
KRONOSPAN, CHIRK

PROPOSED BUILDING EXTENSION TO HOUSE A NEW MELAMINE FACING (MF) PRESS, FOLLOWING THE DEMOLITION / RELOCATION OF THE EXISTING MF DEPARTMENT'S VENTILATION SYSTEM, HYDRAULIC OIL AND DIESEL STORAGE TANKS, A VEHICLE FILLING STATION, GARAGE SERVICE BUILDING AND OTHER ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

PLANNING STATEMENT

April 2016

This document has been prepared in support of the planning application for a building extension to house a new melamine facing (MF) press building at Kronospan's Chirk site, on behalf of Kronospan Limited. The application has been co-ordinated by AXIS with technical input from NVC Acoustics with regards to potential noise impacts.



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FOREWORD

This document is the Planning Statement for a proposed building extension to house a new melamine facing (MF) press. The proposed development would be undertaken within the existing Kronospan manufacturing facility on land off Holyhead Road, Chirk in Wrexham. In addition to this Planning Statement, the planning submission comprises the requisite planning application form and certificates, an application validation statement, a noise assessment, planning drawings, a Design and Access Statement and supporting figures.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF THE APPLICATION

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application made by Kronospan Limited (hereafter referred to as Kronospan) for the extension of a building to house a new melamine facing (MF) press, following the demolition / relocation of the existing MF department's ventilation system, hydraulic oil and diesel storage tanks, a vehicle filling station, garage service building and other associated infrastructure.
- 1.1.2 The proposed development would be undertaken at the Kronospan manufacturing facility on the industrial site that forms part of Maesgwyn Farm off Holyhead Road, Chirk, Wrexham. The location of the Kronospan site is shown on Figure 1 and the location of the proposed development within the Kronospan site is shown on drawing 1860-01-01. The proposed development is part of ongoing modernisation and environmental improvement works at the site.
- 1.1.3 The proposed development would provide a building extension to house a melamine facing (MF) press following the demolition / relocation of the existing MF department's ventilation system, hydraulic oil and diesel storage tanks, a vehicle filling station, garage service building and other associated infrastructure to the north of the existing MF buildings.
- 1.1.4 There are currently various elements of plant and a small building on the proposed site of the MF building extension. This includes the ventilation system for the existing MF buildings which would be relocated to the roof of the proposed MF building. There is also diesel storage tanks, a vehicle filling station and a garage service building which would all be relocated within the Kronospan site, to the north east of their current location, as shown on Figure 3. Due to the scale of these elements of plant and the garage service building, their construction/relocation fall under permitted development rights by virtue of Part H to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. As such, their erection in the revised location does not require express planning permission and so does not form part of this planning application.

1.1.5 The applicant has been engaged in various pre-application discussions with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) with regards to the proposed development and others planned at the Kronospan site. Meetings have been held with WCBC officers in August 2015 and February 2016. Further information is provided at Section 4.0 of this statement.

1.2 Scope of the Planning Application

1.2.1 The planning application comprises 6 main elements, namely:

- Planning Application Form and Certificates;
- Application Validation Statement;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Planning Statement;
- A Noise Assessment; and
- Planning Application Drawings.

1.2.2 This Planning Statement is divided into four main sections following on from this introduction. Section 2.0 provides a description of the proposed development and provides a brief summary of need for the scheme. Section 3.0 summarises the relevant planning history associated with the proposed development and the Kronospan manufacturing site. Section 4.0 provides a description of the potential environmental effects of the proposed development. Finally, Section 5.0 provides a detailed appraisal of the planning policy context against which this application should be determined and assesses the extent to which the development accords with that context.

1.3 The Site & Its Context

1.3.1 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.

1.3.2 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 to the north of the existing MF building and to the south of the Saw Mill. The location of the proposed development within the Kronospan site is shown on drawing 1860-01-01 and the proposed site layout is shown on drawing 1860-01-03.

