

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Kate Glover - Development Control Case Officer
Reference: P/25/0280

From: Planning Policy and Implementation Section
Ask for: David James
Extension: 7053

Date: 6th November 2025

Summary

No objection raised. The development meets the relevant Replacement LDP policies (SW4, EcW3 & EcW5).

If minded to approve in principle, particular consideration should be given to the impact of the development on the character of the Treharris Conservation Area, the impact on surrounding area and occupiers, the impact on biodiversity interests, traffic generation and parking provision, and any other relevant risks to public health and safety (Policies SW11, SW12, CW1, EnW1, EnW3 & EnW4).

Policy SW9 should also be noted.

Observations in respect of the above development

1. Proposed Development

An application for the change of use of the ground floor from a shop (A1) to a self-contained flat (C3), at 51 Perrott Street, Treharris.

2. Development Plan Framework

The existing development plan framework in Merthyr Tydfil is provided by:-

The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (2016 - 2031)

The relevant LDP Objectives are:-

- *LDP Objective 1 Sustainable Population Growth: To encourage a sustainable level and distribution of population growth.*
- *LDP Objective 2 Welsh Language and Culture: To protect and enhance Welsh language and culture.*

- *LDP Objective 4 Regeneration: To promote the suitable reuse of previously developed land and the continued regeneration of local communities.*
- *LDP Objective 6 Sustainable Design: To promote high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and support measures which mitigate the predicted effects of climate change.*
- *LDP Objective 7 Transport: To support an integrated transport system, promote active travel and ensure new developments are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport links.*
- *LDP Objective 8 Community Facilities: To support existing community facilities and suitable community led development.*
- *LDP Objective 9 Heritage and Cultural Assets: To protect, enhance and promote all heritage, historic and cultural assets.*
- *LDP Objective 10 Biodiversity: To improve ecosystem resilience and connectivity which support habitats and species of principle importance.*
- *LDP Objective 12 Economic Development: To provide and safeguard appropriate land for economic and skills development.*
- *LDP Objective 14 Town and Local Centres: To develop the town and local centres as accessible, attractive, viable and vibrant places.*

The following development plan policies would apply:-

- *Policy SW1 Provision of New Homes*
- *Policy SW2 Provision of Affordable Housing*
- *Policy SW3 Sustainably Distributing New Homes*
- *Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries*
- *Policy SW9: Planning Obligations*
- *Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking*
- *Policy SW12: Improving the Transport Network*
- *Policy SW13: Protecting Community Facilities*
- *Policy CW1: Historic Environment*
- *Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience*
- *Policy EnW3: Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species*
- *Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection*
- *Policy EcW5: Town and Local Centre Development*

The following supplementary planning guidance is applicable:-

- *SPG 2: Planning Obligations*
- *SPG 4: Sustainable Design*

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)

Planning Policy Wales provide guidance on matters relevant to this application, namely:

- **Placemaking in Action: Good Design Making Better Places**
- **Strategic Placemaking: Previously Developed Land**
- **Active and Social Places: Living in a Place**

- Activities in a Place: Retail and Commercial Development
- Activities in a Place: Community Facilities
- Recognising the Special Characteristics of Places
- Recognising the Environmental Qualities of Places

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

TAN 12: Design (March 2016).

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

Future Wales provides guidance on matters relevant to this application, including, but not limited to:

- Policy 1: Where Wales will grow
- Policy 2: Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking
- Policy 7: Delivering Affordable Homes
- Policy 33 : National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys

3. Policy Considerations

The site of the proposal is located within an Other Growth Area (Policies SW1 and SW3), as defined by the LDP, within the settlement boundary where development will be allowed subject to the proposals compatibility with other plan policies and material considerations (Policy SW4), and within the Treharris Conservation Area (Policy CW1).

Policy SW1 states that 2250 additional homes are required to sustainably grow our population. The proposal comprises a new unit, which would represent a contribution to the 2250 units that are required during the plan period. Furthermore, Policy SW3 states that while new homes will be concentrated within the main settlement of Merthyr Tydfil, new homes will also be directed to our other settlements, including Treharris. As such, the proposal complies with policies SW1 and SW3.

Policy SW9 relates to planning obligations. Where appropriate and having regard to development viability, planning obligations will be sought for:

1. On site provision of affordable housing on sites of 10 homes or more at a level of:
 - 10% in the Primary Growth Area.
 - 5% in the Other Growth Area.
2. A financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing:
 - On sites of between 5 and 9 homes or;
 - On sites of 10 or more homes, where on-site provision is not appropriate.
3. The provision of open space on sites of 10 homes or more, where there is an identified need.
4. Other relevant obligations not included within the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 List of Infrastructure.

Given that the proposal is for only one additional unit, on-site provision of affordable housing or open space, or a financial contribution towards affordable housing, would not be sought. Additionally, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is not chargeable in this part of the County Borough.

