

PLANNING STATEMENT

to support a revised planning application
for use of land for outdoor storage of skips

on land at Taff Bargoed Development Trust
The Old Drift Mine, Trelewis, Treharris CF46 6RD

APPLICANT

Mr. Chris Rees

AGENT

philwill planning consultancy ltd.

1. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed use of the land is for the storage of skips associated with the applicant's business operations as a skip hire business. It will involve storage of skips to a height of 3 metres, essentially to accommodate the growing need of the business, which already has a waste transfer station located elsewhere in Trelewis. However, due to the constrained nature of that site, there is a need to utilise other areas of opportunity for skips storage. There is no intention to store waste material at the application site, with the use of heavy vehicles restricted to drop-off and pick-up of empty skips. A landscaping bund is proposed along western, eastern, and southern boundaries of the application site to provide an effective screen behind which the skips would be stored. The existing access would remain as the sole means of access and egress into and from the site on to the public highway.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to an area of hardstanding situated in the southern part of the Taff Bargoed Summit Centre and to the rear of an existing industrial building. The site is located at the bottom of a valley and is at a significantly lower level than the main road (B4255) to the east, which leads to Bedlinog. Access to the site from the B4255 is via an access road to the north, which extends past the carpark serving the Summit Centre, and a large coach business.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

The application site was subject of a refusal of planning permission on 21 July 2021 for a similar development under Code Reference P/21/0198 for 2 reasons, namely-

1. The proposed development, by virtue of its siting in the open countryside, would have an adverse impact on the character and

appearance of the surrounding landscape. As such, the proposal is contrary to policies SW4, SW11 and EnW5 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.

2. The proposed development would have the potential to impact on protected species and habitats within the surrounding countryside, by virtue of the disturbance of ecological environments, emissions and leeching of pollutants into the ground. Therefore, the proposal runs contrary to policies EnW1 and EnW3 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.

4. THE REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION AND MATERIAL ISSUES.

The revised planning application is accompanied by an Ecological Assessment which concludes that the proposed development does not negatively impact on the protected species and habitats as set out in Reason for Refusal 2 above. Appropriate mitigation measures can be secured by conditions attached to any planning permission, with which the applicant is fully prepared to comply.

The proposed vehicular access to the site remains the same and was not a contentious issue in respect of the previous scheme. The vehicular access is currently used by commercial operations, including a recently granted planning permission on 2 December 2022 for a 'change of use to coach parking facility with associated hardstanding area' under Code Reference P/22/0095. In the Officer Delegated Report that application site was described as being "surrounded by open countryside well populated with trees and woodland areas and a watercourse...."

Reason for Refusal 1 refers to three policies in the Replacement LDP each of which will be considered below-

POLICY SW4: Settlement Boundaries recognises that development outside defined settlement boundaries will not be permitted unless

the development, inter alia, supports the expansion of an existing business in the countryside.

The proposal is required to support an existing business elsewhere in Trelewis and is, in any case, immediately adjacent to commercial development on a site previously used as a hardstanding/compound by Welsh Water. The site characteristics are such that it has clearly been developed in the recent past and not 'open countryside' in nature.

POLICY SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking refers, inter alia, to any development being 'appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing...', 'not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity...and incorporate a good standard of landscape design'.

The proposal has been sensitively designed to provide a landscaped bund which provides an effective screening of the stored skips. Its height exceeds the height of the stacked skips, such that the proposal is not visible from the highway.

POLICY EnW5: Landscape Protection refers to SLAs of which there are none present adjacent to the application site, and criteria against which the acceptability of any development is measured.

There is no local landscape character or landscape features in the locality and there is no satisfactory alternative for the location of the skip storage business for the applicant who has an interest in the land.

POLICIES EnW1 and EnW3 have been addressed in the Ecological Survey Report as part of the submission.

CONCLUSIONS

For the above reasons, it is considered that the revised scheme has addressed the previous reasons for refusal and can be granted

planning permission subject to appropriate conditions. The applicant is content that these conditions should seek to control hours of operation, the limitation for storage of empty skips only, mitigation and enhancement measures regarding ecological protection, and an effective landscaping scheme being implemented prior to beneficial use of the site.