- 1.3.3 A number of other process buildings are 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.
- 1.3.4 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/particle board manufacturing buildings.
- 1.3.5 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.
- 1.3.6 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 Cadbury's (Mondelez) factory and the Chirk recreational ground.
- 1.3.7 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.
- 1.3.8 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.

Access

- 1.3.9 The proposed development will not result in any change to the existing site access arrangements and will 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.
- 1.3.10 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.
- 1.3.11 The existing railhead and sidings within the site are already used to import timber for the manufacturing process.

1.4 The Applicant

- 1.4.1 The Applicant is Kronospan Limited. It is the UK's leading manufacturer of high quality wood-based panels and associated products and has been operating in the UK since 1970. The primary products manufactured by Kronospan at the Chirk site are particle board and medium density fibreboard (MDF), from this a number of secondary products are produced such as laminate flooring, worktops and melamine facing boards.
- 1.4.2 The Kronospan manufacturing facility is a major local employer within Wrexham County Borough (WCBC) with the site at Chirk employing 600 staff. It is estimated that the facility also provides indirect employment to 2,500 people in industries relating to the manufacturing and supply chains associated with the operations at the site.

2.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The proposed development comprises the following key elements:

- the demolition / relocation of hydraulic oil and diesel storage tanks, a vehicle filling station, garage service building and other associated infrastructure;
- the extension of a building to house a new melamine facing (MF) press; and
- the relocation of the existing MF department's ventilation system to the roof of the new MF press building.

2.1.2 The existing layout of the site is shown on drawing layout 1860-01-02, the proposed layout showing the MF building extension is shown on drawing 1860-01-03, with elevations and cross sections shown on drawing 1860-01-04. In addition, and for information purposes only, the elevations of the proposed building are shown against the elevations of other existing buildings and plant on Figure 2.

2.1.3 The MF building extension will be 318m in length, 29m in width, 8.5m in height to eaves and 11.5m to ridge. The ventilation system which will be installed to the roof of the new building will be 13.5m in height, making the maximum height of the building and ventilation system, 25m above ground level.

2.1.4 Details of construction materials and colours are provided within the Design and Access Statement, the design has been selected to be consistent with the existing MF building.

2.1.5 The building is required to accommodate the expansion the existing MF department to allow for an additional MF press to be installed. This will bring benefits to the business as described in the following section. The ability to install a new press has arisen from the company restructuring the process flow of operations within this section of the site. This has also allowed the process to become more automated, eliminating the need for internal forklift

vehicle movements of raw board from the chipboard and MDF processes to the MF process lines.

2.2 Need and Benefits of the Scheme

2.2.1 Kronospan has operated its manufacturing plant in Chirk since the early 1970's. The site manufactures wood-based panels and other wood products. The primary products manufactured at the site are particle board and medium density fibreboard (MDF), from this a number of secondary products are produced such as laminate flooring, worktops and melamine facing boards (MF).

2.2.2 Melamine facing chipboard and MDF are versatile products that can be used for many applications including furniture, shop fitting, kitchens, bedrooms, hotels and caravans. The main advantage of melamine facing products is that it does not require any finishing. Once you have constructed a unit and its ready to fit into position it requires no more treatment. Both timber and plywood units would require further treatment with several coats of finish including sanding between each coat. This can be very time consuming and ultimately varnish is not as stain resistant as melamine.

2.2.3 The proposed new MF press would increase the operational efficiency of the site and allow Kronospan to continue to compete effectively with rival wood-based panel manufacturing companies across Europe.

2.3 Operation

2.3.1 MF panels are created by high pressure heat bonding impregnated paper to particleboard / MDF within the MF press to provide a highly wear and water resistant product surface finish.

2.4 Construction

2.4.1 The construction of the proposed development would involve the following stages:

- Clearing the site of the current plant and garage building;
- site preparation including slab breakout;
- formation of foundations;
- building and steelwork erection / modifications;

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- plant (the press), electrical and controls installation (piping, insulation etc.)
 - fire detection and protection systems installation;
 - painting;
 - scaffolding; and
 - testing and commissioning of the new press.

