



PLANNING STATEMENT

In respect of:

CHANGE OF USE FROM RETAIL USE

A1 TO TANNING SALON

AT

4 STATION ROAD, PORT TALBOT,

SA13 1JB

On behalf of:

Lextan Ltd.

Ref: 2058.d

October 2021

JCR Planning Ltd.

PLANNING • DEVELOPMENT

**Advising the property and
development industry**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0.1 This planning statement has been prepared by JCR Planning Ltd. on behalf of Lextan Ltd. ('the Applicant') to support an application for planning permission for the change of use from retail (A1) to a tanning salon at 4 Station Road, Port Talbot, SA13 1JB.

1.0.2 The statement considers the application site and its context, together with relevant planning history, and local and Welsh Government planning policy. The following drawings also forms part of the submission:-

- 1197-P01 Site Location and Block Plans
- 1197-P02 Existing and Proposed Ground Floor
- 1197-P03 Existing and Proposed Elevations
- 1197-P04 Proposed Company Branding

1.0.3 Information is provided in respect of the following:-

- a brief description of the site and surrounding area
- a description of the proposed development
- consideration of relevant planning policy.

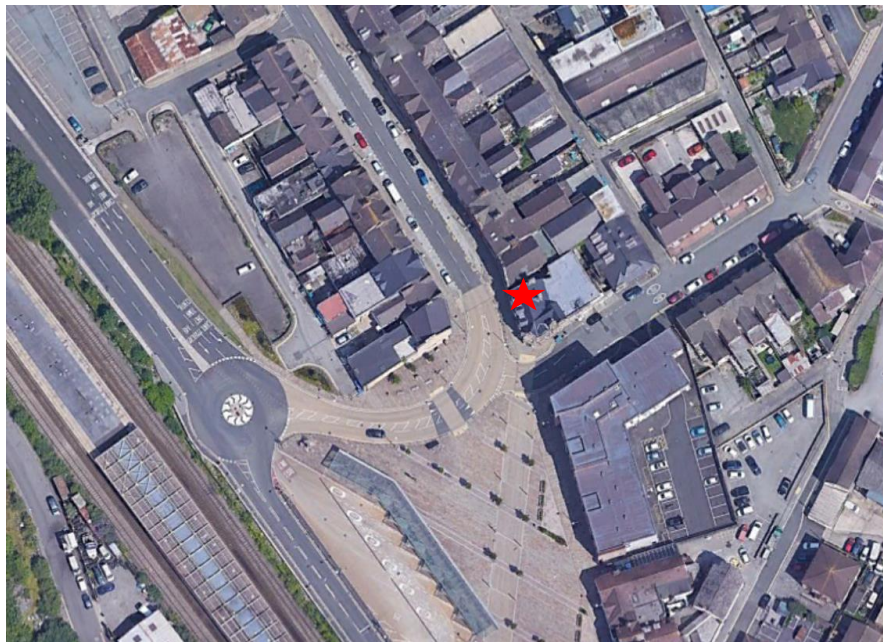


Fig. 1 – Aerial image of application site and surrounding area

2.0 THE SITE

2.1.1 The application site (4 Station Road) comprises an existing retail unit located close to the junction of Station Road with Grove Place. The predominant land uses within the immediate area are commercially oriented.



Fig. 2 – Application site location

2.1.2 The ground floor of No. 4 was previously used for retail purposes and is currently vacant. The site is level, with pedestrian access direct from Station Road. Parking provision is as existing, with availability at town centre car parks and appropriate on-street locations. The front elevation of No. 4 is shown in *Figure 2*, whilst *Figure 3* provides further visual detail.



Fig. 3 – Front elevation of 4 Station Road



Fig. 4 – View of application property from junction of Station Road and Grove Place

