

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT)**

**SUBJECT:** **FULL APPLICATION – ERECTION OF 2 STOREY OFFICE, WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND PARKING AT LAND ADJACENT TO THE RUNNING HARE, ST. DAVID’S PARK SPINE ROAD, EWLOE.**

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** **052507**

**APPLICANT:** **VERBIER HOLDINGS LTD**

**SITE:** **LAND ADJACENT TO THE RUNNING HARE, ST. DAVID’S PARK SPINE ROAD, EWLOE**

**APPLICATION VALID DATE:** **7<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2014**

**LOCAL MEMBERS:** **COUNCILLOR MS A.M. HALFORD**  
**COUNCILLOR D.I. MACKIE**

**TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL:** **HAWARDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**REASON FOR COMMITTEE:** **MEMBER REQUEST**

**SITE VISIT:** **NO**

**1.00 SUMMARY**

1.01 This application is for the erection of a high quality office building with associated landscaping and parking at land adjacent to The Running Hare, St. David’s Park Spine Road, Ewloe. The main issues to consider are the principle of the development in planning policy terms, the highway implications, the effects upon the character and appearance of the area and the stability of the land to construct the development from previous coal mining workings.

1.02 As the site is located within the settlement boundary for Ewloe and is

allocated for high quality office development, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle in planning policy terms. In highway terms, the access is considered acceptable and the car parking provision accords with the maximum standards in the Local Planning Guidance Note. However, the number of car parking spaces accounts for only 50% of the employees. Thus, a travel plan has been requested as a condition upon the recommendation to grant planning permission which will force the operator to consider all modes of transport to the site and a reduction in the number of vehicles to and from the site with a subsequent loss in the number of parking spaces. The office building will be high quality in terms of design and materials and thus be in keeping with area and the Coal Authority confirms that the stability of the land is acceptable for the development.

## **2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-**

### **2.01 Conditions**

1. Five year time limit on commencement of development.
2. In accordance with approved plans.
3. All external materials to be further submitted and approved.
4. No land drainage into the public sewerage system.
5. Surface water to discharge to the public surface water sewerage system.
6. Foul water and surface water discharges drained separately from the site.
7. Full travel plan and transport implementation strategy submitted and approved prior to commencement.
8. Detailed scheme for provision of any off-site works identified by the TIS to be approved prior to commencement
9. Siting, layout and design of means of site access to be approved
10. Forming and construction of means of site access not to commence until approved
11. Site access to be kerbed and completed to carriageway base course layer prior to commencement of any other site building operations.
12. Facilities to be provided and retained within the site for parking and turning of vehicles
13. Detailed layout, design, means of traffic calming and signing, surface water drainage, street lighting and construction of external access road to be approved
14. Positive means to prevent the run off of surface water onto the highway
15. Construction traffic management plan to be approved prior to commencement
16. Landscaping scheme to be approved
17. Implementation of above landscaping scheme.

### **3.00 CONSULTATIONS**

#### **3.01 Local Members**

##### Councillor Ms A.M. Halford

No response received to date.

##### Councillor D.I. Mackie

Requests that the planning application be referred to the Planning Committee. Concerned that the parking issue should be fully considered before a decision is taken, as the Applicant talks about the freight parking situation in this area. Without this development there was chaos in the area until extra parking restrictions were imposed and additional parking was provided at the Ewloe Club. This extra parking may not be available in the future. Concerned local residents should not suffer the problems they had in the past.

Concerned about effect on local schools. Parking blocking the roads will restrict people getting to them.

Ewloe Club is seeking to develop their site, If this were to happen more than 100 parking spaces would disappear

Only solution is more parking restrictions, but these take time to set up and cause yet more issues.

Problem is the building of premises where public transport is inadequate for the additional needs.

##### Hawarden Community Council

Objects on the grounds that there is insufficient car parking proposed for the number of staff predicted. This area already suffers from a severe case of parking for existing commercial premises.

##### Highways Development Control Manager

No objection to principle of commercial development on this land. Has concerns regarding potential number of employees in comparison to on-site car and cycle parking provision. Proposed car parking provision in line with maximum standard by LPGN11 and cycle provision meets minimum standards, however, with a total of 49 car parking spaces and storage of 6 cycle and 2 motorcycles this accounts for less than 50% of anticipated number of employees. Previous development in area has resulted in significant off-site parking issues and recommends any consent is conditional on submission and approval of a full travel plan and transport implementation strategy.

