

Supporting statements:

Document titled 'Location ABC' is a 1:1250 scale view of the site with the building lined in red and labelled D- this is the building we intend on renovating as it is currently abandoned, gutted and devoid of electric, water, Wales or pipes.

There are 3 further areas (marked in blue and labelled A, B and C). A and B have been used perviously (we assume) for car parking and are hard standing and/ or tarmac. It is our intention to use these area for staff and visitor car parking. There is sufficient space for our needs but we have no plans to formally mark off designated spaces. Area marked C is a walled in garden area (currently completely overgrown) which we will maintain as a garden. The area between A and B is, we understand, a public right of way and is used by local residents to park their cars.

The Cross Keys:

We have walked past the Cross Keys most days for 2-3 years and whilst looking for alternative premises for our office (we wanted to get away from renting) we often commented on it. It wasn't for sale so we tracked down the owners and asked them about it. They agreed to meet and show us around- they have owned it since 2016 and it was abandoned when they bought it. During their ownership of it they only did some light remedial work inside (replaced 6 joists) as their plan was to convert into their own offices but something they never got around to doing. Locals have told us it's been derelict 'for years and years now' and the website www.geograph.org.uk comments "in 2008 a local paper has reported that plans were at an early stage for a housing development here (but) that was more than 5 years ago". The website also describes the site as "the long derelict Cross Keys Hotel". We estimate it's been unused and without use for over 15 years.

Proposed Use:

We have an office located in Neath Abbey Business Park which is our 'Head Office'. Working from here full-time are the two Directors/ Owners plus a Training Manager. We hold various meeting here, some staff training, interviews and disciplinary meeting. We operate small children's homes across Wales so the work that goes on at our office is the 'behind the scenes' and doesn't require many staff or much space. It will. To be a shop, cafe or open to the public.

Current access is through a narrow porch to the front of the building - we propose to remove this and create a more suitable, disabled access friendly entrance to the side- please see attached plans. The current access makes it impossible or extremely difficult for those with mobility problems to safely (and with dignity) enter the building.

The other work we want to do is simply to make it useable and safe- electrics, water, a small kitchen to prepare snacks and teas for training days, toilets and meeting/ interview spaces/ rooms.

All work would be compliant with building regs and we have discussed already with NPT building control.

Staffing:

3 members of staff will mostly use this office- two Directors and one Training Manager. On two days a month staff from across Wales (we have homes in Cardiff, Bridgend, Neath, Swansea, RCT and Monmouthshire) will come to the office for formal training- hence the need for car parking.

Car Parking:

In both it's previous life as a Pub and during the last 15 years of abandonment the areas marked A and B have been used to park cars- they are tarmaced and/ or hard standing and local residents confirm this to be the case. We estimate there is space for approximately 20 cars which is more than enough for us but we do not intend on marking the actual ground- it is private land and we'd rather not advertise that there are car parking spaces.

Impact on Community:

Several residents have told us the build had once been squatted in (many years ago) but it's current state would lend itself to the term uninhabitable- there are no interior wall, no water, no wiring. Locals have told us drug dealing goes on in the area (car park) around it and that historically rats and fly tipping have been a problem. The area is currently unpleasant to look at, unkempt and possibly dangerous. Local residents have commented in passing that they're glad 'somethings going to be done with it' and that 'hopefully it'll bring the area up a bit' which we've taken to meaning the undesirable element will find somewhere else.