PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

14 December 2023

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

APPLICATION NO:	23/0118/10 (KL)
APPLICANT:	EVOL (WALES) LTD
DEVELOPMENT:	Extensions to create 10 no. bed hotel with bar,
	restaurant, welfare areas and car park extension. Rear
	extension to include solar panels (Tree Survey Rec.
	05/06/23) (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal rec.
	12/06/23) (Updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal rec.
	29/06/23)(Additional Bat Surveys Rec. 06/10/23)
LOCATION:	NAVIGATION HOUSE HOTEL, THE BASIN,
	CILFYNYDD ROAD, ABERCYNON, MOUNTAIN ASH,
	CF45 4RR
DATE REGISTERED:	02/02/2023
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Abercynon

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

REASONS: The proposed development would result in the substantial refurbishment and extension of an existing Public House which would improve the visual aesthetic of the property and the visual amenity of the area.

Whilst the rear extension is considered to be quite a sizeable addition to the property, it would be sited at the rear of the property and would have a sympathetic design that would ensure that it would not appear overly prominent within the plot or the wider area. Furthermore, the nearest neighbouring properties are situated a sufficient distance away and it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenity and privacy of neighbouring properties.

The development would also result in an increase in parking spaces at the site which would provide a betterment overall and the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact it would have upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site.

REASON APPLICATION REPORTED TO COMMITTEE

• The proposal is not covered by determination powers delegated to the Director of Prosperity & Development

APPLICATION DETAILS

Full planning permission is sought for the extension and refurbishment of the Navigation House Hotel, Abercynon in order to provide a 10 no. bedroom hotel with an associated bar, restaurant and welfare areas and a landlord's residential flat. The proposal includes the following works:

Rear/Side Extension

The largest extension would be situated at the rear of the property. Due to changes in ground level at the site, the extension would be built into and over the raised plateau at the eastern part of the site. Overall, the rear element of the extension would measure a maximum of 10.4 metres in width by 16 metres in depth. The ground floor would extend behind the existing single storey extension to the southern elevation but would not project any further than its side elevation. The roof above the newly extended single storey extension would be replaced with a hipped roof structure that would measure a maximum of 5.6 metres in height, sloping to 2.9 metres at the eaves.

The roof of the main rear extension would be of a dual pitch design which would tie in with the existing roof structure of the main building (maximum of 9.2 metres from the lowest ground level).

Front Extensions

The existing porch to the front elevation would be replaced with a new entrance porch measuring 6 metres in width by 2.4 metres in depth with a mono-pitch roof measuring a maximum of 3.9 metres in height. It would be constructed using timber columns with glazed screen walls supporting a slate roof. The entrance doors would be solid timber.

A further extension would be constructed to the front/side elevation at the northern corner of the property (above an existing single storey projection). The new addition would measure 2 metres in width by 5.3 metres in depth with a flat roof design that would measure 5.5 metres in height.

The extensions would be finished with cream painted render to match the existing building whilst the roof structures would be finished with blue grey slates with terracotta ridge and hip tiles.

Accommodation and Use

The proposed extensions, along with a number of internal alterations, would provide additional floor space to enable the existing building to be used as a hotel with an

associated bar/restaurant at ground floor and a landlord's flat at second floor. Overall, the proposed accommodation, as extended, would consist of the following:

- **Basement:** Bicycle store, barrel store, bottle store and store.
- **Ground Floor:** Public bar, family lounge, lounge bar and restaurant, kitchen, servery, glass wash and food store areas, customer toilets and plant room.
- **First Floor:** A meeting/function room, 7 no. en-suite bedrooms and a linen store.
- **Second Floor:** 3 no. en-suite bedrooms and living accommodation for the landlord which would incorporate a lounge, kitchen, bathroom and 2 no. bedrooms.

It is noted that the property has been used as a Public House/restaurant with a landlord's flat and family/playroom above for many years. The existing A3 use at ground floor would be retained, along with the ancillary C3 residential landlord's accommodation (moved from first to second floor) however, the proposal would introduce a new C1 Use Class (Hotel) to the site.

Car Park and Cycle Parking:

The proposal includes an extension to the existing car park area with the existing and extended area being resurfaced and laid out to increase the number of car parking spaces from 18 to 29. Two of the spaces at the southern end of the car park would include EV charging points.