2.4.2 It is anticipated that the construction works would commence during June 2016, following the receipt of planning permission from WCBC and would be completed by the end of October 2016.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Prior to the 1970s, the site was a greenfield agricultural site and the original old farmhouse still forms part of the offices of Kronospan. The site at Chirk was chosen because of its central location between its main customer base and its plentiful supply of raw materials.
- 3.1.2 The construction of the first factory building commenced in 1970 and the company began operating in 1973. In the late 1980s, the company bought the factory next door and this has since been extended considerably to provide the base for the company's 'Kronoplus' operation, which produces laminate flooring and worktops.
- 3.1.3 The site has a long and complex planning history, therefore only the larger/noteworthy applications have been included in the table below (i.e. planning applications for signage or canopies over storage areas for example have not been included).

Table 3.1 Planning History

Application Ref. No.	Proposal	Decision Date
9/1459	Erection of a factory for the manufacture of particle board together with timber storage, accommodation, kiln, offices with flats over and other ancillary buildings, provision of car parking facilities and enlargement of existing access.	4 August 1970
9/1534	Outline application for the development of land by the erection of a factory for the manufacture of particle board and alterations to existing access.	16 August 1971

Application Ref. No.	Proposal	Decision Date
9/1534/1	Details of the factory for the manufacture of particle board and plastic faced particle board and alterations to existing access.	29 October 1971
9/1549	Use of existing dwelling as office accommodation in association with proposed factory development.	10 September 1971
9/1884	Details of warehouse for the storage of finished particle board submitted in accordance with Condition No.2 of planning permission 9/1534.	29 March 1974
4/472	Relocation of an existing warehouse.	15 January 1975
4/1798	Extension of existing factory for the manufacture of particle board.	17 December 1976
4/1799	Erection of a new warehouse.	12 April 1977
4/2690	Erection of new flanker building and associated wood chipping machinery.	25 July 1978
4/2843	Extension to warehouse with garage and vehicle inspection pit.	3 October 1978
4/5288	Erection of building to house new waste material boiler.	8 April 1982
4/5913	Proposed construction of a pre-drier unit (for the pre-drying of wood chips).	30 November 1982
4/6500	Proposed erection of a formaldehyde plant at existing factory.	29 November 1983
4/6690	Proposed extension to existing factory to provide a new particle board press	29 November 1983

Application Ref. No.	Proposal	Decision Date
	line.	
4/6737	Proposed extension to existing warehouse to provide additional storage accommodation.	17 January 1984
4/7217	Proposed extensions to existing factory to provide a 4th particle board press line and 5th melamine press with additional warehousing facilities and extensions to canopies over loading bays and re-siting of gatehouse.	21 December 1984
4/7554	Proposed erection of plant in the form of a stack, 16m high above the level of factory roof for the collection and exhaust of fumes from the drying ovens.	7 November 1985
4/7724	Proposed construction of a new substation to increase electrical capacity to pre-production area.	1 October 1985
4/7747	Proposed installation of incinerator to deal with the formaldehyde plant tail gases.	6 December 1985
4/8926	Proposed installation of 7.55MW boiler and erection of a 52m high chimney.	16 October 1987
4/8970	Proposed construction of 52m chimney to serve existing wood chip drying plant (no. 3 drier).	13 May 1988

Application Ref. No.	Proposal	Decision Date
4/11904	Proposed installation of medium density fibreboard plant comprising a refiner building, tube drier, sifter, a forming station and in the existing building a new production line and the installation of abatement equipment in the form of an electrostatic fluidised bed (EFB) system to filter emissions from the weiss boiler and the no. 1 Babcock drier.	7 July 1993
4/13976	Erection of sawmill incorporating log in-feed conveyor, de-barker, chipper line, hoggers, cantor chippers, trimmer, profile units, screen units and saws, saw sharpening and tool assembly workshop and stores, plant sorting and stacking unit for the manufacture of timber planks and wood chips (partly retrospective).	13 July 1994
CB01264	Turbine hall extension including 35m high stack.	6 April 1998
CB02609	Amended application for 4 cyclones for MDF II	10 November 1998
CB02899	Erection of new warehouse.	8 March 1999
CB3633/HS	Deemed Hazardous Substance Consent.	29 October 1999
P/2012/0165	Development of biomass plant, recycled wood fibre (RCF) offloading & screening facility & associated infrastructure to support existing	14 September 2012

