TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF: JULIE & DEREK RENNIE

MINERA BOX STORAGE

RUTHIN ROAD

MINERA

WREXHAM

LL11 3RD

Change of use of former Builders yard/ Caravan Storage yard to Storage Container yard (RETROSPECTIVE)

SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT

PLANNING ANGEL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANCY
GUARDIAN TO YOUR PROJECT

PAL Ref: 5082 **March 2025**

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2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 PREAMBLE

2.1.1 Planning Angel Ltd (PAL) have been commissioned by Julie and Derek Rennie to prepare a supporting Planning Statement for the retrospective planning application for the change of use of a former builders yard/caravan storage yard to a storage container yard, to accommodate individually privately let general storage units (Class B8), at Minera Box Storage, Ruthin Road, Minera, Wrexham, LL11 3RD.

2.1.2 This statement has been produced to explain the rationale of the proposal and to set out the main planning considerations.

2.1.3 The proposed change of use involves no alterations to site.

2.1.4 This Statement demonstrates how the planning objectives respond to the advice contained within the National Planning Policy Wales (PPW), and the relevant policies of the Wrexham Local Plan.



Source: Google Earth

3 SITE CONTEXT

3.1 THE SITE

3.1.1 The application site is an area of land which forms a yard within an established industrial estate (Five Crosses Industrial Estate). Vehicular access is taken directly off the internal circulatory road within the estate. Immediate neighbours are CJC MOT test centre and Huws Gray building materials.

3.1.2 The site is screened from the Ruthin Road and entrance boundary by palisade fencing and trees, allowing for glimpses of the storage containers and the industrial sheds beyond.

3.1.3 From within the estate the frontage to the site is open and the entrance to the estate secured by a gate which is locked after 5pm.

3.1.4 Within the site are arranged around the perimeter and down the middle, green storage container units each measuring 2400mm wide (elevation with doors) x 6055 long. They are approx 2540mm tall. There is space for vehicle turning and cars to either pull up in front of their container or park centrally in the open space. The site owner retains an area of the old builders yard for storage purposes.

3.1.5 The site has historically been used as a builders yard and then for the storage of caravans as evidenced via aerial photos in section 3 of this report.

3.1.6 The site has been repurposed to secure container storage, with 62 on site. The change of use will provide sustainable storage for local small businesses and individuals. The containers are rented individually, access is controlled by a gate that is locked preventing access into the estate after 5pm.

3.1.7 The applicant has been invited by Wrexham Council officers to regularise a breach. The breach has occurred because during the Covid pandemic the approved use ceased due to the clients' needs changing and the applicant sought a new income stream - so containers were brought on site for general storage units to third parties. The letting of the units has continued.

3.1.8 The lettings are currently on the following basis:

<u>Container usage:</u>

2,3,5,7,22 Family Members Storage attend not more than once a week

4,6,10,11,12,15,16,17,18,19,23,24,25, (9,26) ,28,29,34,35,37,48,57,58,59, (24,25,60,61)

Business usage, attend 1 to 2 times per day (Monday to Friday)

8,13,14,20,21,27,30,31,32,33,36,38,39,40,41,42,43,45,46,49, (50,51)52, (53,54)55, 56,

General public, stored for house move or additional storage. Attend maybe once a week

Empty Units 44 & 47

3.1.9 The principle of the use of the site for storage purposes at this location is weighed in favour in the planning balance when considering the previous historic caravan storage use of the site, the massing of the structure stored on site is similar (caravan to container) and the use of the land for storage purposes is unchanged. The access, parking and turning space is unchanged and fit for purpose.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 CONTEXT

4.1.1 There is no relevant recorded planning history on the planning register.

4.1.2 Aerial photos







Caravans in 2006 and 2009 and 2012







Containers on site before 2018- date

5 POLICY

5.1 PLANNING POLICY WALES (PPW)

5.1.1 The PPW sets out the national planning policies for Wales and how these are expected to be applied. The Framework re-iterates that planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.1.2 The proposed development is located inside a designated employment site. The Welsh Government's objectives for economic development are to enhance the economic success of both urban areas and the countryside. This includes helping businesses to maximise their competitiveness; supporting initiative; encouraging diversity in the local economy; and supporting rural enterprise. The countryside will be protected, and new development or reuse of buildings should be in keeping with its surroundings.

5.2 WREXHAM COUNTY BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) (ADOPTED DECEMBER 2023)

5.2.1 The following LDP policies are relevant to the determination of this application and are considered to align with the principles, aims and objectives of the PPW and are considered to carry significant weight.

Policy SP8: Economic Growth, Employment and Enterprise

5.2.2 To ensure the continued role of the County Borough as a key economic driver in North Wales and the wider region, the Plan will diversify the local economy and widen the economic base by - Safeguarding 25 existing national, regional and locally important industrial sites essential to meeting the future economic growth of the County Borough, which ensures a range and choice of sites co-located with housing in both urban and rural settlements;

5.2.3 One of the objectives of the Plan is to 'support a vibrant, diverse and competitive local economy that provides a range of job opportunities to enable new and existing businesses to grow in Wrexham.

Policy EM1: Protection of Existing Employment Land.

5.2.4 Five Crosses Industrial Estate is listed as an existing employment area where the council will be protected for B Use Class employment generating uses (together with appropriate complementary uses and activities.

5.2.5 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the existing employment areas within the County Borough are protected from non-employment related land uses.

5.2.6 The use on this site is as Class B8 Storage use.

Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations

Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations

Development proposals, where relevant, must:

i. Accord with or enhance the character, local distinctiveness and appearance of the site, existing building(s) and surrounding landscape/ townscape in terms of their siting, layout, scale, height, design, density, use of materials and landscaping;

ii. Not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties/land; and provide a satisfactory standard of amenity for the occupiers/users of the development itself;

iii. Safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land, noise, light or air, or land instability, arising from development;

iv. Take account of personal and community safety and security in their design and layout;

v. Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport use ahead of travel by car;

vi. Not give rise to highway safety, pedestrian safety or parking problems on site or in the locality;

vii. Contribute to low carbon communities through energy efficiency, be designed to minimise the use of non-renewable energy, water and the production of waste both during construction and when in use;

viii. Not increase the risk of flooding but make adequate provision for sustainably dealing with foul and surface water drainage and not result in an unacceptable impact upon the water environment;

ix. On sites which have previously been developed, new development proposals should make use of existing suitable building materials wherever possible for appropriate uses in order to re-use recyclable materials and reduce the amount of imported materials; and

x. Ensure that any risks arising from past coal mining, as indicated on the constraints map, can be adequately managed.*

*The Coal and Development (High Risk) areas identified on the Constraints Map have been defined on the basis of the best information available to the planning authority and are not necessarily exhaustive. Responsibilities for determining the extent and effects of instability, contamination and other risks remain that of the developer, who must ensure that land is suitable for the development proposed'.

5.2.7 This policy addresses the more detailed; site specific issues related to individual planning applications and will be applicable, where relevant to all new development proposals within the County Borough.

5.2.8 Bearing this in mind the following table assesses this land use proposal to the criteria listed in policy DM1.

Criteria	

Accord with or enhance the character, local distinctiveness and appearance of the site, existing building(s) and surrounding landscape/ townscape in terms of their siting, layout, scale, height, design, density, use of materials and landscaping;	The containers are all uniform in size and colour, similar to the industrial units nearby. The are low scale and are not obtrusive. In terms of their siting, layout, scale, height, and landscaping, the facility accords with the character of its setting
Not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties/land; and provide a satisfactory standard of amenity for the occupiers/users of the development itself;	The storage container site does not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring units or businesses the within the vicinity
Safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land, noise, light or air, or land instability, arising from development	There are no adverse pollutants generated from the site
Take account of personal and community safety and security in their design and layout	The site is enclosed from the public realm and has a secure barrier allowing access onto site only for those authorised. The containers are steel and secure by design
Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport use ahead of travel by car	There are options to get to site but alternative means, however the nature of the site requires transportation of quantity or heavy items.
Not give rise to highway safety, pedestrian safety or parking problems on site or in the locality	No highway safety issues, pedestrian safety or parking issues
Contribute to low carbon communities through energy efficiency, be designed to minimise the use of non-renewable energy, water and the production of	No services or utilities on site.

waste both during construction and when in use	
Not increase the risk of flooding but make adequate provision for sustainably dealing with foul and surface water drainage and not result in an unacceptable impact upon the water environment	No foul generation on site, surface water is deal with by infiltration The site is not at risk of flooding
On sites which have previously been developed, new development proposals should make use of existing suitable building materials wherever possible for appropriate uses in order to re-use recyclable materials and reduce the amount of imported materials; and	N/A the containers are placed on top of existing hardcore surfacing, no development required to facilitate the use
Ensure that any risks arising from past coal mining, as indicated on the constraints map, can be adequately managed	This is not an at risk site

Policy T1: Managing Transport Impacts

5.2.9 The purpose of this policy is to encourage the use of the transport hierarchy to manage traffic impacts arising from development. Development should in the first instance be accessible by walking and cycling, then by public transport and finally by private motor car with the approach to managing traffic impacts reflecting this.

5.2.10 Development growth will inevitably lead to an increase in demand for travel and place additional pressure on existing transport services and infrastructure. It is essential therefore that new developments adequately provide for increased demands for travel ensuring as far as is reasonably practicable, identified negative impacts are adequately mitigated through provision of sustainable transport options and supporting highways infrastructure where considered appropriate.

5.2.11 Realistically due to the nature of the business people will be bringing and taking potentially a lot or heavy items from their containers, so car use is most likely. However, there is a bus stop literally outside the site boundary and also a footpath that connects to Coedpoeth, so if they want to deposit or retrieve smaller items they could get to site by alternative means – walking, cycling or bus.



6 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 The relevant development plan policies are contained within the PPW and the relevant policies of the adopted Local Development Plan.

6.1.2 The main planning considerations raised by this planning application are:

- Use – The Principle of Development
- Impact of Development on the Character of the Area
- Impact on Amenity of Occupiers of Nearby Units
- Highway Safety – Adequacy of Access

6.2 USE

6.2.1 The proposal is sought to regularise the unauthorised use of this site for secure storage units.

6.2.2 The land has been used historically as a builders yard since the industrial estate was established and then for B8 general storage for third parties, originally to those who rent what were storage space to park their caravans. Now since post covid the site is used to rent a secure container unit which now are positioned where the caravans used to be.

6.2.3 Visitation to the storage units varies, currently frequency is as follows:

- 5 retained for the personal use of the owner/family and generates not more than once per week traffic movements.
- 2 units are currently empty.
- 28 units are rented to businesses for general storage and are visited 1 to 2 times per day (Monday to Friday).
- 27 units are simply used for the storage of the excess paraphernalia that people are unable to accommodate at home; these units are rarely visited; once a week on average.

6.2.4 The principle of the appropriateness of the presence of storage containers on site in terms of size, form and siting are considered. The status quo remains unchanged in terms of the use of the site to store big objects. It is the object that has changes going from historically caravan storage to container storage.

6.2.5 The visual physical presence of the object is unchanged, and the arrangement around the site is unchanged (around the perimeter and centrally, leaving space for parking).

6.2.6 The change of size and form of the objects on site and the frequency of visitation that needs assessing, together with matters of highway safety that requires consideration.

6.2.7 National and Local objectives for economic development are to enhance the economic success of both urban areas and the countryside. This includes helping businesses to maximise their competitiveness; supporting initiative; encouraging diversity in the local economy; and supporting rural enterprise. The existing business was forced to diversify in order to continue, it has evolved away from storing caravans to offering secure storage containers and now uses the existing site to cater for this storage service provision.

6.2.8 The use involves no changes to the physical infrastructure already on site, and does not introduce significant increase in vehicle trip generation that would generate highway safety issues any different to that experienced by other users through this junction. The caravans would have been moved on and off frequently through the year, some regularly moved and others not. A similar visitation scenario occurs here. Some users might visit every other day and others will visit once a year.

6.3 IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA

6.3.1 The main LDP policies of relevance relating to layout and scale is Policy DM1 in the Local Development Plan. The policy seeks development to respect the scale of surrounding development, its location, siting, and layout make the best use of land, minimise the need to travel, and provide a safe and attractive environment; be of quality and sensitive design suitable to its location.

6.3.2 The reuse of the existing site for a different storage product but still operate as a storage facility, presents little difference other than the visual difference of a caravan to a storage unit. The storage units are grey and blend into the industrialised landscape that surrounds it within an industrial estate. It is surrounded by tin shed all of which are of a greater scale. Visually if an industrial unit was to be positioned on site it would be accepted and present a greater impact on the streetscape. Currently the containers are screened from the public

realm by the palisade fencing and vegetation behind it, offering pass by glimpses and thereby softening any views.

6.3.3 No additional harm to the estate or public realm is generated by the presence of containers on this site. The containers are uniform in colour and size, well maintained and viewed against the setting of the industrial estate buildings and clutter.. thus policies are satisfied.

6.4 Impact on Amenity of Occupiers of Nearby Dwellings

6.4.1 There are no nearby residential properties, and the adjacent uses are other industrial businesses. Each unit has their own boundaries, and the estate is well managed. The use on this site has no bearing on the functionality of adjacent business units.

