Your Ref: **PP-13519073**
Our Ref: HPD/CD/CM/24/116
Date: 12 November 2024

Wrexham County Borough Council
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Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: UNITS 4-6 WYNNSTAY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, RUABON, LL14 6EN

On behalf of our client, Screwfix Direct Limited, we are instructed to submit a planning application for the amalgamation and change of use of the abovementioned premises from Class B1 (Business) to Class B8 (Storage or Distribution), together with associated external alterations.

Accordingly, please find enclosed the following documents which comprise in addition to this letter, the application:

- Duly completed Planning Application Form;
- Completed Certificate B and Copy of Notice as served;
- Site Location Plan at scale 1:1,250 with the site edged in red;
- Existing Floor Plan (Dwg no. DR-I-0020-EX_GA-P3);
- Proposed Floor Plan (Dwg no. DR-I-0021-GA-P3);
- Existing Elevations (Dwg no. DR-I-0022-EX_ELEV-P3);
- Proposed Elevations (Dwg no. DR-I-0023-ELEV-P3);
- Block Plan (Dwg no. DR-I-0026-BLOCK-P3); and
- Screwfix Transport Assessment Form.

The statutory application fee of £460.00 has been paid electronically by card following submission of this application via the Planning Portal.

The following sections of this letter outline the planning history for the site, Screwfix's proposed operation, and an assessment of the proposal against the relevant national and local planning policy.

PLANNING HISTORY

We are aware of the following planning history for the site:

- LPA ref: P/2016/0735 – Outline planning application (with all matters reserved) for mixed use development comprising the erection of 6 no light industrial units (Use B1) (140 m2 floor space per unit), erection of 1 no retail unit (Use A1/A3) (370 m2 floor space. Approved 27 August 2018.

- LPA ref: P/2022/0306 – Erection of 6 no. Industrial units (Class B1). Approved 10 April 2024.

Regulated by RICS

Hybrid Planning & Development Limited is registered in England and Wales No. 10861855.
Registered Office: 463-465 High Street, Lincoln, LN5 8JB.

- LPA ref: P/2024/1040 - Discharge of Conditions 3 (Materials), 5 (Arboricultrual Method Statement), 6 (Landscaping), 9 (Contamination), 15 (Service Delivery Management Plan), 16 (Construction Management Plan), 17 (Biodiversity) And 18 (Broadband Infrastructure) Of Planning Permission P/2022/0306. Pending determination.

It is understood the site recently secured permission for the erection of 6 no. industrial units (Class B1) and is nearing practical completion. As such, Screwfix require planning permission to amalgamate the units and occupy the premises for Class B8 purposes.

Notwithstanding the above, the application site is also currently the subject of a separate planning application (PP-13519089), for the installation of 2 no. external air source heat pump units.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LIMITED

Screwfix Direct Limited comprises a B8 trade counter operation aimed at local building companies. Their products are also sold over the internet, via a catalogue, over the telephone as well as over the trade counter, which typically occupies about 6.1% of the floorspace of a unit, with any individual unit servicing its own local area for each of these methods of purchase. Screwfix brands and products are formulated for the trade professional in terms of quantity and type of goods. Whilst the units are advertised, this is predominantly in the trade press and is directed at tradesmen.

In addition to the trade counter, there is a separate customer collection point for registered 'Trade Plus' account holders. This area equates to about 3.3% of floorspace and is only accessible to registered trades people ordering building products on a regular basis in high quantities. The purpose of the customer collection point is to streamline both their product ordering and collection. This area is not open to general trade customers.

THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS

This planning application has been submitted for the amalgamation and change of use of Units 4-6 Wynnstay Industrial Estate in Ruabon, to Class B8 (Storage or Distribution). In addition, the associated external alterations to the premises include:

Front Elevation	-	1 no. existing roller shutter to be fixed open at 2.4m, new metal stud wall externally clad in 3 layer aluminium dibond panels and new aluminium door with side screen (2100mm (H) x 1200mm (W)) to be installed, both finished in RAL 7015 (Colour Grey);
	-	1 no. existing roller shutter to be retained and utilised as 'goods in' entrance;
	-	1 no. fire exit to be retained;
	-	Existing windows to be covered externally with vinyl Colour Grey (RAL 7015);
	-	2 no. existing doors and 1 no. existing roller shutter to be locked down;
	-	Installation of 1 no. hooped bollard, 1 no. removable bollard and 1 no. fixed bollard to be installed, finished in RAL 3020 (Colour Red);
Rear Elevation	-	1 no. existing fire exit to be retained; and
	-	2 no. existing fire exits to be locked down.

The main footprint and bulk of the existing building is to be unaltered by the proposals as outlined above, with the principal changes made in order to refurbish the building in line with the Screwfix corporate branding, and the applicant's business needs.

A new entrance will be created along the front elevation, ensuring the unit will remain accessible for all, in accordance with the latest Screwfix trade counter specifications. The existing roller shutter will be fixed open at 2.4m and a new metal stud wall externally clad in 3 layer aluminium dibond panels and new aluminium door with side screen (2100mm (H) x 1200mm (W)) will be installed, both finished in RAL 7015 (Colour Grey).

Along the front elevation 1 no. existing roller shutter will be retained and utilised as the 'goods in' entrance

and 1 no. fire exit will be retained, whilst 2 no. existing doors and 1 no. existing roller shutter will be locked shut.

By virtue of the proposals, the existing windows along the front elevation will be covered externally with vinyl finished in RAL 7015 (Colour Grey). It is not considered that obscuring the existing windows would have a detrimental impact on the visual appearance of the building and given the nature of the proposed Class B8 Storage or Distribution use, will ensure that the security of the premises is afforded.

It is also proposed to retain 1 no. fire exit along the rear elevation and lock shut the remaining 2 no. existing fire exits.

The proposed external alterations will not have a detrimental impact on the visual appearance of the building, neighbouring properties or indeed the surrounding area.

The building's main activity will be the supply of building materials to local builders and related services e.g. plumbers, electricians, facilities departments to large organisations such as offices, hospitals, hotels, school and prisons.

Opening hours will be between 7.00am – 8.00pm Monday to Friday (including bank holidays), 7.00am – 6.00pm on Saturdays and 9.00am – 4.00pm on Sundays. The early/late opening is required to serve tradesmen.

The business will employ 12 members of staff on the premises, 4 of which will be full time employed, and an average of three delivery vehicles will visit the site in a normal working week.

Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024), Chapter 5: Productive and Enterprising Places contains current land use planning policy for Wales. It provides the policy framework for the effective preparation of local planning authorities' development plans and confirms at paragraph 5.4.2 that economic land uses include the traditional employment land uses (offices, research and development, industry and warehousing), as well as uses such as retail, tourism, and public services.

Paragraph 5.4.4 continues that *"Wherever possible, planning authorities should encourage and support developments which generate economic prosperity and regeneration"*.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 23: Economic Development (2014)

TAN 23 provides national guidance in regard to planning for economic development within Wales.

Paragraph 1.2.5 states that local planning authorities should recognise market signals and have regard to the need to guide economic development to the most appropriate locations, rather than prevent or discourage such development.

The purpose of the Screwfix operation at Wynnstay Industrial Estate will be to serve the jobbing builder providing building materials that would not be appropriate to stock in a town centre location.

As such, a location such as Wynnstay Industrial Estate is the best location for such a distribution use to occur as it is of appropriate and sufficient size and provides appropriate parking/collection points for builder's vehicles.

The proposed storage and distribution use is entirely appropriate to a settlement the size and function of Ruabon and will make use of the existing premises on site such that there will be no impact on the character of the area by reasons of scale or design.

In addition to the inherent sustainability benefits of occupying an existing building within a sustainable location, by virtue of the proposed amalgamation and change of use, Screwfix Direct Limited will employ 12 members of staff on the premises, 4 of which will be full time employed. It will also help minimise commercial

vehicle journey miles and congestion by providing building products in an easily accessible location.

Given the above, the proposals will provide benefits to the local economy whilst meeting sustainability objectives and will not be to the detriment of the environment or amenities of the area.

Accordingly, the Council are required to look favourably on this application, which seeks to secure sustainable economic growth on a site that is situated within the wider urban area.

COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL PLAN POLICY

The Local Development Plan for Ruabon currently comprises the Wrexham County Borough Local Development Plan (2023) and its accompanying Proposals Map.

On the Proposals Map accompanying the above, the site falls within the Wynnstay Technology Park which is an Employment Area and in accordance with Policy EM1, such areas will be protected for B Use Class employment generating uses.

Access and egress to the site is achieved via Wynnstay Lane, which provides access to the A539, the A483, and beyond. There are also bus stops within 0.2 mile (4 minutes' walk), serving local destinations. Pedestrian infrastructure is well established with all surrounding footways lit.

The proposed number of vehicle movements to the site (including an average of three delivery vehicle movements per week) is entirely appropriate for a B8 use in a normal working day. The premises will also be served by 6 no. dedicated car parking spaces, to the front of the units and in addition to shared surface parking. Accordingly, we do not consider Screwfix's operation of the unit would contribute to traffic congestion and parking problems either in the immediate vicinity of the site or on the wider highway network.

Given that the immediate surrounding area is primarily characterised by a mix of uses including industrial, commercial and residential, it is not considered that the proposal will detract from the environment or amenities of the area. The external alterations associated with the refurbishment are sympathetic to the form and character of the building and are entirely suitable for a location such as Wynnstay Industrial Estate.

Within this context, it is our view that the amalgamation and change of use to Class B8 is acceptable within this location, and subsequently that the proposals are in accordance with the Wrexham County Borough Local Development Plan (2023).

CONCLUSION

Screwfix Direct Limited would make a positive contribution to the commercial and community life of the area providing essential trade counter services to local businesses including plumbers, electricians, builders and facilities departments to large organisations.

The proposal is wholly in compliance with Planning Policy Wales and in accordance with the provisions of the Wrexham County Borough Local Development Plan (2023). As such, we conclude that the amalgamation and change of use with minor external alterations are entirely appropriate in planning policy terms.

We trust that you have sufficient information to determine this application, but should you have any questions or queries in the meantime or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Charlotte Mills
SENIOR PLANNER

Encs.