



KRONOSPAN, CHIRK

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RAW BOARD STORE

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

August 2017



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FOREWORD

On 1 June 2009, the Welsh Government introduced a requirement for planning applications for major development to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (DAS). The legislative requirement is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016 (2016 No. 59 (W. 29)).

Design and Access Statements are intended to be a tool to explain the design rationale for a development proposal. Statements typically include a written description and justification of the development proposal and may contain photographs, maps and drawings. The level of detail required will vary depending on the complexity of the proposal.

This document provides a description of the design and access issues considered during the design of the Proposed Development of a raw board store comprising an 11.5 metre vertical extension to an existing building at the heart of the Kronopsan site. The aim of this statement is to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposal including the accessibility, environmental sustainability, character, community safety and movement within the development, and how these issues have been addressed.

In preparing this DAS, consideration has been given to the following documents:

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9, November 2016);
- Technical Advice Note 12: Design (TAN12) (2016) and accompanying Guidance on Design and Access Statements (2016);
- Design Commission for Wales (2014) Design and Access Statements in Wales;
- Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011;
- Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028 ‘Preferred Strategy’ (2016);
- Local Planning Guidance Note 33: Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal World Heritage Site; and
- Welsh Assembly Government leaflet: Design and Access Statements¹.

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/desandaccess/?lang=en>

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of the Application

- 1.1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application made by Kronospan Limited (hereafter referred to as Kronospan) for the development of a raw board store comprising an 11.5 metre vertical extension to part of an existing building.

1.2 The Site & Its Context

- 1.2.1 The location for the Proposed Development is within the existing Kronospan manufacturing site. The Kronospan site is located on land adjacent to Holyhead Road (the B5070), Chirk and covers a total area of approximately 40 hectares.
- 1.2.2 The Kronospan site comprises a number of large industrial process buildings including air emissions stacks, storage areas for raw materials, warehouse buildings for manufactured products, offices and car parking. The Proposed Development would be located centrally within the site, amongst existing large industrial style buildings.
- 1.2.3 A number of other process buildings are also located in the northern half of the site including: a saw mill; formalin plant and the secondary product manufacturing facility (Kronoplus) which produces laminate flooring and worktops.
- 1.2.4 The site car park, reception building, weighbridge and main site offices are located in the south eastern corner of the site to the south of the MDF/Particleboard manufacturing buildings.
- 1.2.5 The western perimeter of the Kronospan site is formed by the Shrewsbury to Chester railway. Improved railway siding facilities have been constructed within the Kronospan site to enable an increased volume of timber to be imported by rail. The Llangollen Canal is located to the west of the railway line. Water is abstracted from the canal for use in the manufacturing process. The eastern perimeter of the site is formed by Holyhead Road (B5070). An earth bund, planted with trees, has been developed along the

eastern perimeter of the site in order to reduce the visibility of the site operations from neighbouring properties on Holyhead Road.

- 1.2.6 A sewerage pumping station and one residential property, owned by Kronospan, are located to the immediate north of the site. To the immediate south of the site is the Mondelez (Cadbury's) factory and the Chirk recreational ground.
- 1.2.7 The main residential area of Chirk is located to the east of the site with residential properties lining the majority of the eastern side of Holyhead Road. Chirk town centre is located approximately 500m to the south east of the site.
- 1.2.8 The wider area beyond the urban settlement of Chirk is dominated by agricultural fields and woodland. Chirk Castle and its grounds are located to the west of the site, beyond the Llangollen Canal.
- 1.2.9 The site location is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Site Location

