

Our Ref: SWJ

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Dear Philippa

LLANDARCY - PROPOSED EV CHARGING AND DRIVE THRU SITE

Thank you for the instructions to undertake a site search for alternative sites for the proposed EV charging station and drive through site at Llandarcy. My report on my findings is below.

Introduction

This instruction has been undertaken by Simon Watson James MRICS, a Partner at EJ Hales based in Cardiff and with over 40 years' experience in commercial property agency and development in South Wales. E J Hales is one of the leading practices of commercial surveyors in South Wales specialising in the letting, development and asset management of retail leisure and roadside properties. Originally our practice concentrated on South Wales as our principal market, but over the last 20 years we have expanded to cover a much larger geographical area including the whole of Wales and substantial parts of particularly the South West of England. The business has been established for over 90 years and is privately owned and independent.

Our instructions on this matter come from the developers promoting this site, namely LP2 Limited. The developers have identified a need and demand for EV charging station and drive through coffee shop and have submitted a planning application for the proposals.

Proposed Development

The site identified for the development is roughly triangular and lies between the B4290 and Llandarcy. The site is currently vacant and there is a slope running across the site with the Llandarcy Road being at the higher level. The proposed access point is on the B4290. The location is close to the established David Lloyd Health Club and also to the Ospreys rugby training ground. It is also readily accessible from the M4 motorway via junction 43. This motorway junction is an important point where the A469 Trunk Road meets the M4 motorway. Close by to the northwest is the Coed Darcy development – a strategic allocation for housing and employment uses. Natural Resources Wales and Swansea Bay Health Board both have offices nearby.

There are good pedestrian links within the proposed development so that users of the EV charging station can readily access the drive through coffee shop while their car is being charged.

The proposal itself is for 16 EV charging bays and a 1800 square feet Drive through coffee shop. The total car parking facility on site will be for 41 cars and this includes the 16 EV charging station.

The site area is approximately 1 acre.

The proximity of the sites to the David Lloyd Health Club and the Ospreys Rugby training ground, nearby offices and residential dwellings mean that users of those facilities and residents can also readily access the proposed development. In addition, people travelling along the M4 motorway or A469 as well as local commuters and those utilising the nearby sports pitches could utilise the proposed development.

We have undertaken an online check of publicly available EV charging points and there are none in the three centres that we are looking at. The closest is at the Tesco Superstore at Neath Abbey.

Methodology

1. The first stage of the process was to visit the site and assess it in respect of the surrounding area, nearby facilities, developments and key highway routes. This took place on Tuesday the 28th of November 2023.
2. In advance of the site visit a list of centres to consider for alternative locations for the proposed development was supplied including details of the designated town centre boundaries. Those three centres are Skewen, Briton Ferry and Neath. All three centres were visited and examined on the same day.
3. Following the first two stages there was a desk based process of searching for alternative sites and checking potential sites that had been observed during stage 2. This third stage involved going through our own databases of properties along with online databases and websites where available sites are listed and finally checking a range of individual agents websites; those agents being known to be active in the area surrounding the subject search areas.

Findings

The retail centres of each of the three centres are defined in the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan 2011-2026 Proposals map. Those boundaries are adopted for the purposes of the search.

1 Skewen

The defined area of Skewen is very largely built up and there were no sites of a suitable size found within that area.

Outside the defined area the following was found:-

Clifton Place Skewen, this is a site for 5 dwellings in a residential area. The site is too small and in an unsuitable location.

Ormes Road Skewen, this site is of 2.2 acres but in an unsuitable location in a housing area.

Site at Dynevor Road is a site of 4,400sqm(1.09 acres), this is large enough for the form of development in the proposal, but the area is a residential area and not suitable for this form of development.

Talbot Road, this is a site for a single house and far too small and the wrong location for this form of development.

2 Briton Ferry

The defined area of Briton Ferry is comparatively small and is very largely built up and there were no sites of a suitable size found within that area.

Outside the defined area the following was found:-

Site at Brunel Way. This site is approximately 2.74 acres and is part of the Baglan Energy Park. The site might be a suitable location for this form of development although the lack of main road frontage and visibility coupled with the availability of drive through's at Baglan Bay Retail Park make it very unlikely to be attractive. The site would be too big for the proposed development and would need to be split. This location would not have any of the key ingredients that the proposed development site. This site is not within a town or edge of centre location.

3 Neath

The defined area of Neath is the largest of the three centres and is very largely built up and there were no sites of a suitable size found within that area.

Outside the defined area the following was found:-

Land at 135 Brookfield Neath Abbey. This is a plot for a single dwelling that is too small and in an unsuitable location for the form of development proposed.

Land at Nant Celyn, Crynant, Neath; this is a plot for a single dwelling and is too small and an unsuitable location for the form of development proposed.

Land at Neath Road , Tonna, Neath, this is a plot of 2.5 acres which is larger than the proposed development but the location is unsuitable for the form of development proposed.

Land at 37 Heol Derwen , Cimla, Neath, this a plot for a single dwelling and far too small for the proposed form of development and is an unsuitable location.

Land at Cefn Yr Allt, Aberdulais, Neath, this is a site of 1.4 acres which has planning consent for the demolition of a residential property. This is not a suitable location for the form of development proposed.

Land at Cefn Yr Allt, Aberdulais, Neath, this is a site of 2.2 acres that has planning consent for 3, 4 bedroom houses, as such it is unsuitable for the form of development proposed.

Overall Assessment

The location of the proposed development is uniquely placed to offer publicly available EV charging and coffee shop adjacent to both the David Lloyd Health Club, The Ospreys Rugby Training facility, the Coed Darcy development, office development and Junction 43 of the M4 Motorway.

The location is well suited for the form of development proposed and having undertaken a search for alternative sites we have found no suitable alternative sites in or on the edge of Skewen, Briton Ferry or Neath town centres.

Yours sincerely



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