

**ADRODDIAD PENNAETH
CYNLLUNIO,
CYFARWYDDIAETH YR
AMGYLCHEDD**

**REPORT OF THE
HEAD OF PLANNING,
DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENT**

**AR GYFER PWYLLGOR CYNLLUNIO
CYNGOR SIR CAERFYRDDIN**

**TO CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL'S PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**AR 05 NOVEMBER 2020
ON 05 TACHWEDD 2020**

**I'W BENDERFYNU/
FOR DECISION**

*Ardal
Dwyrain/
Area East*



Mewn perthynas â cheisiadau y mae gan y Cyngor ddiddordeb ynddynt un ai fel ymgeisydd/asiant neu fel perchennog tir neu eiddo, atgoffir yr Aelodau fod yn rhaid iddynt anwybyddu'r agwedd hon, gan ystyried ceisiadau o'r fath a phenderfynu yn eu cylch ar sail rhinweddau'r ceisiadau cynllunio yn unig. Ni ddylid ystyried swyddogaeth y Cyngor fel perchennog tir, na materion cysylltiedig, wrth benderfynu ynghylch ceisiadau cynllunio o'r fath.

In relation to those applications which are identified as one in which the Council has an interest either as applicant/agent or in terms of land or property ownership, Members are reminded that they must set aside this aspect, and confine their consideration and determination of such applications exclusively to the merits of the planning issues arising. The Council's land owning function, or other interests in the matter, must not be taken into account when determining such planning applications.

COMMITTEE:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE:	05.11.2020
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF PLANNING

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APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

Application No	PL/00112
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Application Type	FULL PLANNING
Proposal & Location	ELEVATIONAL ALTERATIONS, BUT NO MATERIAL CHANGE OF USE TO THE BUILDING ITSELF AT FORMER CO-OPERATIVE SUPERMARKET, COLLEGE STREET, AMMANFORD, SA18 3AB.

Applicant(s)	Mr Tristan Hobbs, Tretan Developments, Eastmarket Street, Caerphilly, CF83 1NX
Agent	Ken Morgan Design and Building Management Ltd, The Studio, Little Greenway, Crinow Road, Narberth, SA67 8TA
Case Officer	ANDREW FRANCIS
Ward	AMMANFORD
Date registered	3 rd August 2020

Reason for Committee

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee following the receipt of more than one objection from third parties

Site

This application site is the well-known former Co-operative building situated off the north eastern flank of College Street, close to the town centre of Ammanford. The building became empty fairly recently as the Co-operative store moved to a brand new store approximately 90 metres to the north west on the site of the former Police Station on the junction of College Street and Margaret Street. As a result, this larger building, built in the early 1980's is now vacant but occupies a strategically important site, directly adjacent to Ammanford's Bus Station and large Council controlled car park.

The irregularly shaped building has a red brick façade up to wall plate, with a slightly angled slate roof leading to a large flat roof. The roof is in two sections, with approximately half of the building at the longer southern end at single storey and typical single storey height, with the remainder at the shorter northern end being taller, made up of a taller roof section.

Most of the walls are solid brick, leading to a fairly imposing and unwelcoming impression if approaching the building from most angles. The existing small entrance doors and windows all face the eastern elevations towards the car park.

The building has an overall length of 49 metres, with a minimum width of 18.9 metres and a maximum width of 40.2 metres.

Proposal

The application is simply to provide changes to the external elevations to the building in order to potentially make the building more viable to commercial interests in the current market. As such, this application DOES NOT seek to change the use of the building or to subdivide the building into different retail/commercial units. Plans showing artist impressions of the elevations with names above different potential access points are purely to show how the building might look and does not imply that "Designer Outlet", "Caffi Amman" or "Tafarn Amman" are going to occupy the building. As stated, this application is not looking at the potential change of use of the building or any subdivision that may be required as the end user(s) is/are not known.

In terms of the elevation changes proposed, the majority of the changes are shown on the north west and south west elevations. The existing north west elevation is blank, with some vents in the side roof profile for the internal plant. The proposed north west elevation shows that new box profile windows are to be introduced into the side profile of the taller roof section, with large new glazing panels, particularly on the walls towards the western end of the building towards the College Street section. Looking at the building directly from College Street, as proposed, the currently blank walls will be extensively glazed and the level up to the access points of the building will be ramped to current DDA standards behind the existing stone wall. All around the building the windows and doors are to be anthracite grey and the currently white eaves are to be improved and clad with grey uPVC. At different points around the building, that are intended to be entrances, they will be marked out by a distinct modern looking rendered or uPVC clad entrance feature.

The proposed south east elevation is shown to have one additional glazed and featured entrance whilst the north east elevation will feature a large glazed area in the lower roof section and a glazed area where the current delivery door is located.

