

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Extension to Provide Additional Storage Space

Unit 10 Maesglas Retail Park, Port Road, Newport

April 2025

Valley Wholesale Carpets – Unit 10 Maesglas Retail Park, Newport

Project	Valley Wholesale Carpets Newport
Client	Valley Wholesale Carpets
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Project Team	Jon Imber
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Document Produced by:

JMI Planning Limited
62 Carter Street
Uttoxeter
Staffs
ST14 8EU

Phone: 01889 566107
Email: enquiries@jmiplanning.com

www.jmiplanning.com

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 JMI Planning is a Midlands based town planning consultancy. Its directors are chartered town planners with over 30 years' combined experience in both the public and private sector.
- 1.2 The author of this appraisal, Jon Imber, has worked as both a development control and forward planning officer in local government, and more recently as a senior planning consultant in the private sector. He has extensive knowledge of the planning system and experience of the appeals process. He is a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.
- 1.3 This statement forms part of a detailed planning application. It should be read in conjunction with the plans and drawings prepared by AJS Structural Design.

2 Site and Planning History

- 2.1 The site consists of a carpet retail warehouse within an out of centre retail park to the south of the City Centre.
- 2.2 Surrounding uses include similar retail warehouses to the east, west and south and a railway line to the north. There are residential properties beyond the railway line.
- 2.3 The site has two accesses: one directly off Port Road; and one off an entrance shared with the unit to the west.
- 2.4 The site is flat. It is predominantly hard surfaced, although there are some grassed areas across the Port Road frontage and to the rear of the building.

2.5 The site has the following history of relevance:-

- 91/0683 - Change of use to class 1 retail warehouse with storage for sale of DIY goods, carpets and furniture and erection of new garden centre on land at rear of unit - Granted with conditions 21st August 1991
- 97/0420 - Variation of condition 01 relating to planning permission 91/0683/ to include sale of live pets and associated pet food/ancillary products - Granted with conditions 23rd June 1997
- 13/0167 - Variation of condition 1 (restriction of goods) relating to planning permission 97/0420 to allow for the sale of unrestricted goods – Refused 4th October 2013
- 13/1291 - Variation of condition 01 (restriction of goods) relating to planning permission 97/0420 to amend the restriction on goods sold – Granted with conditions 17th April 2014

2.6 A request for pre-application advice on the proposals was submitted to the local planning authority in November 2024. Its response was broadly positive, and detailed comments have been taken into account in the preparation of this application.

2.7 The site and its surroundings are shown on the following photograph.



Figure 1 - Aerial photograph of site

3 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The applicant's operations at the site involve importing large rolls of carpet, cutting them to size and distributing them to the trade with some retail sales.
- 3.2 The existing storage area within the building is proving restrictive, and it is therefore proposed to erect an extension on the northern elevation of the building to provide additional storage space.
- 3.3 The extension has a floor space of 1,827m². It measures 85.3 metres long by 22.5 metres wide, with an eaves height of approximately 10.1 metres and a ridge height of approximately 12.2 metres.
- 3.4 The proposals do not involve any increase in the customer trading area.

- 3.5 The project represents a significant investment in the site which will help to secure an ongoing presence and retain jobs in the city. Over £750,000 alone is being invested in a new cutting table.
- 3.6 The proposals involve reconfiguring the existing parking and servicing areas. Commercial vehicles servicing the site and staff cars will enter and exit via the access directly off Port Road, and customers will access a separate parking area off the shared driveway to the west. A total of 14 customer spaces and 29 staff spaces are to be provided, together with 10 spaces for rigid commercial vehicles.
- 3.7 The applicant anticipates that the proposals will facilitate 6 to 8 new members of staff. In terms of servicing vehicle movements, it is anticipated that there would be one additional articulated lorry and two rigid delivery lorries per day.
- 3.8 It is also proposed to install a mezzanine floor over the existing ground floor offices. This internal alteration does not require planning permission. It does, however, necessitate three new windows on the front elevation.

4 Planning Policy Context

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (2024)

- 4.1 Paragraph 1.22 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) reaffirms the statutory requirement for planning applications to be determined in accordance with adopted development plans unless material planning considerations dictate otherwise.
- 4.2 Figure 4 of PPW sets out a range of key planning principles. These include growing the economy in a sustainable manner by enabling “*development which contributes to*

long term economic well-being, making the best use of existing infrastructure and planning for new supporting infrastructure and services.”

- 4.3 Paragraph 4.3.18 sets out a sequential approach to the location of retail and commercial centre development. However, Paragraph 4.3.23 acknowledges that *“Some types of retail store, such as those selling bulky goods and requiring large showrooms, may not be able to find suitable sites or buildings within existing retail and commercial centres. Where this is the case such stores should in the first instance be located on sites identified for such a purpose in the development plan, preferably on an edge of centre site. Where such sites are not available or suitable, other sites at the edge of retail and commercial centres, followed by out-of-centre locations may be considered, subject to application of the needs and impact tests.”*
- 4.4 Paragraph 5.4.4 of PPW states *“Wherever possible, planning authorities should encourage and support developments which generate economic prosperity and regeneration.”*
- 4.5 Paragraph 5.4.14 states *“Development policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) should support mixed use developments, including flexible live/work units and commercial premises, where these are appropriate.”*

Newport Local Plan (2015)

4.6 ***“R11 Development of Existing Out-of-Centre Retail Sites***

Outside the city centre and district centres, proposals for redevelopments of and extensions to out-of-centre retail outlets, and garden centres, involving increases in floorspace to previous consents and/or changes to the range of goods sold will only be permitted provided that:

- i) *need is identified;*
- ii) *the proposed development would not, either in its own right, or cumulatively with other out of centre developments and outstanding planning permissions, have an adverse effect on defined retail centres as a consequence of the type or range of goods sold;*
- iii) *the sequential test can be satisfied having regard to the availability, suitability and viability of city and district centre sites, or edge-of-centre sites which could accommodate the proposed retail uses;*
- iv) *the proposal would not increase the land area of the site;*
- v) *the surrounding highway and transportation network has capacity to serve the development, and that accessing and servicing arrangements can be accommodated in a satisfactory manner;*
- vi) *the proposal is fully accessible on foot, by bicycle and by public transport.”*

5 Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

5.1 The proposals involve the extension of an existing and established retail warehouse within an out of centre retail estate. Policy R11 of the Newport Local Plan is therefore particularly relevant.

