

<b>DATE WRITTEN</b>	15th November 2018
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Judith Jones
<b>CASE OFFICER</b>	David Cross
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Planning and Regulatory
<b>COMMITTEE DATE</b>	28th November 2018

**Application No.**  
P/18/0286

**Date**  
6th September 2018

**Determining Authority**  
MTCBC

**Proposed Development**

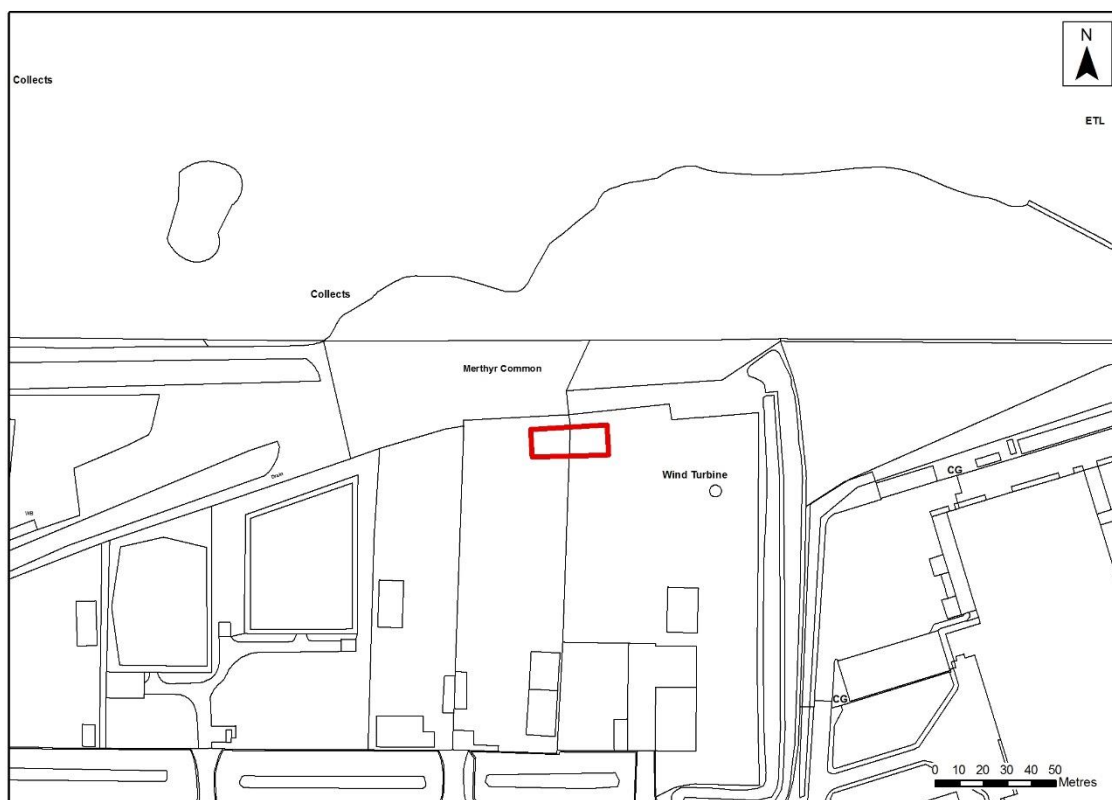
**Location**

**Name & Address of Applicant/Agent**

Change of use of renewable energy facility with biomass boiler fuelled by virgin wood to renewable energy facility with biomass boiler fuelled by waste wood

Plot 5 & 10  
Pengarnddu Industrial Estate  
Dowlais  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF48 2TA

Merthyr Biomass Limited  
c/o Technia Environment And Planning Ltd  
F.a.o. Dr S Watcham  
Suite 4  
St. Margarets Park  
Pengam Road



P/18/0286

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**APPLICATION SITE**

This application relates to an existing industrial building, which has recently been constructed and forms part of a waste transfer facility, within a well-established

industrial estate. The building is currently used to house a biomass boiler which generates heat for the drying of biofuels (logs and woodchip) and products (aggregate), as well as heating the building itself. At present the fuel used to operate the biomass boiler is woodchips from clean sustainable sources i.e. virgin timber, forestry residue and/or biofuel crops.

Access to the building is via an existing hardcore road that links to the main industrial estate highway to the south. The site is bound to the north by vacant land, which forms part of Merthyr Common, and on all other sides is land used in conjunction with the waste transfer facility.

## PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought to change the type of fuel that is used to operate the biomass boiler from virgin wood to primarily treated waste wood, supplied from the adjacent waste transfer facility. Untreated and virgin biomass would also be used occasionally to supplement the treated waste wood fuel.