Planning Site History

E/25206 - PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF 24 HOUR ATM CASH MACHINE INTO ELEVATION IN SECURE LAMINATE PANEL TO INCLUDE SECURITY LIGHT AND USED SLIP BOX - FULL GRANTED 3rd October 2011

E/21390 - INSTALL NEW SHOPFRONT TO FRONT ELEVATION - FULL GRANTED 17th August 2009

E/20853 - 4 X FASCIA SIGNS, 2 X DIRECTIONAL SIGNS - ADVERTISEMENT GRANTED 07th May 2009

E/07988 - INSTALLATION OF AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINE (CASHPOINT) - FULL GRANTED 04th October 2004

AM/03374 - 4 X COOP LOGO/TOWN NAME LOZENGES, 1 X MENU BOARD, 5 X GRAPHIC PANELS (RE-SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION NO E/03040 WITHDRAWN ON 14.10.02) - ADVERTISEMENT GRANTED 24th March 2003

E/03040 - 10 X GRAPHIC PANELS, 4 X LOZENGE SIGNS, 1 X MENU BOARD, 1 X TOTEM SIGN - WITHDRAWN. 14th October 2002

E/00363 - FASCIA SIGNS - ADVERTISEMENT GRANTED – 21st February 1997

P6/22/96 – EXTENSION AND REFURBISHMENT – APPROVED 15th February 1996

P6/69/95 – ADDITION OF CONDENSER UNIT ON UPPER ROOF TO MAINTAIN CURRENT FOOD REGS/MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARD OF TEMP CONTROL – APPROVED 10th March 1995

P6/68/95 – ADVERT – APPROVED 10th March 1995

P6/14462/88 – NEW COVERED WAY TO ENTRANCE LOBBY – APPROVED 06th October 1988

P6/11389/85 – BIN COMPOUND – APPROVED 10th September 1985

P6/5448/79 – FOOD SUPERMARKET – APPROVED 05th June 1980

Planning Policy

Only list policy headings e.g.

[Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan](#) (Adopted December 2014) ('the LDP')

SP1 Sustainable Places and Spaces

SP2 Climate Change

SP3 Sustainable Distribution- Settlement Framework

GP1 Sustainability and High Quality Design

RT1 Retail Hierarchy

RT4 Retail Centres (Growth Areas): Town Centre Zone

TR1 Primary and Core Road Networks

TR3 Highways in Developments – Design Considerations

EQ 4 Biodiversity

National Planning Policy and Guidance is provided in [Planning Policy Wales](#) (PPW)

Edition 10, December 2018 and associated [Technical Advice Notes](#) (TANs) published by Welsh Government.

[TAN 4: Retail and Commercial Development](#)

Summary of Consultation Responses

Head of Transportation & Highways - No observations received to date.

South Wales Trunk Roads Agency – Has no observations to make on this application.

Head of Public Protection – Has no objections to the proposal.

Ammanford Town Council - No observations received to date.

Local Member - Councillor D E Harries has not commented to date.

All representations can be viewed in full on our [website](#).

Summary of Public Representations

The application was the subject of notification by way of two site notices.

Two representations were received, both generally supporting the intention to develop the old store but are raising objections and the matters raised are summarised as follows:

- The proposal shows new windows on the north east elevation which will directly overlook the houses in the first section of Margaret Street, up to No. 9. This would allow overlooking of gardens and into the backs of these houses through their existing windows.
- The proposed elevations show a public house named 'Tafarn Amman; would be included within the complex. This would be too close to the existing homes on Margaret Street and the road that runs along the north east is the only route to the primary schools. The access road and surrounding area is always severely congested at peak times, with queues all around the main car parks, the access road and Margaret Street. It would be inappropriate to have a public house so close to schools and also object to the inevitable disturbance that would ensue from such establishments.
- The existing residents already have issues regarding parking at the rear entrances of the Margaret Street properties, despite the area being private land, due to its proximity to the car park and people's reluctance to pay car parking charges. Despite the homeowners legal rights, this unauthorised car parking causes a daily issue. The proposal could cause this issue to get worse and as such, would require assurance that the risk of the objector's right of way being compromised will be mitigated and how. Some people in the street have significant medical issues and this parking issue directly affects health and quality of life.
- Despite the access road having a 20 mph speed limit, this doesn't stop cars from speeding with the Police not able to control it. With the increase in footfall a safe crossing should be considered.

All representations can be viewed in full on our [website](#).

Appraisal

Principle of development

The application seeks to provide changes to the large, strategically important building in the town centre of Ammanford, in order to make it more viable for current retail and commercial requirements. The building is not being extended, nor is this application looking to consider any changes of use, it is purely to consider the design changes to the external elevations of this building which seek to modernise the building. This should then

allow it to be marketed based on a building with large glass frontages offering any potential occupiers a more vibrant and attractive building to operate out of. As such, as no change of use is being proposed, it is considered that the principle of this proposal is acceptable and would be beneficial for Ammanford.

Impact upon character and appearance of the area

The current building, built in the early 1980's is currently quite ominous with large, blank facades. Since the Co-op left this building it has emphasised its tired appearance which, given the building's strategic location, is a terrible waste of an important site. The design changes successfully modernise the building greatly improving its visual appearance when considered in isolation but also in the context of its location adjacent to the town's Bus Station, car park and close to a historic Arcade that enjoys Listed Building status.

