



## **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**16 AUGUST 2018**

### **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLANNING**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

**APPLICATION NO:** 18/0512/10  
(BJW)  
**APPLICANT:** JR Group  
**DEVELOPMENT:** Change of use and alterations to provide office units and storage/distribution units.  
**LOCATION:** TREForest TEXTILES PRINTERS LTD, UNIT E6,  
MAIN AVENUE, TREForest INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,  
PONTYPRIDD, CF37 5UR  
**DATE REGISTERED:** 23/05/2018  
**ELECTORAL DIVISION:** Hawthorn

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

#### **REASONS:**

The principle of the restoration and refurbishment of the premises and its productive alternative re-use are considered to be both beneficial and acceptable.

It is considered that the scheme which has been proposed seeks a faithful refurbishment of the property that would provide a sustainable and profitable use that would also assist in maintaining the property for the future.

Subject to conditions it is considered that the current application would respect the historic and architectural importance of the listed building while also providing, regeneration, improved longevity and utility to the property.

Consequently, the application is considered to represent an acceptable balance between faithful historic renovation and appropriate re-development and is, on balance, acceptable.

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**REASON APPLICATION REPORTED TO COMMITTEE**

The application is considered a “Major” development and therefore falls outside the remit of the scheme of delegation.

## **APPLICATION DETAILS**

Full planning consent is sought for the refurbishment, alterations and redevelopment of Treforest Textiles Printers Limited, Unit E6, Main Avenue, Treforest Industrial Estate, Pontypridd.

The application seeks consent to convert this large former factory building (9270 sq m) into 32 storage/distribution units with attached office space and 22 small discreet office units.

Specifically, the proposed works would consist of the following elements:

### **External**

#### Front Elevation

- Replacement of steel windows, where required, in a like-for-like manner including the replacement of UPVC windows with steel windows.
- Replacement of the steel windows in the right-hand side (north) of the rubble stone tower from steel to alitherm architectural aluminium windows. This is to ensure that the opening vent on the existing steel windows which is at an inaccessible high level can be made more commodious.
- Removal of the external lean-to loading bay/storage area.
- Lowering of the existing parapet wall to ensure that water does not build up behind the parapet and cause internal damp, form new eaves and gutters.
- Where necessary the existing glazed roof lights would be replaced with “twin-fix” plastic glazing.
- 6 No. new roller shutter entrance doors to allow greater access to internal spaces.
- 4 No. new pedestrian and roller shutter doors are proposed in the front elevation.
- Repainting of the right-hand side of the ground floor single storey element from red to grey.

#### Side Elevation (facing South)

- Four of the middle pane windows have already been changed from steel to aluminium. It is proposed to replace the existing aluminium panes with alitherm architectural aluminium surrounds.
- Removal of 2 No. external lean-to loading bay/storage areas.
- 10 No. new roller shutter entrance doors to allow greater access to internal spaces.
- 8 No. new pedestrian and roller shutter doors are proposed to allow greater access to internal spaces.
- Black box profiled sheet cladding on the northern light gables to cover the existing painted red bricks.

- The bricks on the ground floor elevation that already have been painted red would be painted grey.

#### Side Elevation (facing North)

- Removal of external lean-to loading bay/storage area.
- 5 No. new roller shutter entrance doors to allow greater access to internal spaces.
- 5 No. new pedestrian and roller shutter doors are proposed to allow greater access to internal spaces.
- Black box profiled sheet cladding is proposed on the northern light gables.

#### Rear Elevation

- 9 No. new roller shutter entrance doors to allow greater access to internal spaces.
- 6 No. new pedestrian and roller shutter doors are proposed to allow greater access to internal spaces.
- Removal of external lean-to loading bay/storage area.
- Lowering of the existing parapet wall to ensure that water does not build up behind the parapet and cause internal damp, form new eaves and gutters.
- Cladding to be taken down to new gutter line.

#### Roofscape

- Replacement of the existing asbestos roof sheeting which has deteriorated and is a health and safety liability with J1 roofing insulated panel.
- Broken rooflights are to be repaired using the 'Twifix' glazing bar system with Sunlite Polycarbonate sheet.

