
KRONOSPAN, CHIRK

REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LOG OFFLOADING FACILITY AND FLAKER FACILITY AND REFURBISHMENT OF THE EXISTING CHIPPER

PLANNING STATEMENT ADDENDUM

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Chester Office | Well House Barns | Chester Road | Bretton |
Chester | CH4 0DH

South Manchester Office | Camellia House | 76 Water Lane |
Wilmslow | SK9 5BB

t 0844 8700 007 | e enquiries@axisped.co.uk

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Planning Application Drawings

Drawing Number	Drawing Title
2195-01-01 Rev C	Statutory Plan (Planning Application Boundary)
2195-01-02 Rev C	Existing Site Layout
2195-01-03 Rev C	Proposed Site Layout
2195-01-04 Rev C	Proposed Elevations
Figure 1 Rev C	Site Location Plan

Appendices

Appendix A – LVIA Update (including updated photomontages)

Appendix B – Colour Study

Appendix C - Noise Impact Assessment Update

FOREWORD

This document provides an addendum to the Planning Statement submitted in support of a planning application (Reference P/2017/0699) for the development of a log delivery and transfer system, and new building to house a replacement chipping and flaking facility within the existing Kronospan manufacturing facility on land off Holyhead Road, Chirk in Wrexham.

This addendum describes modifications made to the proposal in light of comments received during the consultation process on the submitted application.

Supporting this Planning Statement addendum is a revised elevation, section and plan drawing, a revised Noise Assessment and Landscape and Visual Assessment which includes a series of visualisations illustrating the revised proposal.

The Proposed Development forms part of an ongoing improvement programme to deliver environmental improvements at the site and ensure the long term economic viability of the manufacturing facility. The ongoing improvement programme is referred to as Kronospan Vision 2020.

Kronospan Vision 2020 is an investment programme which will modernise and enhance the site over the coming three years. The forward investment programme has a total cost of £150 million. The plans will enable the company to reduce its environmental impact, improve operational efficiency and offer new business and revenue streams.

Kronospan is an important local and national business. It is the 6th largest manufacturing business in Wales and provides direct employment for over 630 people of which 90% live within 10 miles of the site. As such ensuring that the Kronospan site in Chirk remains a competitive and sustainable business is important to the local and national economy.

It is Kronospan's intention to ensure that the Chirk manufacturing site remains a world leading production site. Furthermore, as a result of the Kronospan Vision 2020 investment and development programme Kronospan will be able to deliver continued environmental improvements at the Site.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF THE ADDENDUM

1.1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1.1 Axis was appointed by Kronospan Ltd (hereafter referred to as Kronospan), the Applicant, to prepare and submit planning application reference P/2017/0699 to Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC). This application was submitted on 10th August 2017.
- 1.1.2 The development proposed in application P/2017/0699 comprises the construction of a log delivery and transfer system and building to house a replacement wood chipping and flaking system and demolition of existing debarking and chipping facilities. The revised proposal now seeks permission for the Development of a Log Offloading Facility and Flaker Facility and Refurbishment of the Existing Chipper (hereafter referred to as 'the Proposed Development').
- 1.1.3 The development is proposed at Kronospan Ltd, Holyhead Road, Chirk, Wrexham (hereafter referred to as the site) in the same location as the original proposal. This site is located adjacent to the Llangollen Canal which is designated as the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS) and as a Scheduled Monument.
- 1.1.4 On the 28th September 2017 the World Heritage Site Planning, Landscape and Conservation Delivery Group (hereafter referred to as the WHS Group) provided a consultation response to WCBC in respect of application P/2017/0699. Within their consultation response the WHS Group expressed concerns about the proposal in terms of the impact on the WHS. Subsequently, WCBC requested that Kronospan look at options to reduce the visual impact of the development and its impact upon the WHS.
- 1.1.5 As a result, several modifications have been made to the proposal and the purpose of this Planning Statement Addendum is to provide details of these. Following this introduction, Section 2.0 provides details of the consultation which has taken place since the original application was submitted. Section 3.0 details the modifications made to the Proposed Development in light of the consultation comments received. Section 4.0 provides a revised description of the proposal which replaces the description provided in the Planning Statement submitted originally. Section 5.0 details the

environmental effects with potential to arise from the revised Proposed Development and Section 6.0 provides a conclusion to the addendum.

2.0 CONSULTATION

- 2.1.1 In order to fully understand and assist in addressing the concerns surrounding the Proposed Development in its original form, Kronospan have liaised with the WHS Planning, Landscape and Conservation Delivery Group (the “WHS Delivery Group”), WCBC and the Canal and River Trust.
- 2.1.2 Kronospan attended a meeting with WCBC and a representative of the WHS Delivery Group on 19th December 2017. At this meeting the effects of the original proposal on the WHS were discussed.
- 2.1.3 It was agreed that Kronospan would review the proposal and identify opportunities to reduce the scale / visual impact of the facility from the WHS. It was also suggested that Kronospan undertake a colour study to ascertain if the use of colour could help reduce the visual impact of the development.
- 2.1.4 The potential for planting along the canal was also discussed, consistent with the proposals in the Long Term Landscaping Strategy (Axis, May 2017). It was agreed that Kronospan would approach the Canal and Rivers Trust (CRT) to ascertain the potential to undertake planning along the canal where visibility of the factory, and the proposed development, is greatest.
- 2.1.5 Following the meeting Axis contacted the Canal and River Trust on behalf of Kronospan to discuss the potential for planting along the canal. Despite making contact a number of times Axis have not received a response from CRT. Kronospan remain open to engaging in discussions with CRT and, as set out in the Long Term Landscaping Strategy, Kronospan would be willing to undertake planting and subsequent management of new vegetation along the section of the canal identified as potentially benefiting from additional screening.
- 2.1.6 Following a revision to the design of the original proposal and having undertaken a colour study, Kronospan met with WCBC and the WHS Delivery Group on 27th February 2018. This meeting was also attended by members of CADW and the CRT. At this meeting Kronospan presented the modifications using visual aids including updated photomontages (contained in Appendix A). No adverse feedback with regard to the revised proposals was received at this meeting.

2.1.7 WCBC have confirmed that they would be happy to accept the revised proposal as a revision to the submitted application. This addendum document forms part of the revised application.

3.0 MODIFICATIONS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The modifications made to the original proposal can be summarised as follows:

- Reduction in the scale and height of the development; and
- Modification to the colour of the cladding.

3.1.2 As a result of the proposed modification it is not deemed necessary for planting to be undertaken along the canal to mitigate the visual impact of the proposals. However, as indicated above, Kronospan remain willing to undertake planting along the canal subject to agreement with CRT as this would provide benefits in terms of screening other elements of the Kronospan manufacturing facility from users of the canal.

3.1.3 The modifications to the scheme are to be considered in the following paragraphs.

3.2 Scale and Height

3.2.1 The maximum height of the flaker building has been reduced from 21.1m to 11.5m. As such the revised proposal is the same height as the existing warehouses on the site. The widest façade has reduced in length from 85m to 66m. The gross external floorspace of the Offloading and Flaker building has reduced from 4,237m² to 2,640m².

3.2.2 These reductions in scale have been achieved by reducing the storage space within the building and removing the proposal to house a new chipper within the building.

3.2.3 Whilst this has necessitated operational compromises from Kronospan the revised proposal is considered to be acceptable to enable the business to operate an automated offloading and flaking facility, which were the primary drivers for the project.

3.2.4 In relation to the chipper Kronospan have decided to refurbish the existing chipper facility instead of relocating it within the new building. As part of this upgrade the cladding of the existing facility will be replaced with noise

insulative cladding in order to reduce the noise impact of the chipping process. As such the overall project would still achieve reductions in offsite noise effects, as described within Appendix C.

- 3.2.5 The effect of the changes to the scale and height of the building is apparent from the photomontages contained in Appendix A. As shown on the visualisations from viewpoints N and M (i.e. locations along the canal towpath), the visibility of the Proposed Development from the WHS has been dramatically reduced such that the development is barely appreciable from the canal.