It is noted that the proposal does not seek consent to use hazardous waste wood. Nor does it seek to increase the quantity of wood used to fuel the biomass boiler. Furthermore, there are no changes proposed to either the existing operational biomass boiler or the industrial unit to accommodate the proposal.

## PLANNING HISTORY

P/18/0049 - Change of use of storage building to renewable energy facility including the installation of a biomass boiler.

Permission GRANTED on 10.04.2018

P/17/0284 - Erection of storage building.

Permission GRANTED on 21.12.2017

P/16/0054 - Erection of storage building and drying unit which accommodates a biomass boiler.

Permission GRANTED on 26.04.2016

## CONSULTATION

Environmental Health  
Manager

- No objection.

Natural Resources Wales

- No objection.

Welsh Water

- No response.

Wales & West Utilities

- No objection.

Western Power Distribution - No response.

## PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, a site notice was displayed within the vicinity of the site, along with a notice in the local newspaper, on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

No representations were received as a result of this publicity exercise.

## POLICY CONTEXT

The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

### National planning policy

Planning Policy Wales, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, November 2016

Sections 12.7.1 – 12.7.2 set out the considerations for waste management proposals to ensure waste management objectives are met and harmful impacts on amenity or the environment are adequately mitigated.

Sections 12.10.1 – 12.10.3 sets out the considerations for low carbon energy development, including the promotion of combined heat and power schemes, which need to avoid adverse impacts on the surrounding environment.

Section 13.12.1 sets out the need to have regard to the quality of air and water and the potential for pollution affecting the use of land.

Technical Advice Notes (TAN):

- TAN 8: Planning for Renewable Energy, July 2005
- TAN 21: Waste, February 2014

### Local planning policy

Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006-2021:

- Policy BW1 - Development strategy – Primary Growth Area
- Policy BW4 - Settlement boundaries / location constraints
- Policy AS7 - Waste management facilities – locations of choice
- Policy TB7 - Renewable energy

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

1. SPG 4: Sustainable Design, July 2013

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This proposal simply relates to a change in the fuel type for an existing biomass boiler, located within the grounds of a well-established waste transfer facility. Therefore, the main considerations of this application are, whether the use of waste wood as a fuel would have an unacceptable environmental impact on air quality and local amenity. Regard should also be given to whether the proposal ensures the appropriate management of waste material.

The biomass boiler is used to generate heat for the drying of biofuels i.e. logs and woodchip, as well as other products (aggregates). As part of this process, the biomass boiler is also used as a renewable energy system, with any excess heat generated used to heat the building.

To determine the potential environmental impacts, an Air Quality Assessment was submitted in support of the application. It is concluded in this report that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the surrounding area, and the predicted cumulative impact with other local emitters would be below the relevant air quality standards. As such, the resulting air quality effect would be 'not significant' overall. The report also concludes that a 12m flue stack (which has already been installed) would ensure the concentration of emissions meet appropriate air quality standards.

In terms of local amenity, the above mentioned assessment also considers the potential impact on sensitive receptors, being residential properties in and immediately around the industrial estate, as well as, the properties within Pant and Dowlais. It is concluded in the report that the impact on existing receptors would not be significant and in practice, the impacts are likely to be less than those reported in the assessment. It is noted in Annex C of TAN21 (Section 1.6) that modern, well managed incinerators are unlikely to make a significant contribution to local concentrations of air pollutants. Additionally, waste management facilities (including the use of a biomass boiler) are strictly controlled outside of the planning system by environmental permits. In this respect, neither NRW nor the Environmental Health Manager have raised any objection. Therefore, the proposal adequately meets the objectives of Section 13.12.1 of PPW.

It is recognised in TAN21 (Para 2.7.4) that where waste material is not recycled, other waste recovery operations should be encouraged, whereby the waste serves a useful purpose, by replacing the need to utilise fossil fuels. This may include the incineration of waste where energy (in this case heat) can be recovered. The use of waste wood to operate the biomass boiler would not only support a waste recovery process, as part of the wider waste transfer facility, it would also contribute to the generation of renewable energy, which is used to dry biofuels and aggregates. Therefore, the proposal meets the objectives of TAN21. Additionally, its location within an area identified in the LDP for waste management facilities complies with policy AS7 of the LDP.

## CONCLUSIONS

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”) has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

For the above reasons the proposed development is acceptable and complies with the relevant national policies and LDP policies. Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

**RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED** subject to the following **CONDITION:**

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.