#### Internal

- The location of the entrance door, stairs and general ground floor lobby arrangement would be respected in the proposed plans.
- A new white aluminium front door is proposed.
- 'Parquette' flooring in the ground floor front offices will be retained where practically possible.
- Where internal masonry walls need to be demolished these would be carefully removed. All internal dividing walls are proposed as 150mm thick concrete block walls, built off the existing floor slab and taken up to the underside of the gutters.
- All new internal gable end walls are proposed as finished in a 'firemaster' wall panel system 100mm thick.
- Internal partitions would be installed to create 32 No. storage/distribution units with attached offices.
- 22 No. office units would also be created within the first and second floor of the existing office block at the front of the building.

The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (DAS) and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) as well photographs in support of the application.

## **SITE APPRAISAL**

The site is a grade II listed building situated within the Trefforest Industrial Estate along Main Avenue, the main highway through the estate. The building is listed for its architectural interest as an accomplished, well-detailed and well-preserved industrial building in the mid-C20 manner of Sir Percy Thomas and partners.

The key features of the building are the ‘fashionably modern’ 2-storey L-shaped entrance and administration wing in front of a wider 10-bay factory of asymmetrical bays. Both the front wing and factory are of brick, the front wing with concrete detailing, its roof concealed by plain parapets, and metal-framed windows incorporating pivoting lights. The main entrance is on the left side of the front and has replaced doors, and is within a single-storey projection wrapped around the angle and with full-height glazing. The upper storey also has a band of windows wrapped around the angle.

In the left return wall is a porthole window below a plain stair light, beyond which are banded windows in both storeys. Projecting on the right side of the entrance is a narrow and higher rubble stone tower with window in its right side wall, further right of which is a 1-storey wing with banded windows. The right return wall has a similar window.

The site is situated within the Trefforest Industrial Estate and surrounded by large industrial and office buildings. Some others buildings nearby are built in a similar style and are also listed.

The property is recorded as being Listed for its architectural interest as an accomplished, well-detailed and well-preserved industrial building in the mid-C20 manner of Sir Percy Thomas and partners.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

|         |  |   |                |
|---------|--|---|----------------|
| 18/0574 | Treforest Textiles Printers Limited, Unit E6, Main Avenue, Treforest Industrial Estate, Pontypridd | Change of use and alterations to provide office units and storage/distribution units (listed building consent). | No yet decided |
|---------|--|---|----------------|

## **PUBLICITY**

The application has been advertised by neighbour notification letters, site notices and a press notice. No responses have been received.

## **CONSULTATION**

Transportation Section – no objection, subject to a condition to install and maintain the parking scheme on the site.

Land Reclamation and Engineering (Drainage) – no objection.

Public Health and Protection Division – no objection, subject to a condition to restrict the hours of operation during the construction period and standard informative notes.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) – no objection, subject to conditions relating to a scheme for the removal of existing tanks to the rear (west) of the site and adjacent to the river Taf. Also offers advice in respect of Flood Risk, potential European protected species and the existing environmental permit for the site.

Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water – no objections, subject to conditions and informative notes.

Western Power Distribution – no objection. The applicant should be aware that if they require a new connection to the units they will need to apply to Western Power Distribution.

Wales and West Utilities – no response received.

South Wales Fire and rescue Service – no response received.

Countryside, Landscape and Ecology – no objection.

Coal Authority - confirms that the application site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area.

The Coal Authority records indicate that within the application site and surrounding area there are coal mining features and hazards which should be considered as part of development proposals.

The information indicates that the application site is likely to have been subject to past coal mining activities, which would include historic unrecorded coal workings at shallow depth.

The Coal Authority's general approach in cases where development is proposed within the Development High Risk Area is to recommend that the applicant obtains coal mining information for the application site and submits a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to support the planning application.

However, when considering the nature of this particular development proposal, the works proposed will not require substantial foundations or earthworks and therefore we do not consider that requiring a Coal Mining Risk Assessment would be proportionate to the scale and nature of development proposed in this particular case and do not object to this planning application, subject to a suggested informative note regarding potential previous coal mining activity.

Pontypridd Town Council – no response received.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan**

The application site is within the settlement boundary of Treforest, is within an allocated industrial estate (Policy SSA27 - Treforest refers) and is a Grade II Listed Building.

**Policy CS1** – sets out criteria for achieving strong sustainable communities including: promoting residential and commercial development in locations which support and reinforce the role of principal towns and settlements.

**Policy AW2** - advises that development proposals on non-allocated sites will only be supported in sustainable locations.