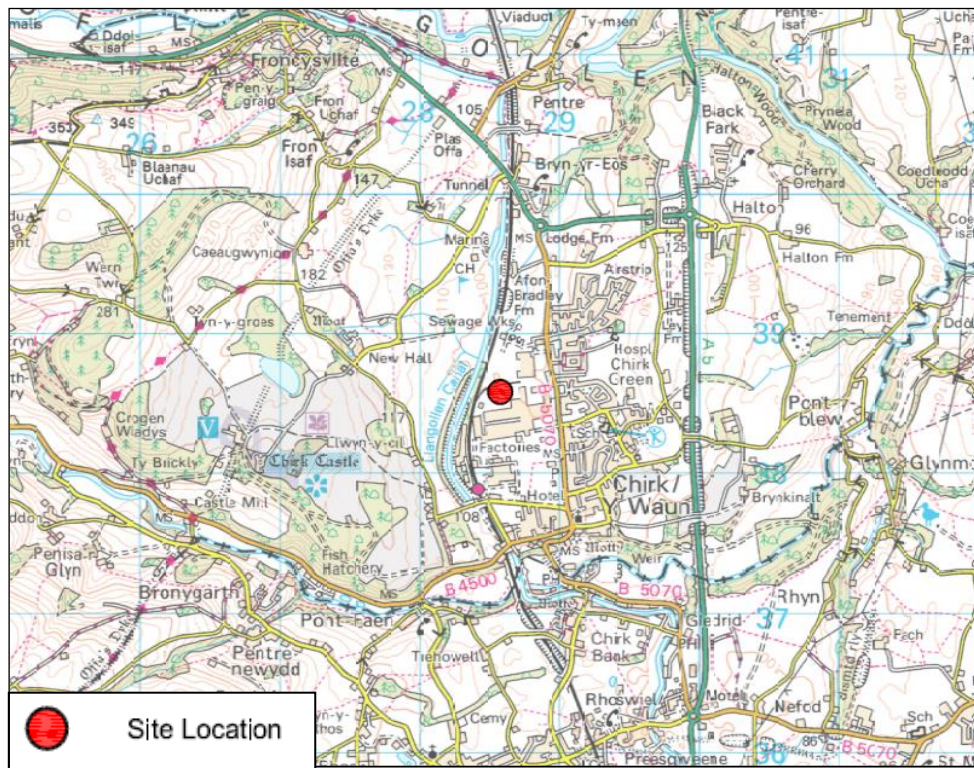
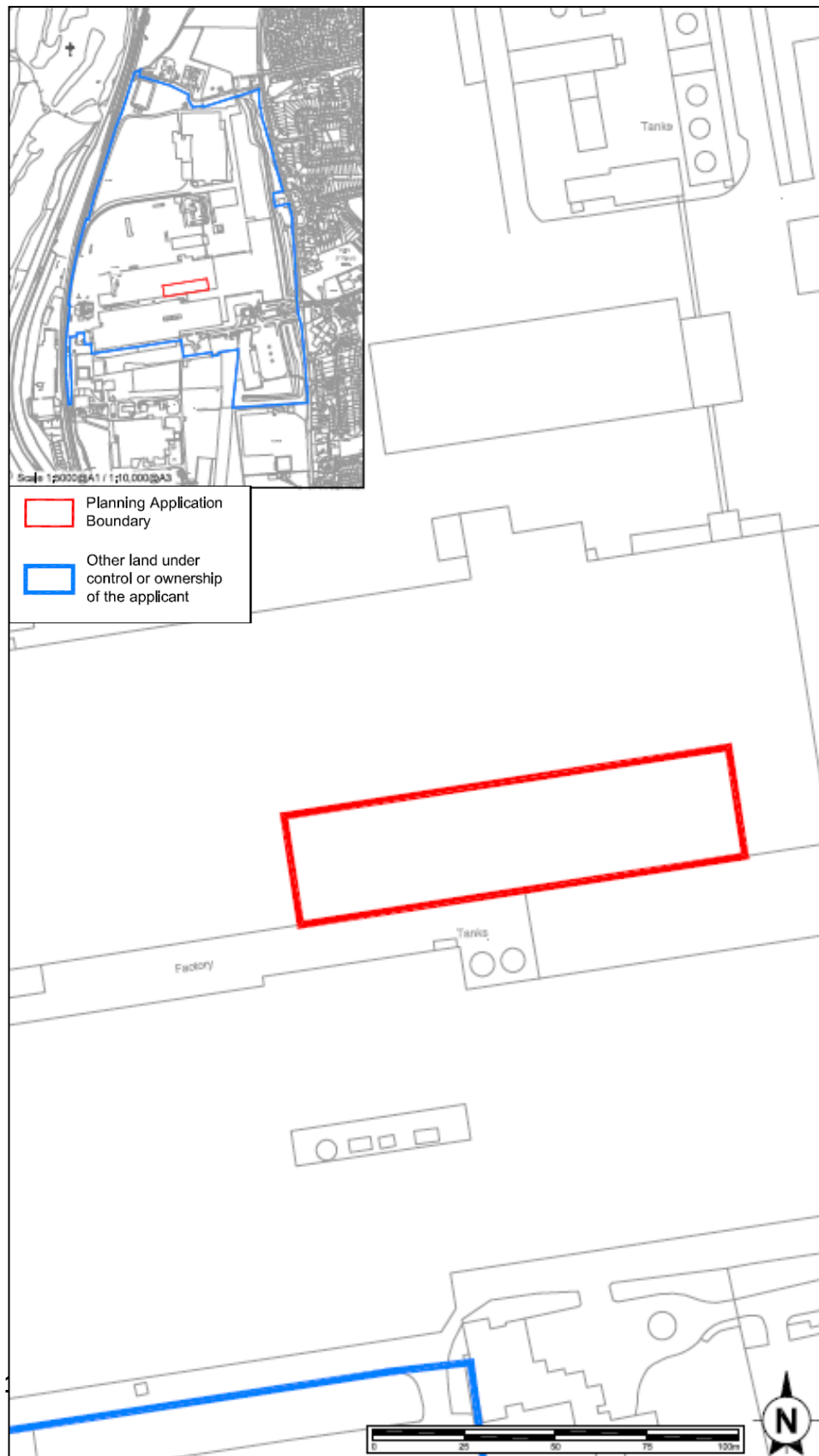