Secure cycle parking would also be provided within the basement of the property with access being from a secure door off the service ramp. The facility would provide frames into which up to 10 no. bicycles can be fitted and locked.

Other Works:

Solar panels would be installed upon the south facing roof slope of the proposed rear extension.

A small gable feature would be introduced to the south facing side of the main building to replace an existing flat roof.

A new canopy would be introduced above a secondary entrance to the front elevation, serving the proposed lounge bar/restaurant.

The roof above the existing two-storey side extension at the northern side of the building would also be replaced and increased in height from 8.7 metres in height to 9.5 metres in height to the ridge. The eaves height would remain the same.

A new external fire escape and associated steps with roof canopy would be located off the proposed rear extension.

A number of internal arrangements would be made to provide a better, more accessible layout and a new lift and central staircase serving all three floors would also be introduced.

The existing outdoor amenity areas to the front and side of the property would be retained and laid to patio to provide outdoor seating areas. The area of trees to the rear would be largely retained and maintained. Details submitted with the application indicate that a small number of trees would be felled to facilitate the proposed rear extension.

The existing windows would be replaced to match the new windows proposed within the extensions.

The application is accompanied by the following supporting document:

- Planning Statement;
- Tree Survey (May 2023)
- Preliminary Ecological Survey (June 2023)
- Dusk Emergence Survey (October 2023)

SITE APPRAISAL

The application site relates to an existing Public House, known as the Navigation House Hotel, which is situated on the eastern edge of the settlement of Abercynon. The building is a prominent detached structure which is set within an irregular shaped plot to the eastern side of Cilfynydd Road. The building is set back and up from the road by a small, raised patio area with further enclosed amenity areas being situated to the southern side and eastern rear elevations. A service area and car park which both serve the application property lie immediately to the northern side elevation.

The surrounding area is characterised by both residential and commercial properties with the nearest neighbouring property being St. Thomas RC Church on the opposite side of Cilfynydd Road to the west. A number of residential properties are located approximately 35 and 40 metres away in Martin's Terrace to the west and south-west whilst a number of commercial properties (Council Depot and industrial units) and Abercynon Fire Station are located approximately 70 metres to the north.

PLANNING HISTORY

There are no planning applications on record for this site in the last ten years.

PUBLICITY

The application has been advertised by direct neighbour notification letters and through the erection of two site notices in the vicinity of the site. No letters of objection or representation have been received.

CONSULTATION

The following consultation responses have been received (summarised):

Ecology: No objection, condition recommended for the mitigation and enhancement measures set out in Section 4 of the Preliminary Ecology Assessment and Section 6 of the October 2023 Acer Ecology Dusk Emergence Survey Report. A further condition is recommended for a Habitat Management Plan.

Flood Risk Management: No objection, condition recommended (discussed in more detail in the *Land Drainage* Section below).

Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust: No objection. There are no known buried archaeological features or findspots within the area of the proposed development. Whilst the building dates from c1791 (built as the headquarters and offices of the Glamorganshire Canal Company), the building became a hotel from around 1880 and it is considered that a number of changes will have occurred internally over this period. As such, it is unlikely that significant original features remain.

Highways and Transportation: No objection, conditions recommended (discussed in more detail in the *Access and Highway Safety* Section below).

Natural Resources Wales: No objection.

Public Health and Protection: No objection. Standard conditions recommended in relation to hours operation, noise, dust and waste during construction.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service: No objection, standard advice provided.

South Wales Police: No objection. Advice and recommendations provided.

Welsh Water: No objection, conditions recommended for details of a grease trap to be installed at the site, and also for no surface water to be drained directly or indirectly to the public sewerage system.

POLICY CONTEXT

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

The application property is situated within the defined settlement boundary however, the rear aspect of the site crosses the settlement boundary line and therefore lies

outside of the settlement boundary. The following policies are considered to be relevant in the determination of this application:

Policy CS1 (Development in the North) – emphasis on building strong, sustainable communities which will be achieved by promoting commercial development in locations which will support and reinforce the roles of the key settlements and by promoting the re-use of under used and previously developed land.

Policy AW2 (Sustainable Locations) - advises that development proposals on nonallocated sites will only be supported in sustainable locations.