Application Ref. No.	Proposal	Decision Date
	production operations	
P/2013/0824	Development of biomass plant comprising biomass boiler & furnace ash, handling facility & flue, gas treatment facility including stack & air pollution control, reagent storage silos, recycled wood fibre offloading & Screening facility, biomass storage area & associated infrastructure (substitution of planning permission code P/2012/0165)	07 May 2014
P/2015/0728	Erection of building to contain three gas engines and three steam boilers, erection of electrical substation building, oil tank compound, a duct from the press abatement system to carry process emissions to the SEKA (WESP) stack and associated infrastructure to support existing operations.	04 Jan 2016
P/2016/0219	Construction and Operation of a Recycled Fibre (RCF) Reception Facility, Grading Plant, Storage Silos And Other Associated Infrastructure	Pending Decision

3.1.4 In conclusion, the planning history identified that:

- The Kronospan site has been developed since the 1970s;
- The site has a long history of planning consents for large industrial development;
- There have been a number of planning applications from 1999 through to 2016 relating to development such as the biomass plant, extensions

to existing buildings, gas engines, temporary stacks, new silos, fencing and signage; and

- The planning consents include permissions for tall stacks, new buildings and wood processing plant.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The proposed development is located within the existing built area of the Kronospan site and will involve the introduction of a relatively minor additional building. However, the proposed development has the potential to result in some environmental effects.

4.1.2 At the pre-application meeting held with WCBC on the 11th February 2016, it was agreed that the planning application should provide a detailed assessment of the noise effects of the proposed development. This is due to the relocation of the ventilation system which would be relocated to the roof of the new MF building.

4.1.3 With respect to other potential environmental effects it was considered that the proposed location and scale of the facility would avoid material effects arising in respect of the following technical areas:

- air quality;
- landscape and visual;
- cultural heritage; and
- ecology and nature conservation.

4.1.4 Irrespective of the above, it was agreed that further justification would be provided within the planning application documents. As such, the following sections summarise the detailed noise assessment that has been conducted in support of the planning application and provide justification for other environmental issues not being material considerations in the determination of the planning application.

4.2 Noise

4.2.1 A detailed noise assessment is provided in Appendix A. This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with appropriate standards and guidance and the approach agreed with the WCBC Environmental Health Officer with regards to the assessment of noise impacts from previous development at this site.

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- 4.2.2 The assessment has been undertaken to inform and guide the design of the development such that any likely noise impact on existing dwellings is minimised. Existing background noise monitoring data has been used along with contemporary site specific monitoring to determine the baseline noise conditions at nearby residential receptors.
- 4.2.3 Observations at the nearest residential properties indicate that intermittent noise from local and distant road traffic, intermittent rail movements and noise from the existing industrial activities in the area form the general noise climate at the nearest receptors.
- 4.2.4 In terms of a design threshold it has been agreed with WCBC that new developments at this site should aim to prevent existing noise, currently experienced by the nearest residential receptors, from increasing. In order to achieve this it would therefore be necessary to ensure that the noise contribution from the proposed development is at least 10dB(A) below existing residual noise levels (i.e. LAeq levels) as measured during the baseline study.
- 4.2.5 Once operational the extension to the MF building would include the use of items of plant that would have the potential to give rise to noise impacts. However, the design of the building is such that these impacts would be mitigated to ensure that the resultant noise levels are within appropriate guidance and standards e.g. through the use of sound insulation, acoustic screens and selection of plant.
- 4.2.6 The noise modelling undertaken for the proposed development has shown that the increase in noise levels during operation of the facility would be low and would ensure that the noise contribution from the proposed development is at least 10dB(A) below existing residual noise levels (i.e. LAeq levels) as measured during the baseline study.
- 4.2.7 Noise levels from the proposed development when considered in isolation and cumulatively with the noise levels from the existing plant at the Kronospan site with mitigation measures would be acceptable.