Proposed road extension, turning head and site entrance comply with highway standards and should be constructed to adoptable standard. Recommends any permission include suggested conditions.

Head of Environmental Protection

No adverse comments to make regarding the proposal.

Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru

Requests if minded to grant planning consent for the development that suggested conditions and advisory notes are included within the consent to ensure no detriment to existing residents or the environment and to Dwr Cymru /Welsh Water's Assets.

Natural Resources Wales

Do not object to the proposal.

A Groundsure report has been supplied, which does not highlight any potential contaminative historic use at the site. Not providing detailed site specific advice or comments with regards to land contamination issued for the site.

Recommends seek further advice from Authority's internal ecological advisor regarding possible effects on all species and habitats listed in Section 42 of the natural environment and rural communities (NERC) Act 2006.

The Coal Authority

Considers that the content and conclusions of Phase II Geo-Environmental Investigation Report (August 2014) and Geotechnical Report (October 2001) are sufficient in demonstrating that the application site is, or can be made safe and stable for the proposed development. Coal Authority withdraws its objection. Further more detailed considerations of ground conditions and/or foundation design may be required as part of any subsequent building regulations application.

SP Energy Networks

Have plant and apparatus in the area. Advised to contact them before any development takes place.

Wales & West Utilities

No objections. However, apparatus may be at risk during construction works and should the development be approved requires the promoter of the works to contact them to discuss their requirements.

Airbus

Does not conflict with safeguarding criteria. Therefore no aerodrome safeguarding objection to the proposal.

**4.00 PUBLICITY**

4.01 Press Notice, Site Notice, Neighbour Notification

1 letter of objection received. The grounds of objection being:-

- One of the few green spaces in this area for residents to walk dogs.
- Office will bring more traffic to area between 8 – 9 am and 5 – 6 pm has longer queues than many roads to Chester City Centre.
- Lack of car parking already and cars block bus stops and all spare places on road which do not have a double yellow line. Lack of bus routes through St. David's Park. Where would future staff park?
- There are offices which are empty and have been for some time between St. David's Park Hotel and the Busy Bee Nursery, can't these be looked at and rented before new offices are built. Don't need more offices.
- Why can't it be developed for something for the residents? Limited on restaurants, coffee shops. Locals have no where else to go and end up taking their money to Chester instead.

## **5.00 SITE HISTORY**

### **5.01 4/1/17483**

Outline application for business park, hotel, residential development, local centre, school, roads, open space and associated development – Granted 9<sup>th</sup> December 1988.

#### Adjoining Site

#### **046531**

Erection of a pub restaurant with ancillary bedsit accommodation – Granted 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

#### **045816**

Erection of a pub restaurant with ancillary bedsit accommodation – Refused 12<sup>th</sup> June 2009. Appeal withdrawn.

## **6.00 PLANNING POLICIES**

### **6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan**

STR1 – New Development.

STR2 – Transport & Communications.

STR3 – Employment.

STR8 – Built Environment.

GEN1 – General Requirements for Development.

GEN2 – Development Inside Settlement Boundaries.

D1 – Design Quality, Location & Layout.

D2 – Design.

D3 – Landscaping.

AC4 – Travel Plans for Major Traffic Generating Developments.

AC13 – Access & Traffic Impact.

AC18 – Parking Provision & New Development.

EM2(3) – High Quality Site Allocations – St. David's Park, Ewloe.

EWP12 – Pollution.

EWP13 – Nuisance.

EWP14 – Derelict & Contaminated Land.  
EWP15 – Development of Unstable Land.  
EWP16 – Water Resources.

Local Planning Guidance Note No. 11 – Parking Standards.

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 6, February 2014).

As the development is for a high quality office building and the site is allocated as such by virtue of Policy EMP2(3), the proposal is considered acceptable in principle in planning policy terms.

**7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL**

7.01 Site Description & Proposals

The site comprises of approximately 3,065 m<sup>2</sup> of an open, flat, mown grassed triangular shared piece of land located on St. David's Park, Ewloe.

7.02 It is situated in between the existing pub and restaurant of The Running Hare to the north and a larger piece of open, flat, mown grassed to the south. It is bound to the east by the Cefn y Ddol Road and to the West by an extension to the road serving The Running Hare and the offices of HSBC and Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water.

7.03 The proposals involves the erection of a 2 storey office building for Verbier Holdings Ltd, car parking and landscaping to meet the current requirements of the company, as well as providing flexibility for there growth.