Policy AW5 (New Development) - sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

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

Policy AW10 (Environmental Protection and Public Health) - development proposals must overcome any harm to public health, the environment or local amenity as a result of flooding, noise etc.

Policy AW14 (Safeguarding of Materials) – safeguards resources of sandstone from development which would unnecessarily sterilise them.

Members will be aware that the current LDP's lifespan was 2011 to 2021 and that it is in the process of being reviewed. The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 introduced provisions specifying the period to which a plan has effect and providing that it shall cease to be the LDP at the end of the specified period. These provisions were commenced on 4th January 2016 but do not have retrospective effect. Therefore, the provisions do not apply to LDPs adopted prior to this date and plans adopted before 4th January 2016 will remain the LDP for determining planning applications until replaced by a further LDP. This was clarified in guidance published by the Minister on 24th September 2020. Subsequently, Members are advised that the existing Plan remains the development plan for consideration when determining this planning application.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design and Placemaking The Historic Built Environment Nature Conservation Planning Obligations Access Circulation and Parking

National Guidance

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of national planning policy which 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.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW) was issued on 24th February 2021 in conjunction with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (FW2040). PPW incorporates the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into town and country planning and sets out Welsh Government's (WG) policy on planning issues relevant to the determination of all planning applications. FW2040 sets out the National Development Framework for Wales (NDF), WGs current position on planning policy at regional and national level.

It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the key principles and requirements for placemaking set out in PPW; and is also consistent with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act's sustainable development principles through its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives of driving sustainable development and building healthier communities and better environments.

It is also considered the proposed development is compliant with the NDF, with the following policies being relevant to the development proposed:

- Policy 1 Where Wales will grow Employment/Housing/Infrastructure
- Policy 2 Shaping Urban Growth Sustainability/Placemaking
- Policy 3 Supporting Urban Growth Council land/Placemaking/developers/regeneration/sustainable communities'/exemplar developments.
- Policy 9 Resilient Ecological Networks green infrastructure/ecology

SE Wales Policies

 Policy 33 – National Growth Areas Cardiff Newport & the Valleys – SDP/LDP/large schemes.

Other relevant policy guidance consulted:

PPW Technical Advice Note 4: Retail and Commercial Development; PPW Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning; PPW Technical Advice Note 11: Noise; PPW Technical Advice Note 12: Design; PPW Technical Advice Note 13: Tourism; PPW Technical Advice Note 18: Transport; Manual for Streets

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 application site relates to the extension of an existing Public House which is set within a substantial plot on the outskirts of Abercynon. The site straddles the settlement boundary with the existing building and car park being situated inside the defined settlement boundary and the area immediately to the east being located outside. The proposed rear extension, as a result of it being located on the eastern rear elevation of the property, would largely be located outside of the defined settlement boundary however, it would relate to an existing building and the principle of constructing an extension to enhance the existing provision is therefore considered to be acceptable.

In terms of the proposed use, the scheme would retain the existing A3 use at ground floor, which is considered acceptable. National Planning Policy acknowledges the important role that public houses can provide communities and schemes to retain and enhance such facilities are generally considered to be acceptable. The proposal would improve and enhance the existing facilities by providing better access for less abled bodies and also providing 10 no. ancillary en-site hotel rooms and a meeting/function room which would make better use of the site.

In light of the above, the principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the assessment of the criteria set out below.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The proposed rear extension would form a sizeable addition to the property however, given its siting and the fact that it would not extend beyond the side elevations of the main three-storey building or the existing single storey side extension, it is not considered that it would impact upon the principal elevation of the property. Furthermore, the extension would tie in with the roof structures of the existing buildings and would be finished with appropriate materials to match the existing building. As such, the proposed extension would be proportionate to the scale of the existing building and the site in which it would sit, and it is therefore not considered that the development would appear overly prominent within the surrounding area.

The proposed extensions to the front elevation (the porch and the first-floor extension at the northern corner) are both considered to be appropriate to the scale and design

of the existing building and with a finish that would match the existing property, it is not considered that either would appear overly prominent within the context of the site.

Furthermore, the property would be substantially refurbished throughout and it is considered that the works would greatly improve the visual aesthetic of what is considered to be a prominent building and subsequently its impact upon the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

As such, it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the existing property, the site or the wider area and the application would therefore comply with Policies AW5 and AW6 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

Impact on residential amenity and privacy

The application site is situated some distance away from the nearest neighbouring residential properties and it is not considered that the proposed development would have an adverse impact upon the amenity or privacy currently enjoyed by those properties.