4.3 Landscape and Visual and Heritage

- 4.3.1 In terms of landscape and visual and cultural heritage effects, the MF building extension would be located amongst existing buildings of the same scale. The scale of the facility would be such that it would sit within the visual envelope of the existing site operations, which already exert an influence on local landscape character. This influence would not increase tangibly as a result of the proposed new structure. This is evident from Figure 2 which depicts the elevations of the proposed development against the existing site infrastructure.
- 4.3.2 In general terms, the proposed development would always be viewed in the context of the existing development on site and would be less evident than the existing tall bulky chimneys. Additionally, the local landform and vegetation cover would screen views from many nearby public locations and long distance views.
- 4.3.3 In light of the above, landscape and visual and heritage effects should not form a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

4.4 Ecology and Nature Conservation

- 4.4.1 The proposed MF building would be located on an area of the site that currently comprises concrete hardstanding and is devoid of vegetation. There are no records of protected species at the site. This area of the site is currently occupied by plant and a small building. The site is directly adjacent to a number of noisy operations and is lit during the hours of darkness. As such there are unlikely to be any direct ecological impacts from the built development.
- 4.4.2 Given that noise impacts have been assessed as being acceptable, it is not anticipated that there would be any indirect ecological impacts from the built development upon any near-by ecological receptors. Ecology should not form a material consideration during the determination of this planning application.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND APPRAISAL

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section of the Planning Statement undertakes an analysis of the proposed development in the context of all current, relevant planning policy and guidance.

5.1.2 Following on from this introduction the policy appraisal is divided into four principal sections. Section 4.2 provides a brief overview of the relevant policy context and identifies the principal documents to which further reference will be made whilst section 4.3 sets out the detailed policy framework against which planning applications should be considered. Section 4.4 provides a detailed assessment of how the proposals accord or otherwise with that framework. Finally, section 4.5 draws a number of concise conclusions.

5.2 Policy Context – Overview

The Development Plan

5.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (September 2004) and paragraph 3.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales (January 2016) requires that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2.2 In the case of the proposed development the relevant statutory Development Plan comprises the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011, which was adopted on the 14th February 2005.

Material Considerations

5.2.3 In addition to the policies of the statutory Development Plan, the proposal has also been considered in the context of other material planning considerations. It is anticipated that these will include (but not be limited to) the following:

The Emerging Development Plan

- Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028 ‘Preferred Strategy’ (February 2016)

Other National, Regional and Local Planning Considerations

- Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 8 (January 2016);
- People, Places, Futures: The Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update (July 2008);
- One Wales: One Planet, The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Assembly Government (May 2009);

5.2.4 A further material planning consideration is the established ‘need’ for the development which is set out in Section 2.0 of this statement.

5.3 Detailed Policy Context

The Development Plan

5.3.1 The policies that are relevant to the proposed development contained within the statutory Development Plan are summarised below.

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 (February 2005)

5.3.2 The Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in February 2005. Its primary functions are to set out planning policies and to provide a basis for decisions on planning applications and to make proposals for development and the use of land. There are several strategic policies of relevance to the proposal; the first two are concerned with the broad location of development.

Policy PS2:

“Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment”.

Policy PS3:

“Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value, or comprises agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a quality”.

- 5.3.3 There are a number of specific development control policies that are considered to be of relevance to the proposal. These are provided below.

Policy GDP1: New Development

“All new development should:

- a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.*
- b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public/private spaces.*
- c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.*
- d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.*
- e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.*
- f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.*
- g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.*
- h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.*

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- i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.*
 - j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.*
 - k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area”.*

Policy E4: Employment Development (of un-annotated land) within Settlements

“Employment development on un-annotated land within settlement limits will be permitted subject to Policy GDP1”.