**Policy AW5** - sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

**Policy AW6** - requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to place making, including landscaping.

**Policy AW7** - development proposals which impact on sites of architectural/or historic merit and sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site.

**Policy SSA27** – proposals within the Treforest Industrial Estate for development, redevelopment, and changes of use will be permitted for offices, research and development, light and general industry, storage and distribution (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) and other sui-generis uses that display the characteristics of B-Class Uses. Other uses including retail (A1), financial and professional services (A2), food and drink (A3), hotels (C1), non-residential institutions (D1) and assembly and leisure (D2) will only be permitted where they are complimentary and ancillary to the main B-Class Uses.

**LDP Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): The Historic Built Environment** (March 2011)

### **National Guidance**

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of National Planning Policy that are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where National Planning Policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

Chapter 2 (development plans), Chapter 3 (making and enforcing planning decisions), Chapter 4 (planning for sustainability), Chapter 6 (Conserving the Historic Environment), Chapter 7 (Economic Development) and Chapter 10 – (Retail and Commercial Development).

**Welsh Office Circular 61/96 (98)**

**Welsh Office Circular 1/98**

**PPW Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 – Design (2016)**

**PPW Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24 – The Historic Environment (2017)**

## **REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Furthermore, applications that are not in accordance with relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed, unless material considerations justify the grant of planning permission.

### **Main issues:**

#### **Principle of the proposed development**

The renovation and re-use of the property for industrial/commercial uses within the existing estate setting is broadly supported in terms of local development plan policy as well as regeneration and job creation objectives within the area.

The proposal is well presented as a sound and justified alternative use for this large former factory building and will offer business premises and employment opportunities on a variety of different scales for businesses within the area.

Other issues around the, the character and appearance of the area and highway safety considerations are addressed later within the report.

However, the principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

#### **Character and appearance of the area**

The application seeks to renovate and refurbish the property to facilitate its conversion into a mix of various size units with storage space and office accommodation as well as stand-alone offices. This would be achieved through various internal partitions, new internal accesses as well as a number of new pedestrian and vehicular access doors around the external envelope of the property.

The main entrance block, which is a particularly fine example of 1950's art deco design, would remain largely unchanged externally and its main distinguishing internal features such as the marble staircase, handrail, terrazzo floor and full height windows would be retained in situ.

The external alterations to the factory would allow the productive re-use of the building while maintaining its scale and main historical features. The alterations while consisting of a number of new openings would not be out of keeping with the industrial and commercial character of premises within the surrounding area.

The impact on the special architectural and historical importance of the property are explored in full as part of the application for Listed Building Consent (LBC) later within the committee agenda. However, it is considered that, from a planning

perspective, the alterations proposed would be acceptable and would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.

### **Impact on amenities of neighbouring properties**

The application site is located within the main industrial/commercial area of Treforest Industrial Estate. Neighbouring properties are predominantly also industrial/commercial in character with the closest residential property being located over 150m from the application site.

It is considered that the nature of the application and the distance to the closest neighbouring residential property would result in no additional detriment to those properties amenities than is currently the case. It is also acknowledged that there have been no adverse comments received as part of the consultation exercise in this regard.

Consequently, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in this respect.

### **Highway safety**

The application has been subject to consultation with the Council's Transportation Section who have raised no objection proposal subject to conditions.

This view acknowledged that the access arrangements to the site remain unchanged and are satisfactory and acceptable for a development of this scale and nature. There is a slight concern with the lack of segregated pedestrian facilities within and in the immediate vicinity of the site. However, the concern is related to private access road, and, as such, the does not warrant a highway objection. There are also alterations within the site boundary to facilitate increased off-street parking provision which are considered to be acceptable.

In terms of parking provision, the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements (March 2011) evaluates the parking requirement for the site to 125-130 spaces and 2.039 square metres of operational space. The proposed parking area identifies 154 spaces for use by the development, which is in excess of its requirement.

There is concern that the use of the front of each unit for operational space would cause obstructions within the site however these obstruction would not result in the creation of traffic hazards on the public highway. As such the concern is not significant enough to warrant highway objection.

Consequently, subject to a condition to secure the proposed parking provision at the site, there is no highway objection to the proposal which is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

### **Other Issues**

The comments of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are acknowledged with regard to the tank farm at the rear of the site. The applicant has confirmed his intention to



remove the tanks as part of the development which has led to further comment from NRW in this regard.

NRW recommends several conditions to ensure that the removal of the tank farm is undertaken in a controlled and sensitive manner due to the location of the tanks close to the River Taff. It is considered reasonable and necessary to include these conditions in this regard.

In terms of Flood Risk perspective NRW does not object to the application as it is for the change of use of an existing building within the C1 Flood Zone, as defined by the development advice maps and the use would remain within the same “less vulnerable development” category. NRW do however recommend that the developer is made aware of the potential flood risks so that they may make the proposal as flood resistant as possible by installing flood prevention measures and placing items such as electric points above potential flood levels.

NRW have also stated that the previous use of the building as a factory was subject to an environmental permit and recommends the permit holder seeks the advice of their regulatory officer about any permit requirements in relation to the planning application.

The comments of the Coal Authority make reference to the fact that the nature of the renovation and redevelopment of the property would not require substantial foundations or earthworks it is not considered that a Coal Mining Risk Assessment would be required in this instance.

Finally, with regard to potentially protected species using the building the Council’s Ecologist considers that the bat potential of the building, due to its large and well-lit nature, is very low and that a bat survey would not be required.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Liability**

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in Rhondda Cynon Taf from 31 December 2014.

The application is for development of a kind that is not CIL liable under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).

The comments of the Public Health and Protection Division are acknowledged, however it is considered that a condition to restrict the hours of operation would be unnecessary as this issue can be more effectively dealt with by other legislative controls available to the Council.

### **Conclusion**

The application seeks the renovation, refurbishment and regeneration of this large and prominent industrial/commercial building within a suitable setting.

The works are considered to be proportionate, sympathetic and visually acceptable and the proposal would respect the special historic and architectural importance of the listed building and the character and appearance of the area.

The scheme would also be acceptable in terms of environmental protection and highway safety, subject to the suggested conditions regarding these issues.

Consequently, the application is recommended for approval.

**RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to favourable referral to Cadw.**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 93 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) no(s):

Site Location Plan

Proposed Elevations, Drawing No. hdw/ph.jr/004, Revision B

Proposed Factory Layout, Drawing No. hdw/ph.jr/003, Revision A

unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the approved plans and documents and to clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. The parking spaces indicated on submitted drawing no. "hdw/ph.jr/003" shall be laid out on site in permanent materials and retained for the purpose of parking only unless agreed otherwise with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that vehicles are parked off the public highway, in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

4. Prior to the commencement of development approved by this planning permission (or such other date or stage in development as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority), the following components of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall each be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority:

- i. A preliminary risk assessment which has identified:

- all previous uses
- potential contaminants associated with those uses
- a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways

- and receptors
- potentially unacceptable risks arising from contamination at the site.
- ii. A site investigation scheme, based on 1 (above) to provide information for a detailed assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.
  - iii. The site investigation results and the detailed risk assessment (2) and, based on these, an options appraisal and remediation strategy giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken.
  - iv. A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in (3) are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.  
Any changes to these components require the express consent of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: In order to mitigate any potential contamination of the environment of controlled waters at this site that are of high environmental sensitivity due to proximity to surface water in accordance with Policy AW10 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

5. Prior to the commencement of development, a verification report demonstrating completion of the works set out in the approved remediation strategy and the effectiveness of the remediation shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include results of sampling and monitoring carried out in accordance with the approved verification plan to demonstrate that the site remediation criteria have been met. It shall also include any plan (a “long-term monitoring and maintenance plan”) for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action, as identified in the verification plan, and for the reporting of this to the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons: To demonstrate the remediation criteria relating to controlled waters have been met, and (if necessary) to secure longer-term monitoring of groundwater quality to ensure there are no longer remaining unacceptable risks to controlled waters following remediation of the site in accordance with Policy AW10 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

6. Reports on monitoring, maintenance and any contingency action carried out in accordance with a long-term monitoring and maintenance plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority as set out in that plan. On completion of the monitoring programme, a final report demonstrating all

long-term site remediation criteria have been met and documenting the decision to cease monitoring shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons: To ensure longer term remediation criteria relating to controlled waters have been met to ensure there are no longer remaining unacceptable risks to controlled waters following remediation of the site in accordance with Policy AW10 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

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