The bulk of the works would be situated to the rear of the property where the nearest property (Former Juboraj restaurant building on A470) is situated at a higher ground level over 100 metres away to the north-east. Given this relationship and the vast covering of trees between the two sites, the development would not be visible from that property.

Whilst properties to the north and north-west of the site are situated in closer proximity to the site (approximately 35 metres and 40 metres respectively), these distances are still sufficient to ensure that the physical works to the front/sides of the application property would not have any adverse overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking impact.

It is noted that the A3 element of the proposal (bar/restaurant) could result in some degree of noise and disturbance as a result of its use however, the property has been used as Public House for many years and it is therefore not considered that the impact would be significantly greater than the existing situation. Furthermore, the Council's Public Health and Protection team have not raised any concern in this regard, nor have any noise surveys or mitigation measures been requested.

In light of this, it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenity and privacy of neighbouring properties and the application would therefore comply with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan in this regard.

Access and highway safety

The application has been assessed by the Council's Highways and Transportation section and no objection has been raised with regards to the impact of the proposed development upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site (subject to conditions).

The comments indicate that the site is accessed via the B4275 (Cilfynydd Road) and that no changes would be made in this regard. Internal alterations would be made within the site to enhance pedestrian access for less-abled bodied pedestrians, which is considered to be acceptable.

In terms of parking, the existing site includes a tarmac hardstanding which is marked out to provide for 18 no. car parking spaces. These spaces serve the existing public areas however, on the basis of the existing accommodation provided, a total of 61 spaces are required (current shortfall of 43 spaces). The proposal includes an extended car park area with the plans indicating a layout of 29 no. car parking spaces. It is indicated that the proposed development would require 58 no. spaces (shortfall of 29 spaces).

On this basis, the proposed development requires 3 no. parking spaces less than the existing situation however, the new car parking provision accommodates 29 no. spaces, which is a betterment of 14 no. spaces.

Furthermore, two of the spaces at the southern end of the car park will include electric charging points whilst a total of 10 no. secure cycle stands would also be provided.

Overall, whilst there is some concern that the car parking for the proposed development is below the required standards, taking into account that the application property is an existing facility, that the proposal would provide a betterment of 14 no. spaces to that currently available, and that the site is situated in a highly sustainable location, the proposal is, on balance, considered to be acceptable. As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact it would have upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site and the application would therefore comply with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

Other Issues:

The following other material considerations have been taken into account in considering the application, though were not the key determining factors in reaching the recommendation.

Land Drainage

The application has been assessed by the Council's Flood Risk Management team and no objection is raised to the proposal in terms of surface water drainage. The comments indicate that the construction area is greater than 100 square metres and, as such, under Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the applicant will be required to submit a separate application to the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) Approval Body. It is further advised that the applicant will also be required to comply with Part H of the Building Regulations.

It is indicated that the site/proposed extension area does not fall within an area of surface water flood risk however, it is noted that there is an ordinary watercourse behind the properties at Martin's Terrace to the west of the site and also a culvert network along the highway to the rear of the site (east). Both identify high, medium and low surface water flood risk but neither impact upon the site.

Details provided within the application indicate that surface water will be disposed of using SuDs and the main sewer however, no relevant surface water drainage proposals have been provided for review. A condition is therefore recommended to secure a site surface water drainage strategy to outline the pre and post discharge rate and a general arrangement of the proposed drainage layout.

Ecology

Protected Species

The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (dated June 2023) and a Dusk Emergence Survey Report (October 2023) which have both been reviewed by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Council's Ecologist. The Dusk Emergence Survey Report found no evidence of bats roosting within or on the external parts of the building and no evidence of bats using the wall in the car park, nor did it find any evidence of nesting birds. On the basis of the findings of the reports, neither NRW or the Council's Ecologist have raised any objection to the proposal however, a condition is recommended for the mitigation and enhancement measures for both bats and birds, as detailed in Section 4 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Section 6 of the Dusk Emergence Survey Report. A further condition is recommended to secure further mitigation/enhancement measures in the form of a Habitat Management Plan for the woodland to the rear if the site (outlined in blue).