Material Planning Considerations – The Emerging Development Plan

Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028 ‘Preferred Strategy’ (February 2016)

- 5.3.4 Wrexham County Borough Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Development Plan (LDP) for the County Borough. The LDP is the Council’s land use plan that will establish where and how much new development will take place in the County Borough over the period 2013 – 2028. It will also identify which areas need to be protected from development and will replace the existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP, 1996-2011) once adopted (currently programmed for March 2018).
- 5.3.5 The Preferred Strategy is the first formal publication in the Local Development Plan (LDP) preparation process. It sets out the broad approach that the LDP intends to take in order to ensure that the County is developed in a sustainable manner. It provides the strategic framework for the more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will subsequently be included in the Deposit LDP. The Preferred Strategy is non-strategic and does not contain site specific land allocations or detailed planning policies.

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- 5.3.6 Whilst the plan is currently at an embryonic stage of development, the objective below is a material consideration in the determination of the planning application, albeit with limited weight attached:

“Objective SO2: 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 County Borough”.

Material Planning Considerations – Other National, Regional and Local Planning Considerations

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016)

- 5.3.7 Planning Policy Wales (PPW), which is supplemented by Technical Advice Notes (TANs) and circulars, is the national planning policy for Wales and sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government. The policies of relevance to the proposed development have been considered in the subsequent section. PPW and the TANs are material to decisions on individual planning applications and, as such, it is important to consider how the proposed development fits within this policy context.
- 5.3.8 The following chapters of PPW are considered relevant to the proposed development:
- Planning for Sustainability (Chapter 4);
 - Economic Development (Chapter 7); and
 - Minimising and Managing Environmental Risks and Pollution (Chapter 13).
- 5.3.9 The relevant advice within these chapters of PPW is outlined below.
- 5.3.10 Chapter 4 relates to ‘Planning for Sustainability’ and sets out the Welsh Government’s commitment to achieving sustainable forms of development. The guidance states that the planning system has a fundamental role to play in achieving this goal.
- 5.3.11 Sub section 4.5 refers to ‘Planning for Climate Change’. It recognises (Paragraph 4.5.1) that: *“tackling climate change is a fundamental part of*

delivering sustainable development” and that the Welsh Government is committed to tackling it through a variety of measures.

5.3.12 Chapter 7 ‘Economic Development’ explains that in assessing the economic benefits of a scheme, key factors include:

- *“the numbers and types of jobs expected to be created or retained on the site;*
- *whether and how far the development will help redress economic disadvantage or support regeneration priorities, for example by enhancing employment opportunities or upgrading the environment; and*
- *a consideration of the contribution to wider spatial strategies, for example for the growth or regeneration of certain areas.”*

5.3.13 Chapter 13 of PPW relates to minimising and managing environmental risks and pollution, in particular the risks associated with climate change. The environmental risks that proposed developments should take into consideration are flood risk, unstable and contaminated land, air and water quality, noise and light pollution.

‘People, Places, Futures’: The Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update (July 2008)

5.3.14 The Spatial Plan is a twenty year plan for the sustainable development of Wales. It comprises the overarching framework and integration tool and provides important underpinning in a whole range of matters, such as:

- *“Economic development and the long term goal of full employment at a rate of 80%; and*
- *Making the right decisions, and getting the most benefit from specific; and major investment decisions, affecting public services;”*

5.3.15 The final section of the Spatial Plan presents the Area Strategies for the six identified Plan Areas. The Kronospan site is located within the North East Wales Border and Coast Region. The overall vision for this region is: *“an area harnessing the economic drivers on both sides of the border, reducing inequalities and improving the quality of its natural and physical assets”*. The Spatial Plan recognises that this region is highly dependent on the

manufacturing sector both in terms of jobs provided and the gross value added to the local and national economy.