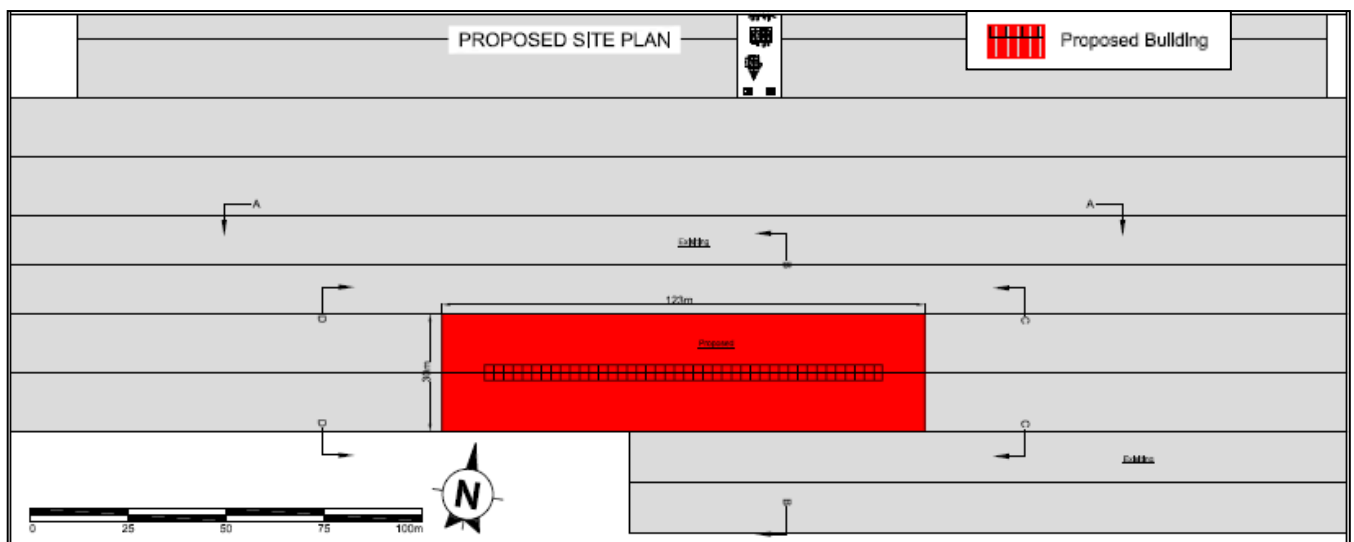
Figure 2: Planning Application Boundary



1.4 Proposed Development

- 1.4.1 Section 2.0 of the Planning Statement (PS) provides a detailed description of the layout and design of the Proposed Development. It describes the processes that would take place at the facility and includes a description of the construction methods involved in delivering the development and outlines the need and benefits of the scheme. The layout of the Proposed Development is shown on Figure 3 below.
- 1.4.2 The Proposed Development comprises the vertical extension of a 123m x 30m area of the existing manufacturing building. The proposed extension is 11.5m high and would feature a flat roof and skylight windows.
- 1.4.3 The raw board storage building is required to provide an essential upgrade to the existing storage facilities by providing additional capacity at the site for the storage of raw board. Along with the other developments taking place at the site as part of Kronospan 2020, the Proposed Development would contribute to efficiencies being made in the manufacturing process.

Figure 3: Proposed Site Layout



2.0 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

2.1 Vehicular Access and Movement to the Site

- 2.1.1 The Proposed Development would not result in any change to the existing site access arrangements and would not result in any change to the current number of vehicles entering and leaving the site other than for a short duration during the construction period.
- 2.1.2 The site is accessed via a T-junction with Holyhead Road (B5070) which runs in a north south direction to the east of the site. The B5070 meets the A5 approximately 1.5km to the north of the site via a roundabout junction, known as Whitehurst Roundabout. Approximately 1km to the east of this roundabout the A5 forms a junction with the A483. The A483/A5 provide links north to Chester, west to Llangollen and south to Shrewsbury. To the south of the site access the B5070 leads to the A5 via Chirk town centre, this route is restricted to non-HGV traffic.