- 2.1.3 No. 4's traditional proportions and design are its most noticeable features, with dressed stone elevations and contrast quoin detailing. Visually, the building is a noteworthy architectural feature of this part of Port Talbot town centre.
- 2.1.4 Immediately adjacent to the application site is that part of the building which presently comprises a 'Pizza Hut'. Both the application site and the 'Pizza Hut' are accommodated within the larger single building. The property adjacent to the application site is presently vacant but has previously been a public house. Other properties along both sides of Station Road offer a wide range of commercial and retail outlets.
- 2.1.5 The area between Station Road and the bus station has been redeveloped in a plaza style with tree planting and paved pedestrian-friendly areas linking the town centre with Port Talbot rail station to the west of the A48 road.
- 2.1.6 There are no potential issues or other material considerations arising from the design/layout of No. 4 nor indeed the overall character of its surroundings that would prevent the proposed change of use taking place.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 11, February 2021) is the latest update that sets out the direction of Welsh Government policy, with its holistic objective to accommodate both current and future societal needs.
- 3.1.2 Regrettably, the document is silent on many day-to-day planning issues and instead focusses upon a number of nebulous paradigms and concepts.
- 3.1.3 The most dramatic change within PPW Edition 11 is the promotion and adherence to the socio-economic context provided by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 3.1.4 It is evident that PPW is now aiming to maximise the delivery of outcomes against all aspects of well-being and sustainable development by adopting the new and largely conceptual 'placemaking' approach.
- 3.1.5 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and other key legislation.
- 3.1.6 'Sustainable development' is defined as the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.
- 3.1.7 PPW also sets out the manner in which placemaking will influence land use plan making, as well as development management decisions. The plan-led system is considered fundamental in underpinning the delivery of "sustainable places".
- 3.1.8 Despite the weight given to conceptual policy, PPW does contain a number of more pragmatic guiding principles which are relevant to the submitted proposal, namely:-
- Better Places through Design

- Development Efficiency
- Regeneration

3.1.9 PPW emphasises the importance of good design as being fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. It is also considered to promote environmental sustainability by contributing to the securing of “well-being” goals.

3.1.10 There is an emphasis for people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient and sustainable journeys. Essentially, this means reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Reducing the need to travel and supporting sustainable transport can be secured by enabling developments which:-

- are sited in the right locations, where they can be easily accessed by sustainable modes of travel and without the need for a car;
- are designed in a way which integrates them with existing land uses and neighbourhoods; and
- make it possible for all short journeys within and beyond the development to be easily made by walking and cycling.

All of the above are satisfied by the submitted proposal.

3.1.11 In addition to PPW, further detail is provided by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs) relating to a range of issues and additional procedural advice is given in circulars and policy clarification letters. The most relevant TAN in respect of the proposal is TAN 23: Economic Development (February 2014).

3.1.12 TAN 23 states that local planning authorities should recognise market signals and have regard to the need to guide economic development to the most appropriate locations, rather than prevent or discourage such development.

3.1.13 The application site is within the defined urban area of Port Talbot and therefore, by definition, already encompasses many sustainable development attributes.

3.1.14 The Wales Spatial Plan - People, Places, Futures sets a strategic framework to guide future development and policy interventions. It integrates the spatial aspects of

national strategies for social inclusion and economic development, health, transport and environment, translating the Welsh Government's sustainable development duty into practice.

3.1.15 This brief synopsis of national policy suggests that the proposed change of use to a tanning studio should be welcomed from a job creation perspective and supported from a sustainable development point of view.

3.2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

3.2.1 In terms of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the adopted development plan for the area within which the application site is located is the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2011-2026)(adopted January 2016).

3.2.2 The LDP provides context for the consideration of the submitted development proposal and contains general development management policies, as well as site specific policies.

3.2.3 The application site is located within the settlement limits of Port Talbot (*Policy SC1*) and lies within the designated Town Centre (*Policy R2/1*)(grey shading) thereby forming part of the established retail/commercial area.



Fig. 5 – Neath Port Talbot LDP Proposals Map extract

3.2.4 For ease of reference, Policy R2/1 is reproduced below:-

Policy R 2

Proposals Within Retail Centres

1. Within the designated retail centres, uses that would enhance the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the centre, including uses in classes⁽¹⁶⁾ A and D will be permitted where:

(a) The proposal integrates with and strengthens the layout, retail character and pedestrian flows of the centre; and

(b) Does not prejudice the effective use of upper floors; and

(c) Maintains a vibrant and attractive shopping street frontage.

2. Proposals for the redevelopment or conversion within a retail centre of retail, commercial, leisure or community premises to ground floor uses not complying with point 1 of this policy will only be permitted where:

(a) It is demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable or appropriate in the location; and

(b) The proposal would not result in the loss of a supermarket, shop, café or public house which is important in terms of providing facilities to serve the community;

Or:

(c) The proposal would result in the redevelopment of derelict, unsightly, underused and vacant land / premises for alternative uses which would have significant social, community or regeneration benefits.