One Wales: One Planet, the Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Assembly Government (May 2009)

- 5.3.16 The document indicates that sustainable development is the overarching strategic aim of all the Welsh Government's policies and programmes. The Sustainable Development Scheme includes strategies for sustainable resource use, sustaining the environment, a sustainable economy, a sustainable society and the wellbeing of Wales. Where the economy is concerned the vision is for a: *"resilient and sustainable economy for Wales that is able to develop whilst stabilising, then reducing its use of natural resources and reducing its contribution to climate change"*.

5.4 Planning Policy Appraisal

- 5.4.1 The objective of this assessment is to determine whether the proposed development would lead to the achievement, or otherwise of national and local planning policy and guidance objectives. Table 5.1 gives a detailed breakdown of all national, regional and local policies against which the proposal is assessed.

Table 5.1: Assessment of the Proposal against Planning Policy and Guidance

Policy No	Policy Thrust	Development aids policy	Development is neutral to policy	Development hinders policy	Comments
Statutory Development Plan					
Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 (February 2005)					
Policy PS2	Seeks to prevent development that would materially detrimentally affect the countryside landscape/townscape	✓			The Kronospan site comprises a number of existing large industrial process buildings including air emissions stacks, storage areas for raw materials, warehouse buildings for manufactured products, offices and car

Policy No	Policy Thrust	Development aids policy	Development is neutral to policy	Development hinders policy	Comments
	character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.				parking. The proposed MF building would sit centrally within the context of the wider industrial site, on an existing area of hardstanding, and would be adjoined to an existing building of the same height and design. The proposed development would therefore not materially detrimentally affect the character of the local area or the quality of the natural environment.
Policy PS3	Directs development to previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land.	✓			The proposed development would be located on previously developed land (as defined in Figure 4.3 of PPW) and would therefore be wholly in compliance with the requirements of the policy.
Policy GDP1	Sets a series of general requirements/criteria all new development should comply with.	✓			It is considered that the proposed development would accord with relevant criteria set out in the wording of the policy for the following reasons: a) The Design and Access Statement prepared in support of the development confirms that the scale, design and layout and use of material at the site are in accordance with the existing Kronospan site and that the proposals would not be detrimental to the appearance of the surrounding locality. b) The building is designed to ensure the safety of operatives and other workers at the Kronospan site. There would be no public access to the facility. c) The building is designed to ensure safe and convenient access for operatives.

Policy No	Policy Thrust	Development aids policy	Development is neutral to policy	Development hinders policy	Comments
					d) As demonstrated by the preceding sections of this statement based upon the impacts of noise, air quality; landscape and visual; cultural heritage; and ecology and nature conservation the proposed development would not result in any unacceptably adverse effects; e) The proposal forms part of ongoing site environmental improvement works which seek to modernise the Kronospan site, improving the efficiency of operations and in doing so, assist in underpinning/safeguarding the future of the facility for its 600 employees (many of whom are local to the Chirk area).
Policy E4	Employment development on un-annotated land within settlement limits will be permitted subject to compliance with Policy GDP1.	✓			The Kronospan manufacturing site is not allocated for employment use in the UDP, although it has been in an employment use for over forty years. The site is within the settlement limits and is previously developed brownfield land. In addition, the proposal has been found to be fully compliant with the criteria set out in Policy GDP1. In light of the above the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the wording of Policy E4.
Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013 – 2028 ‘Preferred Strategy’ (February 2016)					
Objective SO2	Support a vibrant, diverse and competitive local economy that provides a range of job opportunities to enable new and existing businesses to grow in	✓			The proposed development forms part of ongoing environmental improvement works which seek to modernise the Kronospan site, improving the efficiency of operations and