2.2 Vehicular and Automated Access and Movement Within the Site

- 2.2.1 The main considerations with regard to vehicular and automated access and movement within the site is the safety of those working at the site and the efficiencies which can be made with regards to the manufacturing process.
- 2.2.2 The Proposed Development would not result in additional vehicular movements within the site. Raw board would be transferred from the board presses via automated handling and conveying systems, this arrangement represents a significant safety improvement for those working at the site from the existing situation involving the use of vehicles to manoeuvre manufactured boards within the manufacturing and storage buildings.

2.3 Pedestrian Access and Movement

- 2.3.1 The arrangements for pedestrian access at the site are carefully considered to create as safe a working environment as possible for those working at and visiting the site. Pedestrian routes are clearly identified within the site and all pedestrians are required to wear appropriate high visibility clothing.

3.0 DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The Welsh Government's Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design was published in March 2016 and provides the objectives of a development with regard to character. These are:

- “sustaining or enhancing local character;
- promoting legible development;
- promoting a successful relationship between public and private space;
- promoting quality, choice and variety; and
- promoting innovative design.”

3.1.2 A Heritage Appraisal and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the effects of the Proposed Development on the local landscape character and on the assets of heritage value in the vicinity of the site. The Heritage Appraisal focuses on the visual interaction of the Proposed Development on nearby designated heritage assets and follows the assessment principles set out in Planning Policy Wales Edition 9 (2016) and TAN 24 The Historic Environment.

3.1.3 Local planning policies and local planning guidance have also been considered with regards to the influence of the Proposed Development on local landscape character. The relevant local policy and guidance is identified as follows:

- The Development Plan - Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 (February 2005)
 - Policy GDP1: Development Objectives
 - Policy EC7: Conservation Areas
- Local Planning Guidance Note No. 26 – Landscape and Industrial Development
- Local Planning Guidance Note 33 - Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal World Heritage Site

3.1.4 A detailed appraisal of the development within the context of these policies and guidance is provided in the Planning Statement.

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- 3.1.5 Based on a detailed assessment of the site, the Proposed Development is considered to meet the above objectives and policies due to the context of the site and through the incorporation of design solutions, as described below.

3.2 Character and Context

- 3.2.1 The Proposed Development would be located within the established Kronospan site, which covers an area of approximately 40 hectares at the western edge of Chirk. The site includes various buildings/structures, timber stock piles and items of plant pertaining to existing on-site operations. Some of the buildings are large in mass and height and include tall and bulky chimney stacks. The tallest existing structure on the site is the combined heat and power (CHP) biomass plant stack which is 70m in height.
- 3.2.2 The site has been in operation since the 1970s. A considerable expansion of the site took place during the 1980s, when an adjacent factory was acquired by Kronospan. The Proposed Development is part of an ongoing improvement programme to deliver environmental improvements at the site and ensure the long term economic viability of the manufacturing facility.
- 3.2.3 The existing Kronospan site is a notable component of the local landscape. Its presence exerts a particular influence in the vicinity of Chirk, where the land rises to both east and west, creating a shallow valley. Beyond this, the contribution of the site to landscape character is very limited; with both topography and tree cover restricting its influence to occasional longer views. Proposed Development Proposed Development

3.3 Layout

- 3.3.1 The location of the Proposed Development within the site has been dictated by the location of the existing storage building. The existing storage building which is proposed to be extended is located adjacent to the raw board production building.
- 3.3.2 Other reasons for the proposed layout configuration include:
- ensuring the proposed building and plant meet process requirements;

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- minimising the footprint of the facility;
 - establishing a logical and efficient process layout for the buildings; and
 - location close to the raw board production area.

3.4 Scale

- 3.4.1 The proposed raw board storage building has been sized to accommodate the required additional storage capacity. An application for the development of a board store was refused in September 2016 (Reference CHIP/2016/0534) because Wrexham County Borough Council considered that the development, by virtue of its scale, height, massing and sitting would have an adverse impact upon the character and setting of the World Heritage Site, the nearby Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Chirk Castle. To address this concern, the height of the extension has been reduced by 3m and the length of the extension has been reduced by 27m. This represents a 20% reduction in the height and an 18% reduction in the length of the Proposed Development from the previous refused proposal.
- 3.4.2 This reduction in the dimensions of the Proposed Development has significantly decreased its impact upon the local landscape including the features listed by Wrexham County Borough Council in their decision notice on the previous scheme (Reference CHIP/2016/0534). A full assessment of the Proposed Development on the landscape is provided in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment accompanying this application, with the effects on heritage assets assessed within the Heritage Assessment also accompanying this application.
- 3.4.3 Furthermore, the Proposed Development would sit amongst buildings and plant of a similar or larger scale. In this context, the additional presence of the Proposed Development would be unremarkable and would result in very little material change to the nature of the existing influence of the Kronospan site upon its surroundings.

