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Croesawn alwadau yn y Gymraeg
We welcome calls in Welsh



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

Christopher Davies
Unit 5 Triangle Business Park
Pentrebach
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 4TQ

Dyddiad/Date: 18 September 2019

Ein Cyf./Our ref.: PA/19/0046

Eich Cyf./Your ref.:

Gofynnwch am/Please ask for:

Llinell Uniongyrchol/Direct Line:

e-bost/e-mail:

Rebecca Owens

01685 726281

rebecca.owens@merthyr.gov.uk

Dear Mr Davies,

RE: PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF LAND ADJACENT TO THE ORBIT BUSINESS CENTRE TO AN OVERFLOW CAR PARK INCLUDING NEW SURFACING, DRAINAGE AND LIGHTING WORKS.

I write in response to your recent application for pre-application advice regarding the above proposal which was received in my Division on 3rd September. I provide the following advice:

Relevant Planning Site History

The relevant planning history relating to this site is summarised below:

P/07/0518 Erection of business and innovation centre building and associated parking
Granted planning permission subject to conditions on 26 October 2017

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil Borough Local Development Plan 2006-2021 would be relevant to the determination of this application:

- BW1: Development Strategy - Primary Growth Area
- BW4: Settlement boundaries / locational constraints
- BW5: Natural heritage
- BW7: Sustainable design and place making
- BW8: Development and the water environment
- BW12: Development proposals and transport
- BW14: Managing employment growth
- BW18: Contaminated land
- AS14: Employment allocations in the Primary Growth Area
- AS24: Employment site protection
- TB11: Access, parking and accessibility of local facilities

Furthermore, the application will be determined having regard to the advice contained within the following Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan 2006-2021, Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes:

Merthyr Tudful
... lle i fod yn falch ohono

Merthyr Tydfil
... a place to be proud of

Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedl. Rhwch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewis iaith e.e Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.

- Note 5, Nature and Development.

The LDP (including the full detail of these policies) and the relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance documents can be found on the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Website at:

<https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/planning-policy/>

It is likely that the main material planning considerations for this application would be:

- Compliance with relevant planning policies;
- Design and impact on character and visual amenity;
- Impact of the proposal on residential amenity;
- Highway safety;
- Ecological impact.

Information required with the submission of a planning application

In order to apply for full planning permission for this proposed scheme the following would need to be submitted to my Division:

- 2 No. completed copies of the relevant planning application form;
- 2 no. copies of an ordnance survey based location plan with the application site outlined in red and any other land in the control or ownership of the applicant outlined in blue. This is normally at a scale of 1:1250 and must contain a north arrow;
- The relevant planning application fee which in this case would be £570;
- 2 No copies of an existing block plan and proposed block plan, drawn to an appropriate metric scale;
- 2 no. copies of elevational drawings of any boundary treatments/lighting etc. These must be drawn to an appropriate metric scale;
- A light spillage diagram of any proposed lighting;
- a landscaping scheme and landscape management plan; and
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA);

Alternatively, I would encourage you to submit any planning application via the Planning Portal.

Summary of the acceptability of the Proposal

The application site is within the settlement boundaries and relates to a parcel of scrub land which is within an allocated employment site (AS14) which is also a protected employment area (AS24) of the LDP. It is recognised that the proposal would result in the loss of land for new employment uses but it would support the ongoing viability of the existing Orbit Centre. Policy AS24 states:

“At Rhydycar Business Park and at site allocation E8 (Car Park, Hoover Factory), development will be permitted if:

- *it falls within use class B1; or*
- *it provides an ancillary facility or service to the primary employment use”.*

The principle of creating an overflow car parking area to serve the existing Orbit Centre is therefore considered to be acceptable and would comply with the relevant Policies.

However, the acceptability of the proposal is also subject to compliance with other relevant planning policies and material planning considerations which are outlined below.

Character and Visual Amenities

The application site is located within a business park where there are a number of large buildings and associated car parking facilities. Whilst it is currently a parcel of undeveloped, vegetated, scrub land it has

been allocated for development in the LDP. The proposed change of use of the land to a car park would not appear out of place within its context and thus in principle would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. However, in the interests of visual amenity, it is advised that the development site includes some soft landscaping treatment consistent with that of the surrounding landscape. This should include landscaping along the eastern perimeter and within the site (for example within the proposed islands, areas allocated for lighting and within any other suitable locations). Alder species are successful in wet ground conditions and would enable use to be made of ground water run off directed to areas where these trees are planted as part of an integral landscape / SUDS scheme. There are a number of hardy legumes which may be used to add a more ornamental/ amenity aspect to the planting mix Cytisus, and Lupins. A number of ornamental grasses and sedges will also thrive in such conditions. The design of the soft landscape treatment should aim to introduce colour into the planting. As such a suitable landscaping scheme would be required to support the development and this should be accompanied by a minimum five year landscape management plan.

Residential amenity

There are no residential properties within close proximity to the site and as such the proposal would not impinge on residential amenity. Notwithstanding this, you are advised that the application would be publicised as part of the planning application process and any representations received following this publicity exercise would be material planning considerations.

Highway safety

The Engineering and Traffic Group Leader has considered the submitted proposal and has not raised any objections to the scheme in terms of highway safety. Indeed the provision of additional parking for the Orbit Business Centre, where the current provision has at times been found to be insufficient would be beneficial in this respect.

Ecological Impact

The scheme will directly impact upon the grassland habitat and scattered scrub and would impact on faunal species that may be present (this might include, but not be limited to, foraging bats, nesting birds, reptiles, hedgehog and invertebrates). It would also indirectly impact upon the woodland habitat.

The submitted details also suggest that street lighting is to be included in the development but no specific details of this has been provided. It is therefore advised that guidance should be sought from the Council's Ecologist for observations on an appropriate approach.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist would therefore be required to support any planning application. The PEA would need to provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to assess the potential ecological impacts of the proposed development, or to identify what further information is required before a full assessment is possible. The results of the PEA will inform whether further surveys are required, or to establish the need for, and extent of, any mitigation or compensation measures required as part of the proposed development.

Other issues

- The application site forms part of the former Rhydycar reclamation scheme which was completed a number of years ago. However, it is in an area identified as being of potential high risk from coal mining activities. Notwithstanding this, given the nature of the development proposed a Coal Mining Risk Assessment may not be required. However, you may wish to contact the Coal Authority for further advice.
- There may be a large water main (600mm diameter) within the adjacent embankment as such advice should be sought from Dwr Cymru Welsh Water as this may impact upon the proposal.

There are also utility boxes within the proposed development area and advice should be sought from the relevant bodies.

- The proposal will consist of a level area, comprised of hard surfacing. The net effect will be an increased rate of run off unless an integral sustainable urban drainage scheme is built into the design. SAB approval is required which is independent of any planning approval and as such contact with the SAB officer Huw Williams is advised (email: huw.williams@merthyr.gov.uk)
- The application site is within close proximity to the A470 trunk road. As such the Welsh Government Economy and Infrastructure division would be consulted as part of any planning application.

Final Comments

The principle of developing the site is considered to be acceptable subject to a suitable landscaping scheme. However, a light spillage diagram and PEA will be required and these would be material planning considerations.

The information provided above is offered without prejudice to any future decision taken by the Council upon submission of a planning application. However, should you have any further queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact my Planning Officer Rebecca Owens on the above direct line.

Yours sincerely



MISS J JONES

PRIF SWYDDOG CYNLLUNIO A GWASANAETHAU CYMDOGAETH/ CHIEF OFFICER PLANNING & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES