

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/25/0142
Site Address:	Units 2-3 Triangle Business Park Pentrebach Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4TQ
Development:	Change of use to Welsh Ambulance Transport Hub to include new Ambulance Maintenance facility, MOT Bay and associated storage / office areas and other external alterations which include changes to the roof and installation of solar panels
Case Officer:	Rebecca Owens
Site Visit:	27th May 2025
Application Expiry Date:	8th July 2025
Consultation reply date expired:	17th June 2025

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to an industrial unit located within an existing business park. It is bound by other units to the north and south and highways to the east and west.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought to change the of the unit to a Welsh Ambulance Transport Hub (to include new Ambulance Maintenance facility with associated storage / office areas) with an MOT provision.

In addition permission is sought for changes to the roof and the installation of solar panels. It is noted that the thermal upgrading works to the roof have already taken place which involved the installation of a new roof over the existing roof with a built up roof system. This has increased the height of the roof by 0.3m. In addition, the roof parapets have been realigned in accordance with the above roof works and renewed parapet copings provided. On the north and southern roof planes it is proposed to provide solar panels. These would cover an area 10.85m by 35m on each side. Solar panels are also proposed to the canopy roof to the northern side of the building that would cover an area 4.65m by 33.5m.

Other external alterations also proposed are summarised below. It is noted that much of these works have already taken place:

- In the northern elevation it is proposed to replace an existing roller shutter door with a new insulated roller shutter door that includes integrated vision panels and create a new opening to be fitted with the same roller shutter as above. It is also proposed to remove two existing roller shuttered openings and replace these with translucent cladding with brick below.
- Within the southern elevation it is proposed to remove two existing doorways and insert new aluminium windows.
- Swift and bat boxes would be installed on the external elevations at parapet level.
- Adjacent to the northern elevation, under a roof canopy it is proposed to provide a bunded oil and fuel store, a vehicle wash, a timber bin store with double gates and two skips.
- Four electrical charging points are proposed to the east of the building

PLANNING HISTORY

The relevant planning history is summarised below:

P/23/0113	New perimeter fencing to replace the existing chain link fence Granted planning permission on 21 July 2023
P/03/0187	Construction of canopy Granted planning permission on 23 June 2003
P/01/0226	Extension to Industrial Unit Granted planning permission on 24 July 2001
P/98/0358	Extension to existing factory unit Granted planning permission on 1 October 1998

CONSULTATION

The following bodies were consulted and their responses are presented below:

Head of Engineering and Highways	No objection
Planning Policy	No objection
Ecologist	No objection
Environmental Health Manager	No objection

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to neighbouring units and two site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site.

No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021) 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.

National Planning Policies

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)

Local Planning Policies

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031 are relevant to the determination of this application:

- SW4 Settlement Boundaries
- SW11 Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- SW12 Improving the Transport Network
- CW1 Historic Environment
- EnW1 Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
- EnW2 Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species
- EnW3 Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species
- EnW4 Environmental Protection
- EcW2 Protecting Employment Sites
- EcW9 District Heating

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.
- Note 5, Nature and Development.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle

The application site is located within the primary growth area of the settlement boundary. As such the principle of development is acceptable subject to compliance with other relevant policies and material planning considerations.

Triangle Business Park is an allocated employment site within the LDP and as such Policy EcW2 is relevant. This policy only permits development within such sites if :

- It is within Use Classes B1(b), B1(c), B2 or B8; or
- It provides an ancillary facility or service that supports the primary employment use, or
- It is an acceptable complementary commercial service outside class B uses, or
- It is an appropriate waste management facility compatible with existing industrial and commercial activities.

Development proposals for uses other than those stipulated and that would result in the loss of employment land/premises within protected employment site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not lead to an unacceptable change in the nature of the employment site and where the existing use is inappropriate or the land/premises are surplus to the requirements of the employment market. It is acknowledged that this use would be a sui generis use and thus would not fall within the 'B' Use Classes. However, many elements of this particular activity (an Ambulance Transport Hub) would and be considered to be Class B Uses with only the introduction of MOT element necessitating the change in use class. As such, it is considered that the activities are, and would be, appropriately located on an employment site. It is also acknowledged that the transport hub element has been operating from the site for around 2 years and has not resulted in an unacceptable change in the nature of the employment site. Moreover, prior to this it is recognised that the site was vacant and marketed for sale or rent prior to being occupied by the existing use. Given the above, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy EcW2.

Design and visual amenity

The proposed external alterations to the unit are considered to be acceptable. The works to the roof have only resulted in a minimal increase in its height and the introduction of solar panels would be an acceptable addition that would not appear incongruous. Similarly, the alterations to the elevations are deemed to be minor in nature and would not significantly alter the appearance of the unit. In terms of the other developments within the curtilage, these are located where they would not be visible from public view and are largely contained under an existing canopy. As such these elements would not have any harmful visual impact. Accordingly, the proposal is found to be acceptable in terms of its design and impact on the character of the area and thus would accord with Policy SW11 of the LDP.

Residential amenity

The application site is located within an established business park and the unit has been used as a Welsh Ambulance Transport Hub for over two years without any adverse impact. This proposal seeks permission to allow the unit to provide MOTs to the service's vehicles. As this is classed as a sui generis use, the unit would become a mixed use transport hub with associated MOT facility. Whilst it is recognised that MOTs can generate a level of noise and disturbance, the MOT bays would be located within the building and this is within a business park and not in a residential area. As such it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to any significant noise disturbance to local residents, the nearest being located over 70m from the building itself. The application also seeks permission for external alterations but given the distance of the unit from the nearest dwelling and the nature of the works proposed it is not considered that there would be any adverse impact as a result of these.

Thus having regard to the above and noting that no representations were received following the publicity exercise and no objections have been raised by the Environmental Health Manager, the proposal is found to be acceptable in this respect and thus would accord with Policies SW11 and EnW4.

Parking and highway safety

As noted above, the transport hub has been operating at the site for a number of years under the permitted use of the building. It is only the introduction of the MOT element and external alterations that have necessitate an application. The proposals would not impact on access arrangements and it is not considered that the introduction of the MOT provision would significantly increase vehicle movements or impact on highway safety. Indeed it is reiterated that the unit is within an established Business park and could be occupied by 'B' uses with their associated traffic movements, without the need for planning permission. The Head of Engineering and Highways is also satisfied that the parking facilities are appropriate for the use and that there would be no detrimental impact to the adopted highway or highway safety.

Ecology

It is noted that some of the works subject to this planning application have already taken place which includes the thermal upgrading of the roof and the insertion of roller shutter doors. Subsequently, the Local Planning Authority's Ecologist indicated that whilst surveys would normally have been requested, in this instance they would no longer be beneficial and as such are not sought. However, in line with chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (edition 12), the application has been supported by a Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS). This highlights that the site comprises of the building with service and features limited green areas formed of small, grassed area, trees and hedgerows which are largely located around the edges of the site. These areas would not be affected by the development and are to be retained. As such the development would not adversely impact on green infrastructure and would provide a net benefit to biodiversity through the provision of bird nest boxes. These can be secured by condition and would contribute to the wider green infrastructure objectives. The proposed development would therefore comply with LDP Policy EnW1.

Conclusion

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.

Accordingly the following recommendation is made:

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

Drawing Title: Proposed Site Plan, Drawing Number: TBP-LAW-X-G00-DR-A-061009 Rev. P7, Received 2 October 2025

Drawing Title: Proposed Elevations, Drawing Number: TBP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-062001 Rev. P2, Received 2 October 2025

Drawing Title: Proposed Sections, Drawing Number: TBP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-063001 Rev. P0, Received 13 May 2025

Drawing Title: Ground Floor Plan GA, Drawing Number: TBP-LAW-X-G00-DR-A-061011 Rev. P8, Received 13 May 2025

Drawing Title: Roof Plan GA, Drawing Number: TBP-LAW-X-R01-DR-A-061013 Rev. P3, Received 1 May 2025

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

3. Within 3 months of the date of this permission, bat and bird boxes shall be provided in accordance with drawing no. TBP-LAW-X-X-DR-A-062001 Rev. P2 and retained in perpetuity thereafter.

Reason - Future Wales and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024) requires all development to maintain and enhance biodiversity and to accord with Policy EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1. This planning permission does not provide consent to undertake works that require a European Protected Species (EPS) licence. All bats and their roosts are protected under UK and European legislation. It is an offence to deliberately kill, injure, capture or disturb a bat or to recklessly damage or destroy their breeding sites or resting places.

If works are planned on a building/tree in which bats are found to be roosting, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) must be contacted. on 0300 065 3000 or at <https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/species-licensing/apply-for-a-protected-species-licence/bat-licences/?lang=en>.

If work has already commenced and bats are found, or if any evidence that bats are using the site as a roost is found, work should cease and NRW should be contacted immediately.

Under these circumstances, an EPS licence is likely to be required to undertake the works within the law.

2. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding.

If works to any trees, hedgerows and/or other nesting bird habitat (including buildings with suitable features) are to be undertaken, they will take place outside of the bird nesting season. If the works must be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a breeding bird survey will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any active nests identified will be protected until the young have fledged.

Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1>) is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, will be devised and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 16.02.2026