3.5 Appearance

- 3.5.1 The building would be clad in Goose Wing Grey panelling and feature skylight windows. The external colour and materials of the building have been chosen in order to reduce the visual impact of the facility. The

Proposed Development would be located close to existing established buildings at the Kronospan site and the proposed colour and material has been selected as it is similar to those of adjacent buildings and structures.

3.5.2 The use of alternative colours, such as green, have been discussed with the Council. However, it was agreed that Goose Wing Grey would be the most appropriate due to its recessive nature, particularly given the setting amongst other established industrial structures of a similar colour. Goose Wing Grey is a commonly used colour for large industrial buildings as it suits a range of common lighting and weather conditions. The use of green can be effective in certain lighting conditions and certain seasons in views where the building would be seen against a background of the surrounding landscape. However, its use could accentuate the presence of the building at certain times of the year, and particularly when the building is seen against the sky.

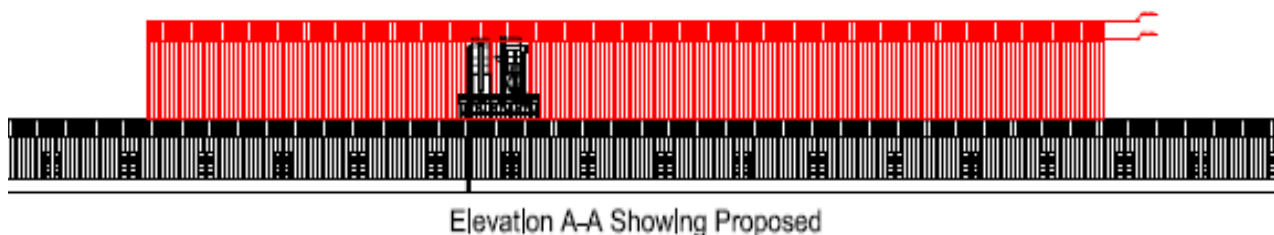
3.5.3 An elevation of the raw board storage building is shown in Figure 4. It is proposed that the materials used in the construction of the building would be as follows:

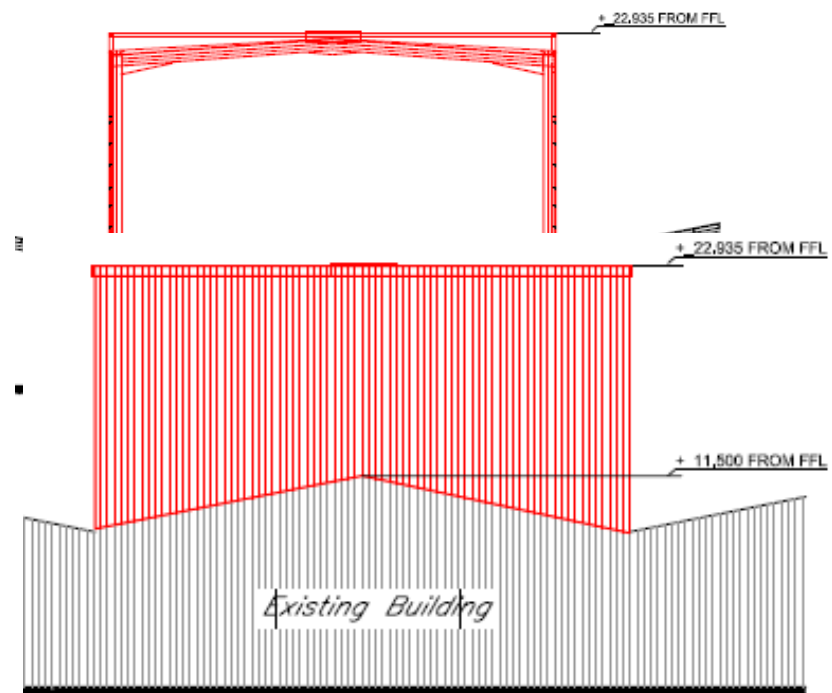
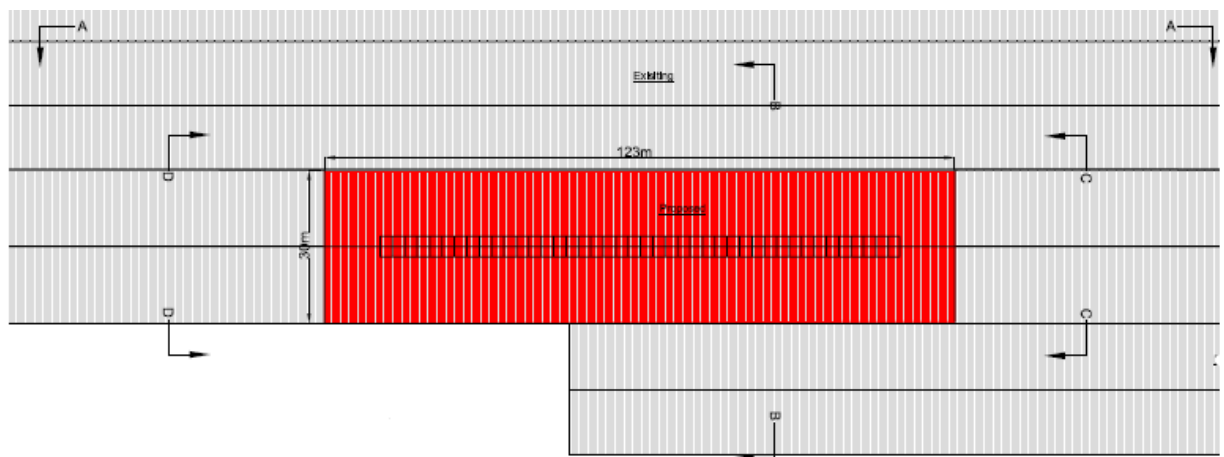
- Steel framed external cladding to eaves
- Steel sheeting to eaves would be Plasticol coated and Goosewing Grey in colour
- Roof would be Plasticol coated and Goosewing Grey in colour with 15% Rooflights
- All flashings would be Goosewing Grey

Figure 4:

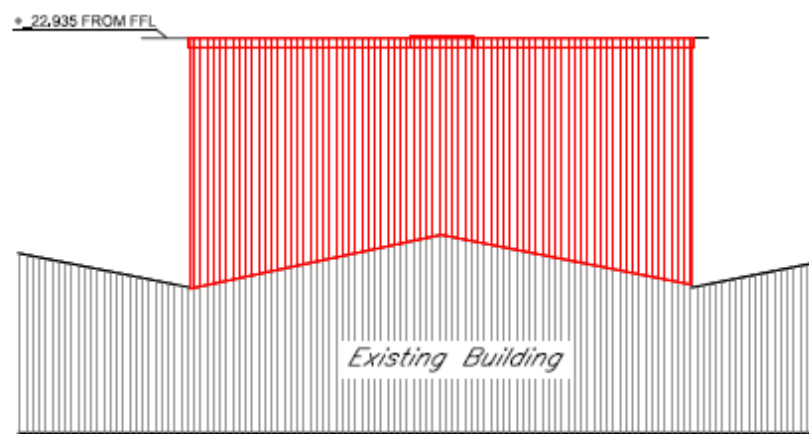
Raw Board Storage Building Elevations

Please refer to drawing 2196-01-03 for scaled elevations





Elevation D-D Showing Proposed



Elevation C-C Showing Proposed

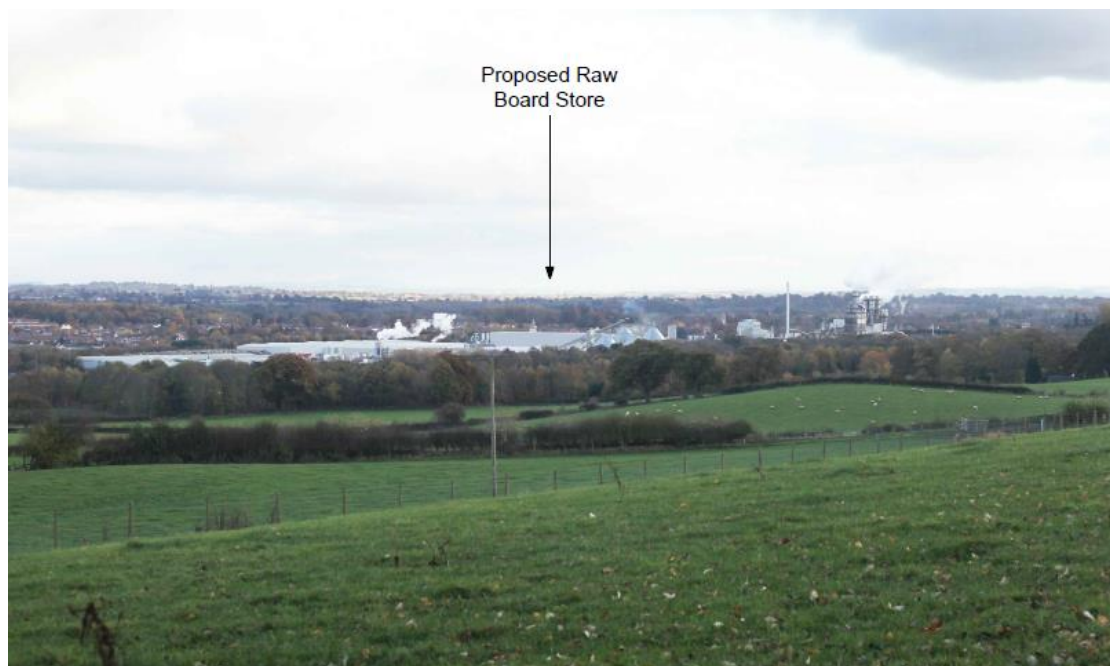
3.6 Key Views from outside the site

- 3.6.1 Figure 5 below provides a series photomontages showing how the Proposed Development would be seen from key views outside the site. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which accompanies the application contains a full suite of views from the surrounding area. The viewpoints shown in Figure 5 demonstrate how, the Proposed Development would, both visually and in respect of its influence upon the surrounding landscape character, always be experienced as part of the wider industrial development at Kronospan. It would constitute an addition to the existing development and would in some cases result in an incremental increase in the influence of Kronospan upon its surroundings. The existing vegetation cover located around the Kronospan site perimeter would continue to provide effective screening of views from nearby locations in Chirk. Furthermore, a Long Term Landscape Management Strategy has been submitted to the Council pursuant to a planning condition on a recent consent. This Long Term Landscape Management Strategy would provide additional screening of the Proposed Development.
- 3.6.2 The Proposed Development would be visible from points within the World Heritage Site (WHS) boundary and within the buffer zone in the context of the existing views into the site from this area, where development is already conspicuous. However, screening by vegetation and other features is significant to the west of the Site, with few clear views of the Proposed Development available. Where visible, the Proposed Development would always appear subordinate to the existing taller structures on Site.
- 3.6.3 A detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Heritage Assessment have been submitted in support of the planning application which provide further information on the key views from outside the site.

Figure 5: Photomontages of the Proposed Development



Viewpoint A



Viewpoint B

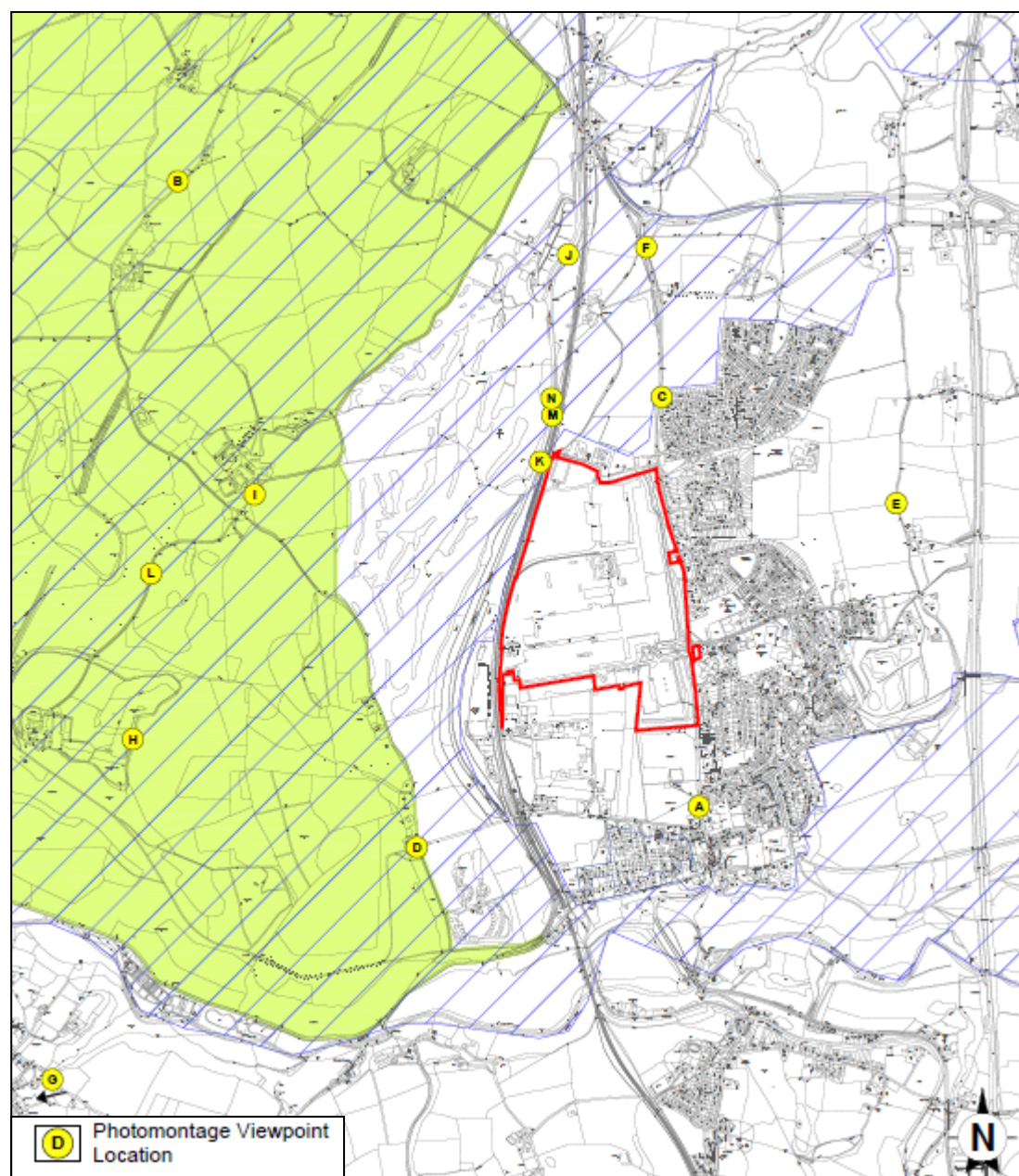


Viewpoint C



Viewpoint E

Direction of views



3.7 Sense of Arrival to the World Heritage Site

- 3.7.1 The Proposed Development would be visible from the A5/B5070 in the context of views of existing structures at the Kronospan Site. Views from this road would be intermittent due to screening provided by vegetation and the transient nature of views from moving vehicles.
- 3.7.2 The A5/B5070 does not give any strong sense that the WHS is near, nor do they pass through the most attractive parts of the buffer zone. The existing structures at Kronospan are already evident and form part of the visual experience.

3.8 Conclusion

- 3.8.1 The Proposed Development would be introduced into an existing large-scale industrial site that is an established influence upon the town of Chirk and the surrounding rural area. Views of existing tall, bulky structures at the Kronospan site are commonplace within the study area and their presence is an established part of the character of the landscape.
- 3.8.2 Several of the existing structures are considerably taller and bulkier than the Proposed Development. In this context, the additional presence of the Proposed Development would be unremarkable and would result in very little material change to the nature of the existing influence of the Kronospan site upon its surroundings.

4.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The application site is within a large industrial area which is subject to strict safety controls and site security. The Kronospan site has a prominent Security Control Point from which access and egress can be monitored. Members of the public (i.e. not employees or HGV drivers) are not permitted to access the site unless by prior arrangement. This is to ensure the safety of all staff and visitors.

4.2 Site Maintenance and Environmental Controls

