

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COUNCIL

25 APRIL 2018

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

DEPARTURE FROM DEVELOPMENT PLAN - PLANNING APPLICATION P/17/1083/FUL

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 On 15 March, 2018, the Development Control Committee considered planning application P/17/1083/FUL as a departure from the Local Development Plan. The Development Control Committee resolved not to refuse planning permission so the application is referred to Council which is requested to approve the application subject to conditions.
- 1.2 A copy of the Development Control Committee report is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The delivery of the County Borough Council's planning functions has links to all three of the Council's corporate priorities as outlined in the Corporate Improvement Plan 2016-2020.

3. Background

- 3.1 The application, by Western Power Distribution (South Wales) Plc., relates to an extension to the existing grid substation at Bridgend Grid Substation, off Great Western Avenue, Bridgend. The existing substation is of major importance as it supplies electricity to the majority of the town. The proposal comprises an extension to the west of the existing substation, as shown outlined in red in the plan below:



- 3.2 The extended area will provide space to erect a building which provides the opportunity to upgrade the existing substation, erected in the 1970s, by transforming the incoming voltage from 132,000 (132kV) to 33,000 (33kV) for distribution to the local network, providing power to the wider Bridgend area. The existing infrastructure is in urgent need of upgrading and modernisation.
- 3.3 As part of the proposal, the existing switchroom building will be removed following the commissioning of the new equipment. The existing infrastructure cannot be dismantled because WPD needs to maintain the supply of electricity to its customers during the construction and testing stage.
- 3.4 The application site is located within the Primary Key Settlement of Bridgend, as defined by Bridgend County Borough Council's adopted Local Development Plan (2013).
- 3.5 The proposed development is within the Regeneration and Mixed Use Development Site - Coity Road Sidings, Bridgend, as defined by Policy PLA3 of the Local Development Plan (2013). The site is allocated for regeneration and mixed use schemes which includes 140 residential units (COM1(4)) an employment function (REG1(3) already developed) and a Park and Ride facility to serve Wildmill Train Station (PLA7(21)).
- 3.6 The site offers opportunities for development to take place over the plan period to help meet the visions and objectives of the Local Development Plan and the allocation will result in the provision of comprehensive residential, employment and commercial development, whilst providing new transportation, community, education and recreation facilities to serve the community.
- 3.7 Whilst the application site is within the demarcated strategic transportation improvement area, it is considered that the proposal would not prejudice the implementation of the Park and Ride Facility or walking, cycling and public transport routes because the access road is capable of being realigned, as illustrated in the Potential Realignment of Access Road Through Coity Sidings Site plan received with the submission.
- 3.8 In 2015, planning consent was refused for a standby generating facility on land to the north of the current site. However, this proposal covered a much larger area and if developed would have sterilised a significant part of the allocated land. The proposed extension to the existing substation facility cannot be considered temporary in nature nor can it be said to be employment generating, however, it is noted that the new structure and subsequent removal of the existing switchroom would provide betterment in terms of visual amenity, which would be more compatible with the future residential development of the Coity Road Sidings Development Brief.
- 3.9 The Joint Housing Land Availability Study (2017) states that Coity Road Sidings designated site has a deliverability of 30 units in 2021, 40 units in 2022 and 70 units thereafter. Although the overall developable area will be reduced if this application is approved, it is considered that the proposal will not unduly jeopardise the future residential scheme given its residential capacity and the limited extent of the substation extension.

- 3.10 Therefore, there is a reasoned argument for the extension being located on an allocated site.
- 3.11 The Local Planning Authority can grant permission for development which does not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area under Article 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, subject to ratification by Council.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 The application site is located within an area that is allocated as a Regeneration and Mixed Use Development Site - Coity Road Sidings, Bridgend, as defined by Policy PLA3 of the Local Development Plan (2013).

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 Whilst the application does not fully accord with the policies of the Bridgend Local Development Plan the substation extension is an operational requirement for WPD.

6. Equality Impact Assessment.

- 6.1 A screening for Equality Impact has been undertaken and no negative issues have been identified.

7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act are:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

- 7.2 The duty was considered in the assessment of the application and in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing goals/objectives as a result of the proposed development.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 That if Council is minded not to refuse the development then the Corporate Director Communities be given delegated authority to issue a decision notice in respect of this proposal to include the following conditions:

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with drawing numbers "BDG0112" and "A 73210 Issue 3" received 22 December 2017.

Reason: To avoid doubt and confusion as to the nature and extent of the approved development.

2. The building shall be completed with 'new burntwood red rustic 0269' elevations and shall have an 'anthracite RAL 7016' roof, in accordance with the samples received 27 February 2018.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed materials of construction are appropriate for use on the development so as to enhance and protect the visual amenity of the area.

3. No later than 6 months after the beneficial use of the building and apparatus commencing, the existing switchroom on the north western boundary of the application site shall be removed in its entirety and all associated waste removed from the site.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenities.

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Corporate Director Communities
25 APRIL 2018

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Background documents

Appendix 1: Development Control Committee Report