6.4.2 Visually the containers have been sensitively sited, and sit low within the site.

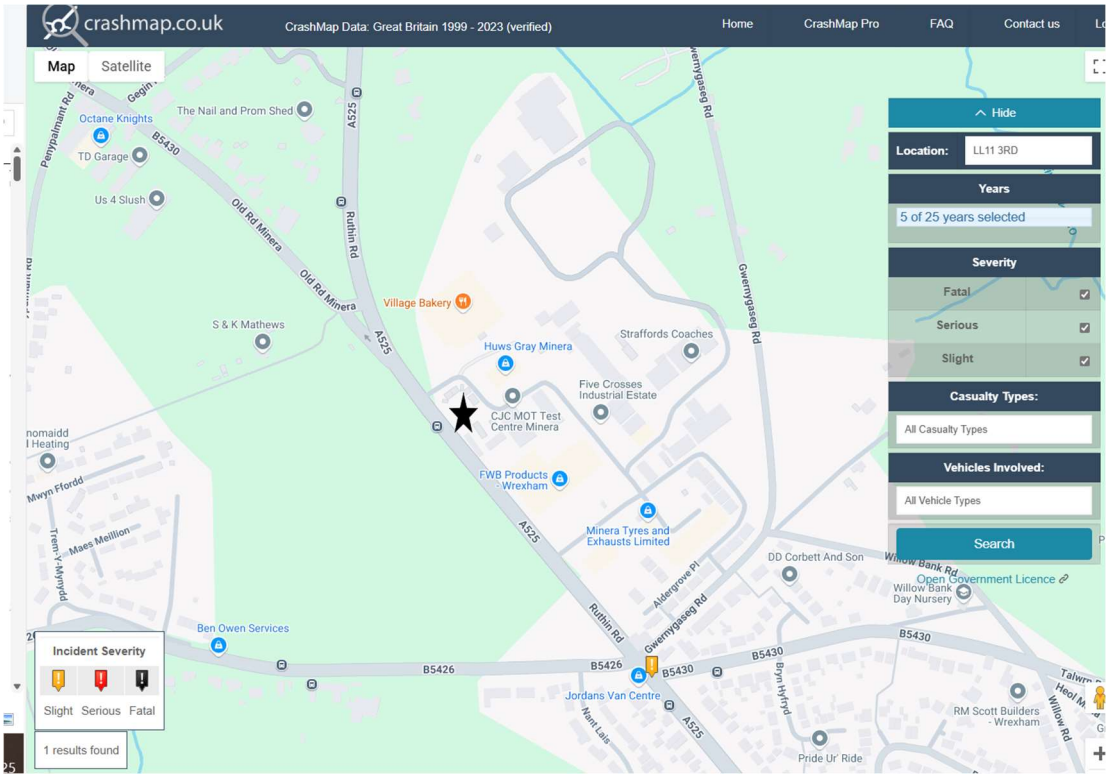
6.4.3 The frequency of visits to the containers vary, but generally infrequent. Notwithstanding, visiting units does not generate noise disturbance, any noise from vehicles accessing the site is muffled by the general traffic noise generated from within the estate or the adjacent road (MOT garage next to site). The units all operate varying opening times, and an unrestricted access policy on this site will have no adverse implications to neighbour amenity.

6.4.4 In terms of visual impact, taking account of the surrounding buildings, the nature of the use and the built form, it is considered that the general storage use is an acceptable use at this location.

6.4.5 It is considered that the proposed change of use, given the nature of the use, will not have a detrimental impact (visual or amenity) to the surrounding area.

6.5 Parking & Highway Safety

6.5.1 There is ample parking for the storage users, with communal parking within the large courtyard area and it is anticipated that the majority of the customers would park up and walk to their unit, unless undertaking the initial filling or clearance of the unit. Should they drive up to their unit, there is ample unrestricted space to manoeuvre. There should be no adverse traffic impacts generated by this use.



6.5.2 Crashmap shows no accidents at the entrance to the industrial estate closest to the site and it is concluded that the junction has operated in an adequate, safe, manner for a significant length of time. Any increase in traffic generation is of a magnitude considered insignificant when compared to the nature and volume of other traffic movements through the junction onto Ruthin Road (A525).

OTHER MATTERS

Flood risk

Results for the area within 10 metres of: HUWS GRAY MINERA, FIVE CROSSES INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MINERA, WREXHAM, LL11 3RD

Very low risk	**Flooding from rivers** Risk less than 0.1% chance each year More about very low risk from rivers
Very low risk	**Flooding from the sea** Risk less than 0.1% chance each year More about very low risk from the sea
Medium risk	**Flooding from surface water and small watercourses** Risk between 1% and 3.3% chance each year More about medium risk from surface water and small watercourses

6.5.3 The Natural Resources Wales flood risk map identifies the site as being outside the Flood Risk Area, as the site will be used for parking and storage it is therefore classed as none highly vulnerable development.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 SUMMARY

7.1.1 In accordance with policy DM1, the development harmonise with the site and surroundings in terms of the siting, scale, design, layout, use of space, materials, and external appearance. The development does not have a significant adverse impact on the safety and amenity of nearby businesses. The development does not have an unacceptable effect on the highway network arising from traffic generation.

7.1.2 The containers and continued use at this site for B8 storage is considered to be in accordance with policies.

7.1.3 We therefore respectfully request that this application is granted without delay.