3.3 Colour

- 3.3.1 The original proposal set out that the buildings would be coloured goosewing grey. At the request of the WHS Delivery Group a colour study has been undertaken and is contained in Appendix B. This study has applied colours including goosewing grey (RAL 080 70 05), dark 'quartz' grey (RAL 080 50 20), mid 'camouflage' green (RAL 110 50 10) and dark 'olive' green (RAL 100 30 20) to the development when viewed from three selected locations, two along the canal and one from an elevated viewpoint to the east of the site.
- 3.3.2 The colour study identified that the use of 'olive' green would help reduce the visual effects of the Proposed Development. This is most clearly observed from Viewpoint E to the east of the site. From this viewpoint the use of olive green cladding would mitigate the effect of the northward extension of the facility.
- 3.3.3 From viewpoints within the WHS (viewpoints M and N), the visibility of the Proposed Development is also reduced through the application of an 'olive' green colour to the buildings. Albeit the reduced scale of the building means that only glimpsed views of the building are possible through foreground vegetation.
- 3.3.4 From the WHS the crane arm would be viewed in the context of existing goosewing grey coloured equipment and machinery which rise above the tree line. The alternative colours have therefore not been applied to the crane arm because it is considered that when coloured grey, this element would blend with the existing plant and equipment it would sit amongst. Put

simply, the crane arm would potentially stand out if it were a different colour to the other pieces of equipment which are also visible from the same viewpoints within the WHS.

3.4 Planting along the Llangollen Canal

- 3.4.1 The Kronospan site is intermittently visible along the Llangollen Canal at locations where there are breaks in the trees which screen the site. Kronospan has offered to undertake tree planting along the canal at these locations. The proposed planting is based on the landscaping strategy for the site (*Long Term Landscape Strategy, May 2017*). However, Kronospan would need to agree planting with the CRT before it could be implemented. At the time of writing, Kronospan had not received any correspondence from the Canal and River Trust in response to multiple requests to discuss this matter.
- 3.4.2 If planting was to be undertaken along the section of the canal identified within the *Long Term Landscape Strategy* this would further help to mitigate the glimpsed views of the Proposed Development. The planting would also help to screen other development within the Kronsopan site.
- 3.4.3 Kronospan shall continue to pursue the provision of planting in the areas identified. However, the planting is not considered essential in relation to the Proposed Development as the reduction in scale and use of an alternative cladding colour has significantly reduced the visibility of the development from the canal / WHS.

3.5 Modifications Conclusion

- 3.5.1 The result of the dramatic reduction in the height and scale of the Proposed Development, and proposed use of dark green cladding, is that the development is barely visible from the WHS. The application of dark green cladding also reduces the perceived visual extension of the site to the north when viewed from Green Lane. As such, it is considered that the modifications are capable of addressing the WHS Group's and WCBC's concerns in terms of the visual impacts of the Proposed Development on the WHS.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE REVISED PROPOSAL

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The description of the Proposed Development has been revised to incorporate the proposed modifications detailed in Section 3.0. The revised description is provided in the following paragraphs.

4.2 Development Components

4.2.1 The Proposed Development comprises the following key elements:

- The installation of a log delivery and transfer system comprising a rail frame with grab cranes and a log infeed system;
- A building to house flaker equipment, along with associated conveyers to transfer wood chip to the consented storage silos; and
- The refurbishment of the existing chipper.

4.3 Layout and Design of the Proposed Development

4.3.1 The layout and elevations of the Proposed Development are shown on Drawings 2195-01-03 Rev A and 2195-01-04 Rev A. The planning application covers an area of 0.87ha and includes the development of a building with gross external floorspace of 2,640m².

4.3.2 The flaker building and log delivery and transfer system would be located to the east of and adjacent to the rail siding, to the north of the new wood chip storage silos. The flaker building would be 11.5m in height. The log delivery and transfer system would be located to the north of the flaker building, alongside the rail siding, and would comprise two grab cranes mounted on a new rail system adjacent to the rail siding track, and a single conveyor line located within the footprint of the new rail system. This system would be used to transfer logs from rail cars on to a conveyor which would feed them into the flaker building.

4.3.3 The Proposed Development would be located close to existing established structures within the northern portion of the Kronospan site. The Proposed Development differs from the nearby structures in that it comprises a large building (flaker building) with a flat façade, rather than being a piece of

machinery or equipment (the most common structures in this part of the site). A colour study has been conducted to identify the preferred colour to reduce the visual impact of the log offloading and flaker building. In light of the colour study it is proposed that the building would be clad in olive green (RAL 6003 or similar) coloured steel sandwich, powder coated panel. However, if considered appropriate WCBC may wish to attach a planning condition requiring a scheme to be submitted to agree the cladding colour.

4.3.4 The grab crane would be most visible from the WHS where it would be viewed in the context of existing pieces of machinery which are coloured goosewing grey. The grab crane is therefore proposed to be coloured goosewing grey (RAL 080 70 05 BS 10A05) or similar to enable it to blend in with the existing structures on site. There is considered no benefit in colouring the crane in olive green.

4.3.5 A series of photomontages are contained in Appendix A that illustrate the Proposed Development from a number of key locations in the vicinity of the site.

4.3.6 The existing chipper would be refurbished to provide a modernised chipping facility. The chipper facility would be re-clad with noise insulative cladding as part of the refurbishment. The noise assessment contained at Appendix C proposes that the acoustic cladding used on the building should provide insulated double skinned cladding to achieve external noise level not exceeding 70dBA @ 1m (apart from conveyor opening area).

4.4 Proposed Site Operations

4.4.1 At present round wood logs are delivered to the site by rail and HGV. The rail carriages and HGVs are unloaded using a series of diesel driven front loaders. The logs are then transported into the logyard for storage. When required for production, the logs are moved again by front loaders to the existing debarking, hacking and chipping facilities.

4.4.2 The new log offloading and transfer system would involve round wood being unloaded from the train carriages and HGVs by one of two cranes mounted on a rail system that runs parallel to the rail siding. The crane grabs would deliver the logs onto a conveyor that would feed in to the flaker building.

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- 4.4.3 The building would contain a series of machines that would be used to debark and flake the logs. The flaked wood would then be conveyed to the storage silos to the south of the building (Planning Permission Reference P/2016/0219).

4.5 Construction

- 4.5.1 The general construction sequence of the Proposed Development would involve the following stages:

- site preparation including slab breakout;
- formation of foundations;
- building and steelwork erection / modifications;
- installation of plant and equipment;
- electrical and controls installation;
- fire detection and protection systems installation; and
- testing and commissioning of the new crane grab rail line, conveyor and and flaking equipment.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

5.1 Noise

- 5.1.1 The Noise Assessment completed to inform the planning application for the original scheme has been updated to reflect the proposed modifications to the scheme. The updated Noise Assessment is contained within Appendix C.
- 5.1.2 The noise from the operation of the existing chipper plant is shown to be one of the main contributors to existing noise levels at sensitive receptors. Instead of relocating the chipper within the new building, as originally proposed, the existing chipper would be refurbished as part of the Proposed Development. This refurbishment would involve improving the cladding of the chipper building to reduce noise impact.
- 5.1.3 The updated Noise Assessment assessed the noise impact at the nearest sensitive receptors around the site. The noise contribution from the existing chipper plant is predicted to range between 28dB and 47dB LAeq during daytime and night-time periods at nearest sensitive receptors. By way of comparison, the background sound levels at night-time (i.e. lowest likely) vary between 40dB and 60dB LA90 with residual LAeq levels typically between 43dB and 60dB.
- 5.1.4 Acoustic cladding would be provided to the flaker building in the form of an insulated double skinned cladding to achieve an external noise level not exceeding 70dBA @ 1m (apart from conveyor opening area).
- 5.1.5 The results of the updated Noise Assessment show that the Proposed Development would result in a general reduction in noise contributory levels at sensitive receptors (i.e. reduction of 2dB to 6dB) and that the magnitude of the impact during daytime or night-time would be a low impact. The noise from the operation of the Proposed Development would result in noise levels complying with all relevant standards for noise at the nearest sensitive receptors.
- 5.1.6 As the Proposed Development would result in a reduction in noise from the site it would not have any adverse cumulative effects when considered cumulatively with other proposed developments at the site.

5.2 Landscape

- 5.2.1 An update to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken and is contained at Appendix A. The purpose of the updated assessment is to identify and report any changes to the conclusions of the 2017 LVIA that would result from proposed revised design.
- 5.2.2 Updated photomontages have been produced to demonstrate how the modified development would appear from the 14 viewpoints used in the assessment. The revised photomontages are also contained in Appendix A.
- 5.2.3 The revised photomontages show the baseline view and the view of the revised proposal clad in olive green cladding, the colour considered to provide the development with the most recessive appearance (see Section 3.3).
- 5.2.4 The reduced height of the revised 2018 proposals would result in a corresponding reduction in their visibility from the surrounding area. The use of the more recessive olive green coloured cladding would also generally reduce the prominence of the proposed new buildings. At none of the viewpoints included in the 2017 LVIA would visual effects increase as a result of the revised proposals, and at six out of the fourteen viewpoints, visual effects would be less. No viewpoints would experience significant visual effects.
- 5.2.5 The effects of the revised proposals would be similar in nature to the effects identified in the original assessment, namely that the Proposed Development would be introduced into an extensive existing industrial site, where other similar and larger structures are already present, and that in such a context, its presence would be unremarkable. Given the lower height of the proposed structures, and the use of the more recessive olive green cladding, the influence of the Proposed Development as a component part of the Kronospan Site would be incrementally less, and its contribution to the influence of the Kronospan Site upon the surrounding landscape would also be incrementally less. The effects upon landscape character would not be significant.

5.3 Cultural Heritage

- 5.3.1 The Cultural Heritage Appraisal originally submitted was based on the assessment of a larger, more imposing scheme. The assessment set out that to the limited extent that views from the setting of the canal contribute to the heritage significance of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS and Scheduled Monument, these views would only be very slightly diminished by the original proposal resulting in a negligible adverse effect.
- 5.3.2 Despite the assessment presented with the application the WHS Delivery Group was of the view that the visual effects of chipper and flaker building from the canal would be detrimental to the setting of the WHS.
- 5.3.3 As described above the revised proposal is of a significantly reduced scale.
- 5.3.4 Where the revised proposal could be viewed from the canal it would be far less visible than the original proposal due to the reduced height, and the use of recessive colouring. The buildings would be largely screened by vegetation and as concluded in the LVIA addendum (Appendix A) the visual effects would be negligible.
- 5.3.5 Accordingly, the revised proposals would have less of a visual impact than the original scheme considered in the Cultural Heritage Appraisal. On this basis the conclusion of the original Heritage Appraisal is considered to remain valid i.e. the heritage significance of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS and Scheduled Monument would not be significantly affected by the revised proposals.

5.4 Environmental Effects Conclusion

- 5.4.1 The environmental effects with potential to arise from the revised proposed development have been considered with regard to noise, landscape and cultural heritage. The Proposed Development is considered to be acceptable in terms of environmental effects, and to be in line with the policy assessment provided in the Planning Statement submitted with the original application.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 Modifications have been made to the Proposed Development. It is considered that these modifications enable the concerns of the WHS Group and WCBC to be addressed in terms of the visual impact of the Proposed Development on the WHS and the associated Buffer Zone.
- 6.1.2 As with the original scheme it is concluded that there would be no significant environmental effects likely to arise from the Proposed Development.
- 6.1.3 The Proposed Development is considered to be acceptable in the context of the relevant planning policy, in line with the policy appraisal contained in the original Planning Statement.
- 6.1.4 Accordingly, planning permission should be granted without delay.