Policy SW11 advises that development must contribute to the creation of attractive and sustainable places through high quality, sustainable and inclusive design. Where appropriate, new development will be required to (amongst other things):

- be appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing, layout, form, mix and density;
- integrate effectively with adjacent spaces, the public realm and historic environment to enhance the general street scene and create good quality townscape;
- not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity, loss of light or privacy, or visual impact, and incorporate a good standard of landscape design;
- allow access for the widest range of people possible, and demonstrate that any traffic movements will not have an unacceptable impact on local amenity or highway safety and satisfy the Council's parking standards.
- provide adequate facilities and space for waste collections and recycling.

Considering the nature of the development, and the location of the site (in close proximity to existing residential and commercial uses) consideration should be given to the above issues, particularly the impact on local amenity. Additionally, the submitted plans indicate that the development would not benefit from off-street parking. This should be checked against the Council's current parking standards, and the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader should be sought in this respect.

Policy SW12 supports development that encourages a modal shift towards sustainable transport, including the enhancement of pedestrian, cycle, rail and bus facilities, in addition to any necessary road improvements. Developments will be expected to demonstrate how they reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of sustainable transport. As such, the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader should be sought in this respect.

Policy SW13 states that the provision of new and enhanced community facilities will be supported subject to satisfying other relevant LDP policies. And that the Council will protect and support the enhancement of the County Borough's existing community facilities. Development proposals that would result in a 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.

There are a number of shops, and similar uses, within close proximity to the application site. Additionally, there are a number of commercial properties, in close proximity, that are vacant, and have been for some time. Many of these, including the application site, have been advertised for rent, but there has been no interest.

Policy CW1 advises that the integrity of our historic environment assets will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated they would preserve or enhance the architectural quality, character or the historic or cultural importance of our designated historic environment assets. And that, development affecting undesignated historic environment assets including, Locally Listed Buildings or structures, Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales, Urban Character Areas and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas should have regard to their special character and archaeological importance.

The site is located within the Treharris Conservation Area. As such, this and any other relevant historic environment assets should be taken into consideration, and the views of the relevant Officer or external Heritage body sought in this regard, as appropriate.

Policy EnW4 advises that development proposals will be required to demonstrate they will not result in an unacceptable impact on people, residential amenity, property and / or the natural environment from either:

- Pollution of land, surface water, ground water and the air;
- Land contamination;
- Hazardous substances;
- Land stability;
- Noise, vibration, dust, odour nuisance and light pollution; or
- Any other identified risk to public health and safety.

Where impacts are identified the Council will require applicants to demonstrate that appropriate measures have been incorporated to reduce, or minimise the impact identified to the lowest possible acceptable level. Planning conditions may be imposed or legal obligation entered into, to secure any necessary mitigation and monitoring processes. As such, the views of the Environmental Health department should be sought as appropriate.

Policy EcW3 advises that Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre is the favoured location for retail, leisure, and other complementary development, being situated at the head of a retail hierarchy and being followed by the local centres of Dowlais, Gurnos, Cefn Coed and Brecon Road/Morgantown, Troedyrhiw, Aberfan, Treharris and a new local centre forming part of the 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area'. Proposals for new and enhanced retail, leisure and other complementary provision in all these centres will be permitted where they improve the vitality and viability of the centre(s) concerned.

Policy EcW5 advises that development enhancing the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres will be supported. And that within local centres, the change of use of the ground floor to 'non-A' use classes will only be permitted where:-

- It is demonstrated through active and appropriate marketing that the existing use is no longer economically viable; and,
- The proposal would not result in an over concentration of non-A1 uses that would be detrimental to the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the local centre; and,
- The proposal would not result in the creation of a dead window frontage; and,
- The proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity and viability of neighbouring uses, having regard to the 'agent of change principle'.

Given that the proposal would result in the loss of a unit which formerly contained a commercial use (a shop), it would not be in accordance with Policy EcW5.

A marketing report has been submitted with the application indicating that the site has been marketed for rent without success, for approximately 12 months (and with a competitive pricing strategy).

The report also indicates that market conditions (including local retail demand and occupancy trends) result in there being no meaningful demand for this unit in the current commercial market.

In relation to this, there are a number of vacant units within the local centre, which have been vacant for some time, and have been marketed for at least 6 months. These factors suggest that the economic viability of a new commercial use at this location is poor. Additionally, there are many other commercial units currently operate from the local centre, with a mix of 'A1', and other, uses.

The proposal would not result in a dead window frontage as the vacant unit now has or, for example, a use which operated only in the evenings would have. It would also bring back into beneficial use a vacant unit in a local centre with a number of vacant units. The proposed use (residential), would not be detrimental to the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the local centre, nor would it have an unacceptable effect on the amenity and viability of neighbouring uses.

Taking the above into consideration, it appears that the proposal would satisfy the four criteria above, and therefore, in this instance, would be in accordance with Policy EcW5. However, future proposals within Treharris local centre will need to be monitored closely, to ensure that an over-concentration of non-A1 uses, that would negatively effect the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the local centre, does not occur.