

Application No.
P/16/0001

Date
5th January 2016

Determining Authority
MTCBC

Proposed Development

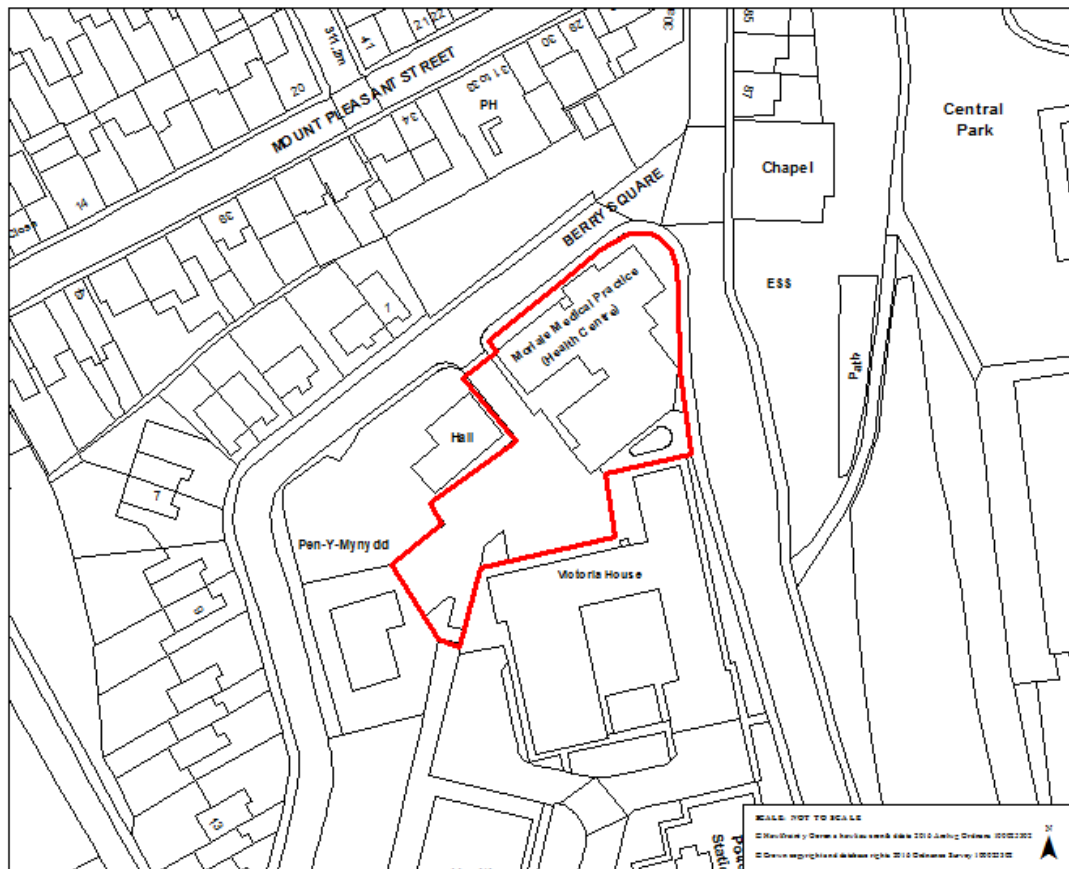
Location

Name & Address of Applicant/Agent

Single storey rear extension

Morlais Medical Centre
Berry Square
Dowlais
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 3AL

Morlais Medical Centre
c/o Stride Treglown
F.a.o. Coral Ducroq
Treglown Court
Dowlais Road
Cardiff



Councillor Phil Williams has requested that this application be reported to Committee to fully consider the concerns raised by the objector.

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to Morlais Medical Centre, a detached building located on a corner plot between Berry Square and Victoria Street, Dowlais. The premises operates as a GP surgery, with 14 consulting rooms, as well as a treatment and minor operation facility. Its main entrance is accessed off Berry Square with a secondary rear access in the western elevation and adjacent to the on-site parking area which provides 18 car parking spaces.

The premises lies to the north of the former nursing home and to the south of the Morlais Tavern Public House/Restaurant. It falls within the settlement boundary – Primary Growth

Area, just outside the retail centre boundary and also within the Merthyr Tydfil landscape of historic interest.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to construct a single storey extension to the western elevation of the premises. The 'L' shaped extension would provide approximately 36m² of additional floor space. It would be constructed on part of an external courtyard and between two existing single storey projections. The extension would comprise a gently sloping mono-pitched roof with external brick walls (to match the existing) and a dark brown aluminium door and window. The maximum length of the extension would be 6.2 metres.