5.2 Policy R11 states:-

Outside the city centre and district centres, proposals for redevelopments of and extensions to out-of-centre retail outlets, and garden centres, involving increases in floorspace to previous consents and/or changes to the range of goods sold will only be permitted provided that:

- i) need is identified;
- ii) the proposed development would not, either in its own right, or cumulatively with other out of centre developments and outstanding planning permissions, have an adverse effect on defined retail centres as a consequence of the type or range of goods sold;
- iii) the sequential test can be satisfied having regard to the availability, suitability and viability of city and district centre sites, or edge-of-centre sites which could accommodate the proposed retail uses;
- iv) the proposal would not increase the land area of the site;
- v) the surrounding highway and transportation network has capacity to serve the development, and that accessing and servicing arrangements can be accommodated in a satisfactory manner;
- vi) the proposal is fully accessible on foot, by bicycle and by public transport.

5.3 The proposals do not affect the range of goods sold from the unit (carpets and flooring). They do, however, involve an increase to floorspace. This increase is to expand storage rather than customer floorspace. However, compliance with the criteria set out in Policy R11 is considered below.

5.4 The proposals are driven by a need for additional storage space at the site. The applicant specialises in wholesale and distribution, and demand for associated storage exceeds current capacity. Criterion (i) of Policy R11 is therefore satisfied.

5.5 The proposals relate to a carpet warehouse. Carpets are bulky comparison goods typically associated with an out-of-centre location. The proposals will not therefore detract from the vitality or viability of retail centres. The proposals therefore comply with Criterion (ii) of Policy R11.

- 5.6 Since the proposals involve the provision of warehouse space as opposed to retail floorspace it is not considered that the sequential test is applicable in this instance. Nonetheless, given the significant floorspace requirements it is considered unlikely that the development could be accommodated within or on the edge of existing retail centres.
- 5.7 The proposals do not increase the land area of the site. Criterion (iv) of Policy R11 is therefore satisfied.
- 5.8 The proposals would not lead to unacceptable impacts upon the highway network. The submitted plans demonstrate adequate servicing space and turning space for HGVs. Access arrangements remain unchanged and the site benefits from convenient access to the strategic highway network. The proposals therefore accord with Criterion (v) of Policy R11.
- 5.9 Whilst it is considered unlikely that customers would arrive by public transport, bicycles or on foot, there is a bus stop on Port Road within comfortable walking distance served by frequent connections to the City Centre. There is also a dedicated cycle part along Port Road. These are both connected to the site via continuous pavements. The site is therefore reasonably accessible via non-car modes and Criterion (vi) of Policy R11 is satisfied.
- 5.10 The proposals therefore comply with all relevant criteria set out within Policy R11 and the broad principle of development is therefore considered acceptable.

Visual Impact

- 5.11 The surrounding area is characterised by wide span portal framed buildings commensurate with retail warehousing.

- 5.12 The form of the extension reflects its function, and it would not appear alien or out of place within this context. The proposals would not therefore harm the character or appearance of the streetscene.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

- 5.13 The proposed extension is sufficiently distant from dwellings to the north to avoid any loss of daylight or overbearing effect. There would be no significant increase in noise or disturbance. The proposals therefore safeguard the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.
- 5.14 The proposed extension would prevent light spillage from the floodlights on the side and rear elevations of the existing building towards the dwellings to the north.

Flood Risk

- 5.15 The application is accompanied by a flood risk assessment which concludes that the proposals will not be at unacceptable risk of flooding and will not exacerbate flood risk elsewhere.
- 5.16 There are therefore no material planning considerations which are a barrier to permission being granted in this instance.

Impact on Trees

- 5.17 The proposals involve the loss of a small group of trees identified as G3 within the Tree Survey.
- 5.18 It is proposed to plant 12 replacement trees across the northern site boundary to compensate for the loss. These will comprise a mixture of field maple and hawthorn planted 3 to 4 metres apart. This replacement planting can be secured by condition.
- 5.19 Pre-application advice from the Council's tree officer highlighted the importance of the trees on the railway land beyond the northern site boundary. The proposed extension is sufficiently distant from the canopies of the trees to avoid any interference, and lies outside of their root protection areas. The proposals will not therefore compromise the trees beyond the site boundary.
- 5.20 There are no other material planning considerations which present a barrier to permission being granted in this instance.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The application proposes the extension of an existing and established retail warehouse within an out of centre retail park.
- 6.2 The proposals involve the provision of additional storage space. They do not increase the customer floorspace of the unit, and do not involve any change in the type or nature of goods sold. The proposals would not therefore affect the vitality and viability of existing centres.

- 6.3 The site lies within a predominantly commercial area characterised by manufacturing and retail warehouse buildings. The proposed extension relates well to its context and would not harm the character or appearance of the surrounding area.
- 6.4 The proposals would not harm the amenities enjoyed by neighbouring land users, would not prejudice the safe or efficient use of the highway network and would not be at unacceptable risk from flooding.
- 6.5 The proposals therefore constitute sustainable development as encouraged by the Planning Policy Wales and which complies with Policy R11 of the Newport Local Plan.