

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/21/0226

Site Address: Gellideg Foundation Action Centre Shop
23 Heol Tai Mawr
Gellideg
Swansea Road
Merthyr Tydfil

Development: Change of use from cafe to beauty parlour and associated external alterations

Case Officer: Rebecca Owens

Site Visit: 5th July 2021

Application Expiry Date: 16th August 2021

Consultation reply date expired: 21st July 2021

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to a unit within a row of commercial properties which are located in a mainly residential area and within the settlement boundary. The site is bound by a highway to the front, a service yard area to the rear and other commercial units on either side.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought to change the use of the premises from a cafe to beauty parlour. The beauty parlour would be open Mondays to Saturdays between the hours of 9am and 5pm.

In addition, some minor external alterations are proposed which include:

- Blocking up a rear window and inserting two new windows in the rear elevation;
- Installing an air conditioning unit on the rear elevation;
- Painting the external wall pale pink; and
- Changing the roller shutters from green to anthracite grey.

It is noted that this is a retrospective application with the use already operating at the premises and the external alterations completed.

PLANNING HISTORY

The relevant planning history is summarised below:

P/09/0040 Change of use of shop to cafe, increase the floor area of building to

adjoining void and external alterations to front and rear elevations of building (retrospective application)

Granted planning permission subject to condition on 27 April 2009

P/07/0654 Erection of ridged roofs to buildings and other external alterations, erection of 2.4 m high palisade fencing to rear, installation of CCTV and security light (pole mounted)

Granted planning permission subject to conditions on 18 January 2008

CONSULTATION

The following bodies were consulted and their responses are presented below:

Planning Division's Policy Group Leader No objection

Environmental Health Manager No objection subject to conditions

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the neighbouring properties and two site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site.

No letters of objection 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 11, February 2021)

Local Planning Policies

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031 are relevant to the determination of this application:

- SW4: Settlement boundaries
- SW11: Sustainable design and Placemaking
- SW12: Improving the Transport Network
- SW13: Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities
- CW1: The Historic Environment
- EcW3: Retail Hierarchy – Supporting Retailing Provision
- EnW4: Environmental Protection.

The following Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes also applicable: -

- Note 4: Sustainable Design (July 2013).

- Note 3 Shopfront Design Guide (May 2013).

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The application site lies within the Primary Growth Area and is within the settlement boundary. Here new development is considered acceptable in principle; subject to the proposal, being compatible with the other relevant policies and material considerations.

In this respect it is noted that the proposal is for a complementary commercial use outside of the established town and local centres and as such Policy EcW5 is relevant. This policy dictates that such proposals should be subject to an assessment of need and a strict application of the sequential test. In addition, proposals will only be permitted where they avoid causing harm to town/local centre viability. However, whilst the terrace of commercial units within which the application property sits is not identified on the proposals map as a local centre, it could be argued that it functions as a district centre serving the residential area of Gellideg. Policy 2 of Future Wales promotes neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable and organised around mixed-use centres. This is supported by paragraph 4.1.31 of PPW, which describes walkable neighbourhoods as comprising a range of facilities within walking distance. Although walking distance is not fixed, in planning terms it often ranges from 1/8 to a mile or a 10-minute walk dependent on accessibility. The nearest retail and commercial centres comprise: Cefn Coed situated one mile or a 23 minute away; Brecon Road/Morganstown situated one and a half miles or a half-hour away and the Town Centre situated 2 miles or a half-hour walk away. In this instance, therefore it is considered that the application property is situated within a small-established walkable district centre that has not previously caused harm either to the Town Centre or nearby local centres and thereby accords with Policy SW13.

However, it is noted that the existing café use would be classed as a community facility and as such Policy SW13 is also applicable. This Policy seeks to protect community facilities and therefore development proposals that would result in the loss of an existing community facility will only be permitted where:

- alternative provision of at least equivalent value to the local community can be provided nearby, or
- it can be demonstrated that existing provision is inappropriate or surplus to the needs of the community and is no longer required, or
- it can be demonstrated there is no longer a viable community use for the facility.

In this respect, it is highlighted that there is another A3 unit within the terrace where operates at a hot food takeaway. Whilst this does not provide the exact same service as a café it is considered that it would represent an alternative provision to the local community. In addition, the introduction of a beauty parlour would provide a new community facility to serve local residents. As such, it is not considered that the application should be refused on such grounds.

As outline above, the application relates to a unit within a row of commercial properties. The proposed use would therefore be in keeping with these and would not represent an incongruous addition. The proposed external works are also deemed to be relatively minor in nature and would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the unit itself or indeed the overall row of premises of which it forms a part. As such, the proposal would be in accord with Policy SW11 of the LDP.

Regard has also been had for the impact of the proposal on the residential amenities of the neighbouring occupants. In this respect it is noted that the site is bound by other commercial properties and not directly adjoined by any residential properties. Notwithstanding this, it is not considered that the proposed use would give rise to a significantly greater number of visiting members of the public than the previous café use and indeed would not create greater levels of noise and disturbance. As such, the proposed use would not harm the residential amenities of the surrounding residents.

In terms of parking and highway safety, it is noted that the proposal would replace a café. It is not considered that the proposed beauty parlour would result in an increase in visiting members of the public greatly above that of the café use and as such it would not have a harmful impact on highway safety. It is also noted that the unit is located in a densely populated residential area and as such is likely to serve the surrounding residents who can travel to the premises on foot and by public transport.

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:**

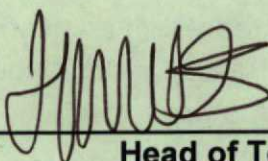
CONDITIONS/REASONS:

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

Proposed rear elevation, Received on 21 June 2021
Proposed floor plan, Received on 21 June 2021

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

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

27/7/21