Policy No	Policy Thrust	Development aids policy	Development is neutral to policy	Development hinders policy	Comments
	Wrexham County Borough				helping to underpin/safeguard the future of the operation for its 600 employees and a further 2,500 people indirectly employed by its operations. As such, the proposed development is supportive of Objective SO2 of the emerging Local Plan.
Material Considerations					
Planning Policy Wales (Edition 7, July 2014)					
Chapter 4 - Planning for Sustainability	Sets targets for carbon and greenhouse gas emissions reductions which are to be achieved through the facilitation of new and more sustainable forms of energy generation. Sets out the criteria and requirements for achieving sustainable development.	✓			The proposed development forms part of ongoing environmental improvement works which seek to modernise the Kronospan site. It is considered that the development proposals would accord with the (relevant) criteria contained within Chapter 4 of PPW in the following ways: • The development would involve the re-use of suitable previously developed land; • The site would not be susceptible to, or give rise to flooding, contamination or soil erosion; and • The development would be readily accessible by a variety of transport modes including car, public transport, cycling and walking.
Chapter 7 – Economic Development	Sets out WAG's objectives for creating a strong and vibrant economy.	✓			See the appraisal text for Objective SO2 of the emerging Local Plan. In addition it would also generate temporary employment opportunities during the construction of the development.
Chapter 13 - Minimising and	Sets out how to minimise the adverse effects of any environmental risks from future land uses.	✓			This statement has confirmed that the proposal would not result in any adverse impacts on people, natural and cultural resources, property or infrastructure. It

Policy No	Policy Thrust	Development aids policy	Development is neutral to policy	Development hinders policy	Comments
Managing Environmental Risks and Pollution					identifies any mitigation measures that would need to be implemented to minimise and manage environmental risks and pollution.
‘People, Places, Futures’: The Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update (July 2008)					
	Provides a 20-year plan for sustainable development in Wales including a vision for the North East Wales region.	✓			The Kronospan wood panel manufacturing facility has been in operation since the 1970s and is a major employer in the local area. The site is undergoing a number of environmental and efficiency improvements of which the proposed development forms part. The benefits of the development are outlined at Section 2.2. It would also provide other economic and environmental benefits which are identified as important matters within the plan.
One Wales: One Planet, The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Assembly Government (May 2009)					
	Sets out the Welsh Government's vision of a sustainable Wales.	✓			The proposed development would support/have a neutral effect on each of the 5 headline indicators of the Sustainable Development Scheme in the following ways: • Sustainable Resource Use – the proposed development would improve the productivity of the MF department; • Sustaining the Environment – As demonstrated within this statement, the proposal would not result in any significant adverse effects on the environment and would therefore not conflict with the Welsh Government Aim of sustaining the environment.

Policy No	Policy Thrust	Development aids policy	Development is neutral to policy	Development hinders policy	Comments
					• A Sustainable Economy – The Welsh Government has a vision for a resilient and sustainable economy for Wales that is able to develop reducing its use of natural resources and reducing its contribution to climate change. The proposed development would ensure a more sustainable use of resources associated with site manufacturing processes. • Sustainable Society – Whilst the proposals would not directly contribute to the indicators on a sustainable society they would nonetheless demonstrably support a sustainable society by underpinning a significant local employer and generating new employment opportunities. • The Wellbeing of Wales – The proposal has no relevance to the aims and objectives of the scheme in relation to the wellbeing of Wales

5.4.2 It can be seen from the assessment of the statutory Development Plan and other material planning considerations in Table 5.1 above, that the proposed development is either in conformity with, or supported by, practically all facets of the identified, relevant planning context.

5.5 Conclusion

5.5.1 The proposed development would provide an extended building to house a melamine facing (MF) press following the demolition / relocation of the existing MF department's ventilation system, hydraulic oil and diesel storage tanks, a vehicle filling station, garage service building and other associated infrastructure to the north of the existing MF buildings.

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- 5.5.2 The proposed new MF press would increase the operational efficiency of the site and allow Kronospan to continue to compete effectively with rival wood-based panel manufacturing companies across Europe.
- 5.5.3 An assessment of the proposals against the relevant planning policy and guidance has demonstrated that the scheme meets the test of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and paragraph 3.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales (January 2016) as it fully complies with the provisions of the statutory Development Plan.
- 5.5.4 In addition, a comprehensive assessment of relevant material considerations has not revealed any justification for determining this application other than in accordance with the development plan. In fact, the proposals have also been found to strongly accord with, and be supported by, a range of material planning considerations. Accordingly, planning permission should be granted without delay.