A point of objection raised concern that one of the units shown on the elevations was to be a Public House – "Tafarn Amman". As clarified above, this is just an artistic impression at this stage. A separate planning application would be required to consider the potential subdivision of the units when the floor plan of the building is known. The Use Class of the building is currently A1 – Retail, so any change to a potential A3 – Public House/Sale of Hot Food will also require planning permission, which is not being sought or granted as part of this application.

Privacy Impacts

Another point of objection relates to the concern that the glazing on the new building, and in particular that shown on the north east elevation will impact upon the privacy of the existing occupiers of the existing dwellings addressed as 1-9 Margaret Street. With regards to this point, the large shop front windows are situated at ground floor level and as such, the existing garden wall and outbuildings will provide good levels of privacy to the garden areas from people who may potentially be in the building in the future. New windows are proposed at first floor level, set into the slate cladding. However, it is not known what is to occupy this level as this application does not seek to consider that detail, only the external changes. Should it become apparent that there may be an issue relating to these windows based on future details, it may become necessary to impose conditions relating to them at this stage. However, the windows of the dwellings are at least 32 metres distant and set at an oblique angle. As such, whilst there may be an alteration to the perceived levels of privacy enjoyed, based on the information currently, it is considered that it would not be enough to be considered to be detrimental.

Biodiversity Impacts

No bats were found and the building isn't considered to be suitable to accommodate bats.

Highway Impacts

Further points of objection relate to parking and highways concerns. Again, it is beyond the remit of this application to consider such issues as the consideration to the changes to the elevations do not go on to have highway and parking implications. These would become a consideration when the subdivision and uses of the building are considered. However, given the former and current accepted use of the building and the adjacent Council operated car park, the issues raised relate to parking enforcement rather than planning, particularly given the ultimate intention to bring this building back into beneficial use. As

such, at that time, it may become prudent to consider a safe crossing point as advised by an objector. However, the issue of parking issues, speeding and congestion are concerns that cannot be addressed by changes to the elevation of the building.

Planning Obligations

There are no planning obligations related to this proposed development.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The decision considers 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). The decision takes into account the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act and it is considered that this decision is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Conclusion

After careful consideration of the scheme as submitted it is concluded on balance that the proposed modernisation to the external appearance of this strategically important building for Ammanford is an acceptable form of development that will help make the currently redundant and quite featureless building much more attractive as a retail opportunity for new operators. This application does not seek to subdivide the building, so it is not known whether the building will remain as one large retail unit, or split into smaller units. That application will be needed should the marketing of this building be successful, as hoped. The modernisation and reuse of this building should greatly enhance the vibrancy of Ammanford's Town Centre and as the proposal is compliant with local and national planning policy and in the absence of any sustainable planning objections, this application is recommended for approval.

Conditions and Reasons

Condition 1.

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

Reason:

Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Condition 2.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the following schedule of plans and documents:

- Existing Location and Block Plans, Elevations and 3D View Scale 1:1250, 1:500, 1:100 @ A1 [01C] received on the 27 July 2020

- Proposed Elevations and 3d View Scale 1:100 @ A1 [02 Rev C] received on 30 June 2020.

Reason:

In the interests of visual amenity and for the avoidance of doubt or confusion as to the extent of the permission hereby granted. (LDP policies GP1, RT1, RT4)

REASONS FOR GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken in accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that, in determining a planning application the determination must be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- The proposed development complies with Policy SP1, SP2, SP3, GP1, RT1, RT4, TR1, TR3 and EQ4 of the LDP in that the modernisation of the elevations of this existing building in the town centre of Ammanford, a Primary Growth Centre is in a strategically important location which is easily accessed by public transport and makes effective use of an existing building which not only is of a good design, but which is more ecologically sensitive than providing a new building. The re-use of the building will aid the vitality of the retail elements of Ammanford's Town Centre and is well served off a Trunk Road and by public transport, along with walking and cycling. Furthermore, it would not have any significant adverse effect on visual amenity, residential amenity, general amenity or highway/pedestrian safety.

Note 1.

Please note that this permission is specific to the plans and particulars approved as part of the application. Any departure from the approved plans will constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action. You (or any subsequent developer) should advise the Council of any actual or proposed variations from the approved plans immediately so that you can be advised how to best resolve the matter.

In addition, any conditions which the Council has imposed on this permission will be listed above and should be read carefully. It is your (or any subsequent developers') responsibility to ensure that the terms of all conditions are met in full at the appropriate time (as outlined in the specific condition).

The commencement of development without firstly meeting in full the terms of any conditions which require the submission of details prior to commencement of development will constitute unauthorised development. This will necessitate the submission of a further application to retain the unauthorised development and may render you liable to formal enforcement action.

Failure on the part of the developer to observe the requirements of any conditions could result in the Council pursuing formal enforcement action in the form of a Breach of Condition Notice.

Note 2.

Comments and guidance received from consultees relating to this application, including any other permissions or consents required, is available on the Authority's website (www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk).