

Planning, access and design statement
For the conversion of a dwelling to house of multiple
occupancy



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This statement is produced by “Nicole Jones - Architect”, 6 Myrddin Crescent, Carmarthen SA31 1DX, on behalf of the RFJ Ltd to accompany the planning and listed building consent application. It should be read together with the included drawings.

1. INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for a change of use of the property from a dwelling C3 in to HMO use class C4 at 5 Mountview Terrace, Port Talbot, SA12 6HH

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site is a double story mid-terraced dwelling with a pitched roof in a residential area with a paved rear garden which has got access from a lane running along the rear of the terrace.

The existing dwelling consists of a living and dining room, with a kitchen – utility and toilet extension on the ground floor. On the first floor are three bedrooms and a bathroom.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

The property has not got any know planning history

A couple of planning permission for a change of use to C4 – house of multiple occupancy in the vicinity were granted planning approval over the last years.

P2019/5182; Oliver Str., Port Talbot

P2020/1041; Victoria Road, Port Talbot

4. THE SURROUNDING AREA

The application site lies in Aberavon settlement area to the West of Port Talbot. Mount View Terrace consists of a row of double story terraced house with no front garden. On the opposite road side is a strip of vegetation consisting of small trees, shrubs and bushes backing onto the railway line.



The first part of the street is overshadowed by the A48 dual carriage way. Street parking is available on both roadsides.



Most of the terrace dwellings are of the same proportion with 2 windows on the first floor and a front door and a window on the ground floor, of a similar size. Most dwellings have been modernised with external insulation and a pebble dash finish.



Further down the road are semi-detached double story dwellings with a front garden on the same road side. The vegetation strip on the opposite road side carries on.



5. ACCESSIBILITY

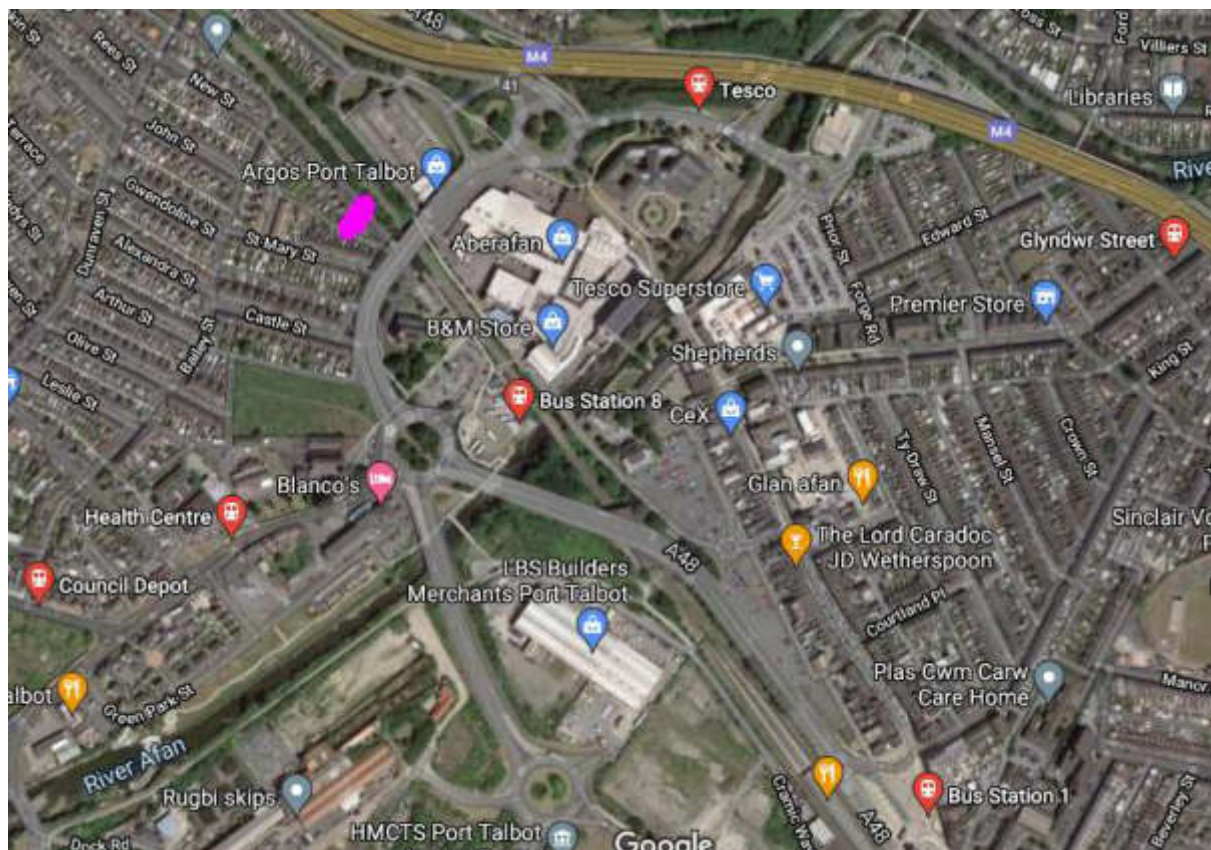
The property benefits from the close proximity to the M4 motorway and direct access to the A48 dual carriage way. Even that the property has not got it's dedicated parking spaces, Mount View Terrace has got on street parking on both sides of the road. Additional parking spaces are under the dual carriage way less than 30m away. The immediately surrounding area is well served with public transport. Various bus stops can be found within a 5 min walking circle. Bus number:

X3, 9, 66, 81, 83, 84

The train station is 12 mins walk

The bus station is 5 mins walk

The main shopping centre, including a superstore, is only 10min walk from the property.



6. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for a conversion of a residential dwelling C3 to a 6-bedroom HMO C4.

- **The building – internal**
The conversion of the property is achievable with very little changes to the internal layout. On the ground floor a stud partition wall will be put back in its original place. An under-stairs shower room will be installed and the leaking utility room extension will be equipped with new windows and door as well as a new roof. On the first floor only a couple of stud walls will be installed.
- **The building – external**
No external alteration will be necessary except for the renewal of the roof, windows and door to the old utility room extension.
- **The services**
All water and sewer will be taken into the existing drainage pipes.
- **Sustainability**
The external envelop of the property has recently been upgraded with an external wall insulation. A new heating system would need to be installed to comply with current building regulation standards.

7. CHARACTER

- **Landscape**
No changes are proposed to external of the property or the rear garden
- **Scale**
No changes will be necessary to the scale of the applicant side
- **HMO size**
The proposal is a 6-bedroom HMO, which is an appropriate number for the size of the existing property
- **Layout of the development**
The proposed layout has been dictated by the existing property to have minimal alterations to the layout
- **Impact on visual appearance**
The front of the property will remain untouched. To the rear, the only alteration will be necessary modernisation and repairs to the small utility extension. Roof, windows and door will need to be exchanged. The rear garden is big enough to be used for the storage of bins as well as bikes.
- **Impact on residential amenities**
Since there are no proposed external alteration to the building, the proposed development will not have any negative impact upon the amenities of residents within neighbouring properties as a consequence of overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking over and above which currently experienced.

The use of the property will be for 6 persons which will not be significantly different to that of many houses which are occupied by families. It is therefore considered that the noise and disturbance associated with the comings and goings to and from the property are unlikely to be different when compared to a family property.

The proposed six-bed HMO would not lead to unacceptable levels of noise, disturbance or nuisance.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY – ISSUES

The proposal will not impact or impede on the existing flow of the pedestrian traffic on the adjoining footpath.

The proposal will assist with the natural surveillance of the area.

We believe that the development will not create any negative impact on the community safety.

- **HMO's**

HMOs represent an efficient use of building resources, where a single house can be fully utilised to provide accommodation for multiple people. This will have positive contributions and important socio-economic role for an area. The positive impacts of HMO's are that they are catering for the increased number of students, the need for affordable and flexible housing tenancies, and the changes to Housing Benefit, their role within the housing market.

This proposal will not reduce the provision of community facilities for families and children.

- **Social Benefits**

HMO's can play an important role in providing a suitable mix of housing types. This proposal will support the development of equal and more cohesive communities in area.

This development should not have any impact upon the property value of the area and would not be a material planning consideration

At present the Council does not have any specific local Policies aimed at HMO's. This is due largely to the absence of any significant historical issue in the area, and the introduction of the C4 Use Class post adoption of the LDP.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- **Water – drainage**

With no external alterations to the property and no additional toilet, there will be no increase either in rainwater or foul water going into the existing system.

- **Waste management**

The rear garden will provide sufficient space for bin storage and the use of the recycling facilities provided by the council. There would not be an increase in waste creation of the HMO in relation to a domestic dwelling of this size.

- **Sustainability**

Very little internal construction work will be necessary for this conversion. We will try to use as many reclaimed and sustainable materials as available in the current climate.

- **Ecology**

No changes to roof structure are proposed which could disturb any bats or nesting birds. The rear courtyard will remain as is. The proposal will not have a negative impact on biodiversity or ecological interest in the area.

10. PARKING

Policy TR2 of the Local Development Plan states that permission will only be granted for development that is acceptable in terms of access, parking and highway safety. The policy also requires that sufficient parking and cycle provision is provided and that the development is accessible by a range of travel means. In this respect the site is situated in close proximity to the Port Talbot shopping centre, as well as local facilities, local restaurants can be found from about 200m away, the nearest bus stop being 200 metres away, the bus station 200m and the trains station 600m away.

The approved Parking Standards SPG does not specifically refer to Class C4 HMOs, but it is considered that a residential use should be subject to the same parking standards as for the existing C3 dwelling house, with both uses requiring a maximum of 3 parking spaces.

The current residential use of the dwelling does not have any off-street parking provision. The property has access to a rear lane which is not gated. This will lead to the rear garden which could be used for parking bikes.

Given that the parking requirements are the same for the existing and the proposed uses, the proposed use will not increase the impact upon on street parking over and above the current position.

11. ACCESSIBILITY

Full accessibility has been addressed wholly in compliance with requirement under Part M of the Building regulations as well as the rights of the Disability Commission Code of Practice "Rights of Access, Services and Premises". Appropriate level access IS provided at its current stage via the front as well as the rear of the property.

12. MOVEMENT TO AND FROM THE SITE

The applicant site is within the “Large local centre” of Aberavon. Local community services and amenities are all within a short walking distance of the property, making the use of a car indispensable.

A range of sustainable transport facilities are all within a 12 min walk of the site. National cycle routes are in close proximity.

Concluding, this property can discourage the use of a private car and encourage the daily use of sustainable transport.

13. LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan which was adopted in January 2016. On this basis, the following policies are considered of relevance to this proposal and have been given full consideration

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales

Technical Advice Notes

Technical Advice Note 12: Design

Local Planning Policies

Topic based Policies

- Policy SP1 Settlement limits
- Policy TR2 Design and Access of New Development
- Policy BE1 Design
- Policy SP3 Sustainable Communities
- Parking Standards (October 2016)

• SP1 – SETTLEMENT LIMITS

The proposed development is within the settlement limits of the Policy SC1, which states that the “development within settlement limits is proportionate in scale and form to the role and function of the settlement as set out in the settlement hierarchy will be acceptable in principle”

Since we are not proposing any change to the form, scale and nature of the property it is considered that the development is proportionate in scale to its surroundings.

- **Policy SP3 – SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

SP3 state that the delivery of “sustainable, healthy and cohesive communities and the conservation of the countryside” will be promoted by the “identification of a settlement hierarchy that reflects the role and function of settlements.

New development should be therefor come considered in more sustainable location of the county. This dwelling is located within the Aberavon Table 3.1 of the LDP, as a “large Local Centre”, it has got adequate transport links with clusters of one or more retail units and local services, with ore or more community facilities and employment provision”.

We believe that in light of the above and the LDP this development is clearly positioned well within the settlement hierarchy and therefore will promote sustainable development in adherence of the requirements of the policy SP3.

- **Policy TR2 – DESIGN AND ACCESS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT**

The proposed development has to comply with Policy TR2 and must adhere as appropriate to the requirement of four criteria.

Criteria 1: the development do not “compromise the safe effective and efficient use of the highway network” It is considered that the site will not impact on the highway safety or create unacceptable level of traffic.

Criteria 2: the requirement is to have appropriate levels of parking and cycling facilities provided. The matter of the parking has been looked into under “Parking and Access” Additionally the rear garden provides sufficient space for the safe storage of bikes. It is considered that this point will be passivated.

Criteria 3: the requirement is that the development is accessible by a range of travel means. The property is in close proximity of bus links, the train station and cycle paths. We believe that this criterion has been sufficiently met.

Criteria 4: the requirement is for a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. Since the development will not be increased in size and has already got a residential use, we believe that this requirement is not necessary as no new traffic will be created.

In summery all four Criteria of the Policy TR2 have been fulfilled.

- **Policy BE1 – DESIGN**

The policy states that “all development proposals must be of a high-quality deigns” and “taken into account the natural, historic and built environment” and set out criteria to archive this.

The outer appearance of the property will not be altered. The outdoor space to the rear will remain untouched.

The building will only be altered internally which be keep to a minimum.

The development used brownfield land which is the preference by the Local Authority (Criteria 8 b)

The existing drainage system was design to limit surface water run-off and flood risk. This will not be amended (Criteria 9)

In summery all necessary requirements of Policy BE1 will be meet.

- **PARKING STANDARDS SUPPLIMENTARY PLANNIG GUIDIANCE**

The SPG sets out the parking requirement for all forms of development, which differ slightly dependant on which zone a proposal is located. The applicant site lies within Zone 3 – urban – of the Parking Zone Designation. The table below shows the maximum parking standards for the provision of off- street parking spaces for a resident development in this zone.

However, there is no specific parking requirement for an HMO property and the maximum requirements are based on a house conversion to a number of bedsit's.

Type of Development	Residents	Visitors
Dwellings, Apartments, House Conversions to Bedsits, or Self-Contained Apartments	1 space per bedroom (Maximum requirement 3 spaces per apartment)	1 space per 5 units

Type of Development	Operational	Non-Operational
Shops (< 200m2)	1 commercial vehicle space	1 space per 60m2

Based on the table above the requirements for bedsits would be 3 spaces for the residence and 1 additional for visitor. In total 4 car parking spaces. Given that this number would be the required amount for the existing dwelling, no additional space would be necessary.

Annex F of the SPG allows for a reduction of the number required at a sustainable location, depending on site distance to public transport and community facilities by a point system where 7 points would reduce one space and 10 or more will mean a reduction of 2 spaces.

Based on this guidance and the close proximity to local amenities, public transport and local community facilities, this site scores in excess of 10 points and is a sustainable location. Taking into account that no changes will be necessary to amount of provided space from the existing use, we considered these criteria are met.

14. CONCLUSION

In the absence of a HMO Policy, this application should be determined with current LDP Policies. Since the site is located within the settlement limits defined by Policy SC1 of the LDP and therefore the principle of residential development (albeit a Class C4 HMO use rather than a Class C3 dwelling house) would be acceptable subject to an assessment of its general impact, which includes the consideration of any potential wider impacts on local character and social / community cohesion created by Class C4 uses, as well as other amenity / highway issues.

We believe that the proposed development would represent an acceptable form of development in a sustainable location being within the local centre of Aberavon in its current urban form. The property is within easy walkable reach of a range of community facilities along an excellent public transport link. These will ensure that the site can sustain a sustainable transport pattern away from the necessity of a car.

It would not have a detrimental impact upon local character or community cohesion, on residential amenity or upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and there would be no adverse impact upon highway and pedestrian safety. Nor would it have an impact on the visual amenity of the area.

We also believe that the proposal represents an appropriate and sustainable development in accordance with Policies SC1, TR2 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.