Impact on Trees

The proposed works seek to retain most of the existing ecological features within the site with the majority of trees on the eastern plateau being retained. A Tree Survey has been undertaken which identifies a limited number of trees to be removed and also details of what works are to be carried out to the undergrowth and existing shrubs as well as details of all replacement planting.

The information has been assessed by the Council's Ecologist who has indicated that the woodland mitigation and biodiversity enhancement details set out within the submitted details (i.e. tree planting) would not be particularly effective ecological mitigation/enhancement and it is recommended that a much better mitigation/enhancement delivery would be for better management of the woodland to the rear of the site through a long-term Habitat Management Plan.

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).

Conclusion

The application would result in an existing prominent building being substantially refurbished and extended to provide a 10 no. bed hotel with an associated bar/restaurant at ground floor which would serve both local people and visitors to the area. The site is set within a sustainable location and within easy reach of Abercynon town centre and the wider area and the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable.

Whilst the rear extension is considered to be quite a sizeable addition to the property, it would be sited to the rear of the property and would have a sympathetic design that would ensure that it would not appear to be overly prominent within the plot or the wider area. Furthermore, the nearest neighbouring properties are situated a sufficient distance away and it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenity and privacy of neighbouring properties.

The development would also result in an increase in parking spaces at the site which would provide a betterment overall and the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact it would have upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to conditions

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 plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 05 May 2023, unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent:
 - Drawing No. 0968/108: Site Location Plan
 - Drawing No. 0968/230 Rev. A: Proposed Basement Plan
 - Drawing No. 0968/231: Rev. F: Proposed Ground Floor Plan

- Drawing. No. 0968/0232 Rev C: Proposed First Floor Plan
- Drawing No. 0968/233 Rev C: Proposed Second Floor Plan
- Drawing No. 0968/234 Rev B: Proposed Roof Plan
- Drawing No. 0968/235 Rev B: Proposed Front and Side Elevations
- Drawing No. 0968/236 Rev B: Proposed Rear and Side Elevation
- Drawing No. 0968/238 Rev B: Proposed Site Layout
- Drawing No. 0968/0239 Rev A: Proposed Hotel Plan

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

3. Before the development is brought into use the means of access, together with the parking and turning facilities, shall be laid out in accordance with the submitted site plan 0968/238B approved by the Local Planning Authority. The car parking spaces shall remain thereafter for the parking of vehicles in association with the proposed public house / hotel.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety/ To ensure vehicles are parked off the highway.

- 4. No development shall commence until details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - i) A drainage strategy with associated calculations demonstrating the pre and post-development surface water discharge rates from the site and a general arrangement of the catchment and proposed drainage system.
 - ii) How the development is to comply with the requirements of Section 8.3 of PPW Technical Advice Note 15.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to beneficial occupation of any unit.

Reason: To ensure that surface water runoff from the proposed development does not cause or exacerbate the flood risk on the development site or elsewhere and does not increase the number of residents at risk of surface water flooding, in accordance with Policy AW10 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

5. The approved use shall not commence until an adequate grease trap has been fitted in accordance with details that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the grease trap shall be maintained so as to prevent grease entering the public sewerage system. Reason: To protect the integrity of the public sewage system and ensure the free flow of sewage.

- 6. Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to the commencement of the development, a habitat management plan that ensures delivery of ecological mitigation and enhancement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include details of:
 - The ecological purpose, aims and objectives of the scheme.
 - A review of the site's ecological potential and constraints.
 - Description of target habitat features and species.

- Selection of appropriate strategies for achieving target habitat and species mitigation and enhancement.

- Selection of specific nature conservation techniques and practices for
- Sources of habitat material.
- Method statement for the restoration of vegetation.
- Extent and location of proposed works.
- Aftercare and long-term woodland management.
- Personnel responsible for works.
- Timing of works.
- Annual HMP project timetable.
- Habitat and Species Monitoring
- Disposal of arisings.

All works will be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Any amendments to the Habitat Management Plan required as a result of ongoing monitoring shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their implementation.

Reason: To enhance and afford protection to animal and plant species in accordance with policies AW5 & AW8 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

7. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the mitigation and enhancement measures set out within Section 6 of the submitted Dusk Emergence Survey Report (By Acer Ecology, dated October 2023). Reason: To provide biodiversity enhancement in accordance with Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales.