically extends between March to August inclusive.

If any vegetation removal or site clearance works are scheduled to commence in the bird nesting season it is advised that the advice from an Ecologist is sought. Any active nests will need to be protected until the young have fledged.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

10/12/20