

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/21/0401

Site Address: 5 Pontmorlais
High Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8UB

Development: Change of use of ground floor from A2 to B1

Case Officer: Rebecca Owens

Site Visit: 6th December 2021

Application Expiry Date: 21st January 2022

Consultation reply date expired: 10th January 2022

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to a three storey property within the Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre and thus is within a mixed use area where there are a number of different uses present including retail, commercial and residential. The site is located within the settlement boundary and is also within the Town Centre Conservation Area and a designated Article 4 area. In addition, it is adjacent to two Grade II Listed structures (Zoar Chapel and the gates and gate piers at the entrance to Zoar Chapel) and is within close proximity to a locally listed building (Olde Express Inn). At present the property comprises of a vacant office at ground floor with a maisonette above. It is bound by a highway to the front and other properties to the side and rear.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought to change the ground floor of the property from an office within the A2 use class to a B1 use. The proposal is to provide a co-working space where a number of small B1 users can occupy the office space provided. No external alterations are proposed to the property to facilitate the change of use.

PLANNING HISTORY

The relevant planning history is summarised below:

P/18/0077 Change of use from shop (A1 use class) to Solicitors (A2 use class)
Granted planning permission subject to conditions on 25 April 2018

P/14/0297 Non material amendment to windows, shopfront, roof details , materials and other alterations as approved under application P/12/0323
Approved subject to condition on 1 December 2014

- SW11: Sustainable design and Placemaking
- SW12: Improving the Transport Network
- CW1: Historic Environment
- EnW4: Environmental Protection
- EcW3: Retail Hierarchy – Supporting Retailing Provision
- EcW5: Town and Local Centre Development

In addition, the application will be determined having regard to the advice contained within the following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Notes:

- Note 4, Sustainable Design.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle

The application site is located within the Town Centre, situated within the *Primary Growth Area* of the settlement boundary, where Policy SW4 applies. Here new development is considered acceptable in principle; subject to the proposal being compatible with other relevant policies and material considerations. In this respect it is noted that Policies EcW3 and EcW5 are also relevant. Policy EcW3 relates to the retail hierarchy, with the Town Centre being the favoured location for retail and other complementary uses where they improve the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. In addition Planning Policy Wales operates a 'town centre first' principle and includes B1 office use as an 'other complementary use'. Given this, it is not considered that the proposed use would harm the vitality of the area or contravene this policy. Moreover, Policy EcW5 also supports development that enhances the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. Given that the ground floor of the property is currently vacant, a proposal that would bring it back into a beneficial use would improve the vitality of the Town Centre. The proposal is therefore in accordance with this Policy.

Character and visual amenity

As noted above, the application site is located in the town centre where there are a number of different uses visible within the immediate vicinity. The proposed use of the ground floor within the B1 use class is considered to be an acceptable use within this location which would not be out of character with the area. In addition, as no external alterations to the building are proposed, it would have no impact on the character or visual amenities of the building itself or indeed the area in general and thus would comply with Policy SW11 of the LDP.

Conservation

The application site is located within the Urban Character Area 1 (Town Centre: High Street and Pontmorlais) and the Town Centre Conservation Area and is bounded by two grade II listed structures. However, as there are no external alterations to the building proposed, the appearance of the building would remain unchanged and as such its visual impact on the UCA 1, the conservation area and listed structures would be minimal. It would however bring a vacant property back into use which would benefit the vibrancy and vitality of the area. The proposal therefore complies with Policy CW1 of the LDP.

Residential Amenity

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

CONDITIONS/REASONS:

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

Floorplans and sections, Drawing Number: 2018-01-HighSt, Rev: A, Received on 26 November 2021

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

INFORMATIVES

1. The application site lies entirely within Zone C2 of the Development Advice Map (DAM) as contained in TAN15. As such, there are potential flood risks. Natural Resources Wales have therefore advised the installation of flood-proofing measures as part of the development. In areas at risk of flooding, they recommend that consideration be given to the incorporation of flood resistance/resilience measures into the design and construction of the development. These could include flood barriers on ground floor doors, windows and access points, implementation of suitable flood-proofing measures into the internal fabric of the ground floor and locating electrical sockets/components at a higher level above possible flood levels. The developer is referred to their website for further advice and guidance.

Additional guidance including the leaflet 'Prepare your Property for flooding' can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding>

The developer can also access advice and information on protection from flooding from the ODPM publication, 'Preparing for Floods: Interim Guidance for Improving the Flood Resistance of Domestic and Small Business Properties', can be found here https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/11485/2187544.pdf

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

4/1/22