7.04 The building will measure approximately 44 m x 20 m x 9 m and will be constructed within materials common to the area including facing brick, cladding, curtain walling and timber. The building will be located along its Southern boundary.

7.05 The parking to be provided will be for 49 cars and 6 cycles and 2 motorcycles and will be located to the East and North of the site.

7.06 The proposals also involve a road extension, construction of a turning head and site entrance.

7.07 The company will employ 122 people full time and will operate 8 am – 6 pm Monday to Friday.

7.08 Issues

The main issues to be considered within the determination of this planning application are the principle of the development in planning policy terms, the highway implications, the effects upon the character and appearance of the area and the stability of the land to construct

the development from previous coal mining workings.

7.09 Principle of Development

The site is located within the settlement boundary for Ewloe and allocated for high quality B1 (office) uses by virtue of Policy EM2(3) within the adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan. Therefore the principle of this prestige office development is considered acceptable in principle in planning policy terms.

7.10 Highway Implications

Access to the site will involve an extension of the existing service road into the site which currently serves The Running Hare and the offices of HSBC and Dwr Cymru Welsh Water. Parking within the site will be for 49 cars, 6 cycles and 2 motorcycles. The company will employ 122 people full time staff and will operate 8 am – 6 pm Monday to Friday.

7.11 The proposed road extension, turning head and site entrance comply with highway standards and provided that they are constructed to adoptable standard, the Highways Development Control Manager consider these to be acceptable in highway terms.

7.12 In terms of car parking provision, this is in accordance with the maximum standard imposed by Local Planning Guidance Note 11 – Parking Standards and the cycle provision meets minimum standards as these are based on the gross floor area of the development. However, with a total of 49 No. car parking spaces and storage for 6 no. cycle and 2 no. motor cycles this accounts for less than 50% of the anticipated number of employees. The previous developments in this area has resulted in significant off-site parking issues. The Highways Development Control Manager has recommended the submission and approval as a condition on any planning permission granted, a travel plan which will force the operator of the development to consider all modes of transport to the site which will result in a reduction of the number of vehicles arriving on site and the subsequent demand for parking spaces. The inclusion of a Transport Implementation Strategy will cover the requirement to undertake any additional work required to implement the Travel Plan whether this be the provision of additional pedestrian/cycle routes, improved public transport, implementation of their own shuttle bus service, additional on-road parking restrictions or whatever means is required.

7.13 Character & Appearance of Area

The site is located in a visually prominent open area on an existing Business Park amongst other 2-3 storey, high quality, contemporary designed office buildings.

7.14 The building will be 2 storeys in height and be of a contemporary design and of materials common to the area including facing brick, cladding, curtain walling and timber.

- 7.15 The concept of the buildings external aesthetic is intended to display the hard consistent furnish of the masonry and cladding against the natural variety of the timber. The detailing along the flashings, copes and windows, as small and defined areas of artificial materials, would be dark grey to emphasise the difference between it and the natural materials.
- 7.16 The buildings immediately adjacent to the development are 2-3 storeys in height with the site very open centrally. The boundary treatment is currently a timber knee rail which the Applicant intends to reinstate once the works are completed to demark the boundary.
- 7.17 There are no trees on site currently and therefore none to be removed as part of the works.
- 7.18 It is proposed to introduce 5 new trees with small pockets of diverse planting. The planting is intended to increase the biodiversity of the site as well as enhance the visual appearance of the developments.
- 7.19 Given the above, it is considered that the developments will be in keeping with area as a Business Park.
- 7.20 Stability of Land - Coal Mining  
Within the site and surrounding area these are coal mining features and hazards which need to be considered in the determination of the application.
- 7.21 The Coal Authority previously objected to this planning application as the Applicant had failed to submit the required Coal Mining Risk Assessment in support of their application.
- 7.22 The applicant has now submitted a Phase II Geo-Environmental Investigation Report and Geotechnical Report which have been assessed by the Coal Authority.
- 7.23 The site is located to the east of the fault on the site and the Phase II Report concludes that shallow mine workings do not pose a risk to the proposed development. Therefore, no specific remedial measures are recommended to address coal mining legacy. The Coal Authority now therefore withdraw their objection.

## **8.00 CONCLUSION**

- 8.01 For the above reasons it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in planning terms.
- 8.02 In considering this planning application the Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic



society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention.

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