- 4.2.1 In addition to the above, site maintenance and environmental controls would be managed in compliance with the existing Environmental Permit (EP) at the site which is currently enforced by Wrexham County Borough Council and is soon to be transferred to Natural Resources Wales. The EP seeks to ensure that protocols and procedures are implemented in order to ensure the efficient operation of the plant such that the potential of the facility to impact adversely on the local community is significantly minimised. The effectiveness of these processes is monitored by WCBC on a regular basis.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 Approach to Environmental Sustainability

- 5.1.1 Sustainability has been an integral element of the project from the start of the design process. The site is undergoing a number of environmental and efficiency improvements of which the Proposed Development forms part.
- 5.1.2 The Proposed Development comprises an alteration to an existing building and would result in the capacity for storing raw board at the site to be increased, increases the efficiency of the business operation. Along with the other improvements proposed as part of Kronospan 2020, the Proposed Development would contribute to the overall improvement of the environmental sustainability of the site.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 An appraisal of the design and access considerations of the Proposed Development has been undertaken in accordance with Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016 and best practice guidance.
- 6.1.2 The Proposed Development has been designed to reflect the other industrial structures which it would sit adjacent to. Accordingly, the Proposed Development would not be out of character with its setting. Accessibility of the facility has been taken into account and no issues or concerns have been identified in this regard.
- 6.1.3 Appraisals of the influence of the Proposed Development on the setting and character of the local area have been undertaken. The proposal would have no significant adverse impact on community safety, access, movement or character of the area. The Proposed Development would deliver environmental benefits and contribute to economic, environmental and social sustainability of Chirk.