

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/25/0343
Site Address:	Former Carpetright Store Unit E Dowlais Top Retail Park Merthyr Tydfil CF48 2TA
Development:	Installation of plant and plant cage and bin store
Case Officer:	Gareth Davies
Site Visit:	14th January 2026
Application Expiry Date:	25th February 2026
Consultation reply date expired:	27th January 2026

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to the former Carpetright outlet located at the Dowlais Top Retail Park and is the middle one of the three units at this location. The site shares the retail park with Dunhelm, and B and M Bargains and car parking is also shared between these three units. Specifically, the application property is unit E a single storey purpose-built retail warehouse unit with a floorspace of approximately 930 sq. m. the property was previously occupied by Carpetright and has been vacant since that company went into administration in 2024.

The property is accessed via an access road from the Heads of the Valleys Road to the south of the site, and forms part of a wider retail offer in this area which also includes Asda to the south and a Lidl outlet to the south east.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development seeks planning permission for the installation of a plant compound and bin store midway along the south western side elevation.

The plant compound would have floor dimensions of 2.5m x 7.5m and would hold the condenser units to be used in association with the shop. The bin store would have floor dimensions of 2m x 2.5m and would sit next to the plant cage. The proposed works also include the creation of service works and associated grilles to connect the condenser units to the shop and their functioning. The units will be within a galvanised flow forge cage with a surrounding Armco barrier around it.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/26/0006 – Lawful Development Certificate for the installation of roof mounted solar panels – Granted 04.02.2026

P26/0002 – Canopy and Roller Shutter Door – Not Yet Determined

P/26/0001 – New Shopfront - Not Yet Determined

P/25/0342 – Provision of two illuminated signs - Not Yet Determined

P/25/0256 – Variation of condition 1 of planning permission P/95/0607 to enable the unit to be used for the sale of convenience goods, carpets and consumer durable goods , together with no more than 175 sq.m. gross floorspace of unrestricted ancillary comparison goods (Removal/Variation of Condition) – Granted 18th December 2025

P/96/0261 – Shop signs and poster panels – Approved with Conditions 16th August 1996.

P/95/0607 – Single storey retail unit – Approved with Conditions 1st March 1996.

CONSULTATION

Head of Engineering and Highways – No objection

Environmental Health Manager – No response received.

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service – No objection

Welsh Government Highways – No objection

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, site notices were placed in and around the site on 14th January 2026.

No objections or representations were received as a result of this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National planning policy

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040: 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.

Policy 6 – Town Centre First, states: *‘To breathe new life into town centres, the Welsh Government has adopted a ‘Town Centre First’ approach. This puts the health and vibrancy of town centres as the starting point of locational decision-making. It also directs facilities and services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them.’*

This policy considers town centres are the most accessible parts of our towns and should be the focus of growth and regeneration. Such areas remain a focal point for communities and provide a hub for a variety of uses alongside retail.

Whilst policy 6 applies to development of a significant scale (defined broadly, where a facility will serve a town, city, or region-wide catchment), it is also recognised that planning authorities are encouraged to take a similar approach for smaller developments.

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12th Edition, February 2024:

Section 4.3.3 acknowledges that in order to ensure maximum contribution to the well-being goals the planning system must promote viable urban and rural retail and commercial centres. It must sustain and enhance the vibrancy, viability, and attractiveness of retail and commercial centres. It must also improve access to and within the retail and commercial centres by all modes of transport.

Section 4.3.8 notes that where a need for additional retail has been identified, planning authorities should consider the most appropriate form, scale, and location of this provision to best meet the need.

Section 4.3.14 sets out the requirement to consider the need for additional retail provision, having regard to the quantitative and qualitative need for both comparison and convenience goods.

Sections 4.3.18 – 4.3.23 emphasise a town centre first to the sequential approach for the location of new retail development before consideration is given to edge of centre and then out of town sites.

Section 4.3.20 states that new out of town retail developments or extensions to existing out of town development should not be of a scale, type, or location likely to undermine the vibrancy, attractiveness and viability of those retail and commercial centres that would otherwise serve the community. It also should not be allowed if they would be likely to put development plan retail strategy at risk.

Section 4.3.25 notes that retail developments outside of designated retail and commercial centres can impact on the viability and vibrancy of a centre. Such impacts, whether individually or cumulatively may include changes in turnover, trading ability, consumer choice, traffic and travel patterns, footfall, as well as affect centre regeneration strategies.

Sections 4.3.26 – 4.3.29 consider the potential retail implications a new retail development may have on designated retail centres, which may impact on their viability and vibrancy. Where appropriate retail impact assessments may be required and the use of conditions may be necessary to limit any changes over time i.e. loss of existing provisions, changes to the range of goods or the sub-division of units etc.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 4, Retail and Commercial Development, November 2016:

Further guidance on retail proposals is set out in the TAN, including the tests of retail need, the sequential approach to site selection, retail impact assessments, and the use of conditions.

Local planning policy

Merthyr Tydfil County borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

- Policy SW4 - Settlement Boundaries
- Policy SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- Policy EcW3 - Retail Hierarchy – Supporting Retailing Provision
- Policy EcW4 - Retail Allocation
- Policy EcW5 – Town and Local Centre Development
- Policy EcW6 - Out-of-Town Retailing Areas

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key considerations in the determination of this planning application are the principle of development itself, the visual impact of the proposed development and the impact of the proposed development on the general amenity of the local area.

The application site is located within settlement limits as defined by the Replacement Local Development Plan and on an established retail park. Given the circumstances and the fact that one of the most recent planning applications on this property has established that its use as an Iceland Food Warehouse is acceptable, by association so is the necessary plant and machinery required to support that use as long as it is also compliant with other relevant policies of the Replacement Local Development Plan.

The visual impact of the proposed development is minimal. The proposed development sits to the side of the shop which is a much larger building. Visually the plant and bin store are read against the much larger side elevation of the property. The plant cage and bin store are considered appropriate to the local context and integrates effectively with adjacent spaces and land uses on an area of land that is otherwise unused and of no particular alternative use. As such the proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on visual amenity and meets the requirements of Replacement Local Development Plan Policy SW11.

In terms of the impact on the general amenity of the area such plant is commonplace across the retail park and a number of the stores around the site have similar air management systems external to the main buildings (including the adjacent B&M store). Operationally, the plant is sufficiently distant from any sensitive receptor for it to have any adverse impact as a result of noise. As such the proposals are considered acceptable in terms of their impact on the general amenity of the area and are compliant with the requirements of Policy SW11 of the Replacement Local Development Plan

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed Plant equipment and cage along with the bin store are considered acceptable in terms of planning policy requirements and all other relevant planning considerations and as such a positive recommendation is made.

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 permission hereby granted relates to the following plans: -

- Block and site location plan drawing no. ICE695-MERTHYR-SP02
- Food Warehouse AC and Refrigeration Design Drawing No. B2689

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

INFORMATIVES

1. The applicants attention is drawn to the observations of the Divisional Fire Safety Officer South Wales Fire Service (Copy attached).

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 10.02.2026