The information submitted with the application states that the extension is necessary in order to accommodate some of the internal space that would be lost if the proposed pharmacy (subject of planning application P/16/0003 and also being considered on this Committee agenda) were to be introduced into the medical centre.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/16/0002 – Erection of two illuminated signs – not yet determined.

P/16/0003 – Change of use of part of the building (ground floor) into dispensing pharmacy. Creation of new entrance with canopy and pathway (adjacent to Victoria Street) and installation air conditioning unit to the eastern elevation – not yet determined. This application appears on this Committee agenda.

P/08/0139 – Erection of two-storey rear extension, new vehicular parking access and parking – Approved: 3rd July 2008.

CONSULTATION

There no were no consultations carried out for this application.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order (Wales) 2012, nearby properties have been consulted and a site notice has been displayed in the immediate vicinity of the site. One letter of representation was received as a result of this exercise. The concerns raised are summarised below:

- The agent claims that the loss of floor space is offset by that provided by the new extension. Clearly this is wrong since there would be a loss of operational medical rooms, not waiting area, where there is a greater need. The loss of the existing internal rooms taken up by the change of use is therefore unnecessary and is surplus to the needs of the medical practice. A reconfiguration of the internal layout could provide an appropriately sized waiting area. The need for the extension application is therefore not supported and is considered premature pending the acceptability or not of the change of use.

POLICY CONTEXT

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan (LDP) are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- BW1 – Development Strategy – Primary Growth Area
- BW4 – Settlement boundaries/location constraints
- AS4 – Historic landscape
- BW7 – Sustainable design and place making
- BW8 – Development and the water environment
- BW12 – Development Proposal and Transport
- TB11 – Access, parking and accessibility

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The site is located within the settlement boundary – Primary Growth Area, and as such development in this location is supported by LDP Policies BW1 and BW4 provided it is compatible with other relevant plan policies and material planning considerations. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in principle. Therefore, the main issues to consider when assessing this application relate to whether the proposed rear extension would have an acceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, and parking and highway safety.

Character and Appearance

The proposal relates to a small extension to be erected on the western elevation of the premises. The extension would be finished with brickwork to match the existing building. Although the gently sloping roof profile is not consistent with the remainder of the building, this simple design is considered the most appropriate given its siting between two projecting annexes. The extension by virtue of its small scale and discrete siting within the courtyard (it is also set-back from the projections either side) would not appear prominent when viewing the premises within the street scene (either along Victoria Street and Berry Square). The extension is therefore considered a low key addition which would appear as a subordinate and sympathetic addition to the existing premises and would therefore not result in an overdevelopment of this site.

The proposal is therefore in context with the character and appearance of the area and would comply with LDP Policy and BW7.

Residential Amenity

The development, as noted above, is proposed on the western elevation of the premises, and would therefore be located a significant distance away from nearby residential properties. Thus, neighbouring properties would not be affected as a result of this proposal. The development would therefore comply with LDP Policy BW7.

Parking and Highway safety

The proposed extension would result in a small (36m²) increase in the floor space of the premises. An on-site parking area is provided to the southwest of the premises, comprising 18 parking spaces (two of which are disabled spaces). This facility along with the use of two

public car parks to the north and south of the application site would remain sufficient enough to cater for the needs of the medical centre. In addition, the application site lies within a sustainable location, within close proximity to alternative modes of transport other than the private car (i.e. being sited near bus routes).

As such, it is not considered that the proposed extension would give rise to adverse highway/pedestrian safety concerns or impinge the free flow of traffic in the area and would therefore comply with LDP Policies BW12 and TB11.

Response to Representations

The operational use of a medical centre is not a planning matter. The proposed extension is considered acceptable whether or not a pharmacy is operated from part of the medical centre in the future. The application subject of this report as well as the application (P/16/0003) for the proposed change of use of part of the ground floor to a pharmacy must be considered on their own planning merits.

Conclusion

The proposed extension is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the existing building and wider area. There would be no impact on surrounding residents or on highway/pedestrian safety. As such the proposal complies with policies BW7, BW12 and TB11 of the LDP.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Extension Proposed Sections: MMP-STL-00-ZZ-DR-A-ZZ-04002, rev P2
- Extension Proposed GF Plan: MMP-STL-00-GF-DR-A-3020-02005, rev P2
- Extension Proposed Roof Plan: MMP-STL-00-02-DR-A-3010-02006, rev P2
- Extension Proposed Site Plan: MMP-STL-00-00-DR-A-ZZ-01006, rev P2
- Extension Proposed Elevations: MMP-STL-00-ZZ-DR-A-ZZ-03004, rev P2

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external walls of the extension shall match those used in the existing building.

Reason - To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area and adjoining buildings in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.