.....

4. Within the district and local retail centres, proposals that would result in the over dominance of one use to the detriment of the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the retail centre will be resisted.

3.2.5 The main purpose of the town centre boundary is to define the area where retail, leisure and other town centre uses should be concentrated, in accordance with PPW's sequential approach.

3.2.6 The LDP adopts PPW's sequential approach in respect of locating retail and other complementary commercial development in the most accessible locations in terms of services, facilities and public transport.

3.2.7 The proposed change of use is fully compliant with the foregoing national and local planning policy. The property is within the defined retail area and whilst a tanning salon is regarded as sui generis, it still bears the hallmarks of an A1 / D1 / D2 use.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.0.1 The proposal seeks planning permission for the change of use from retail A1 to a tanning salon. The Applicant specialises in providing tanning salon facilities to a range of customers at several venues throughout South Wales.

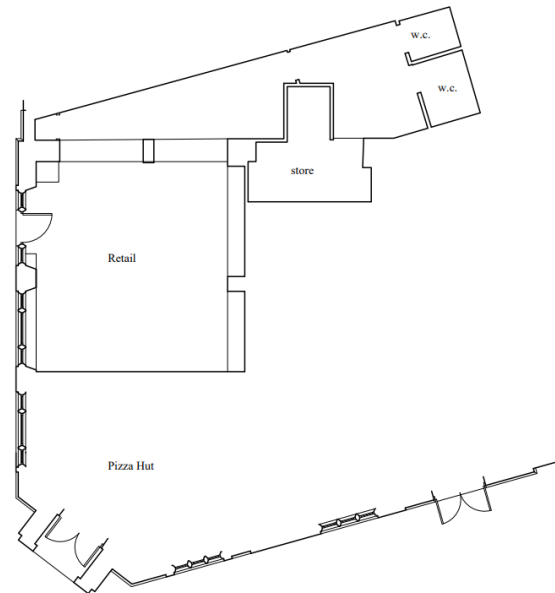


Fig. 6 – Existing ground floor layout

- 4.0.2 The existing external form and appearance of 4 Station Road will be retained. No external changes are proposed to the building's facades, with the exception of the company's branding. No illuminated signage is proposed.



Fig. 7 – Existing front elevation showing application site and adjacent 'Pizza Hut' outlet



Fig. 8 – Front elevation image with company branding

4.0.3 The interior of the unit will be sub-divided into separate tanning booths, each equipped with a sunbed.

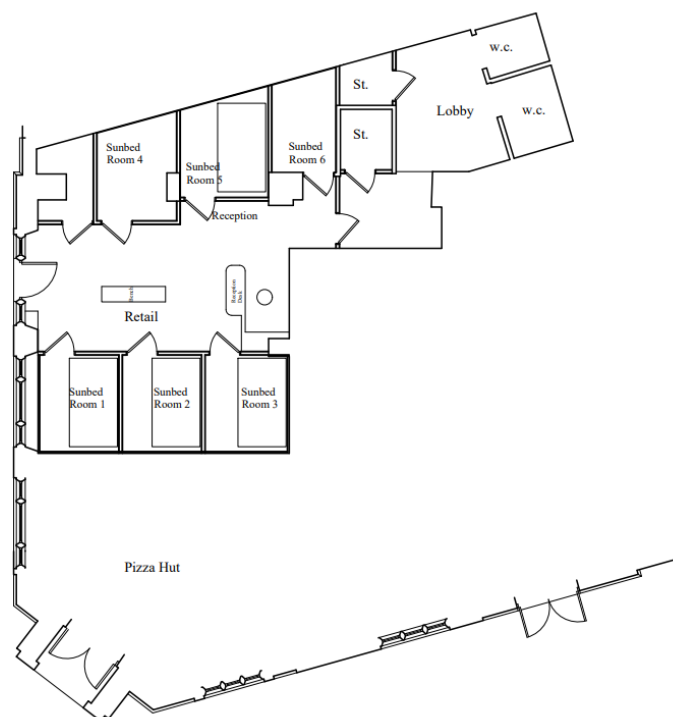


Fig. 9 – Proposed ground floor layout

4.0.4 The internal layout will comprise the following, which will be separated by stud partition walling:-

- reception/waiting area
- max. 6 no. tanning booths
- WCs
- lobby area
- storage

4.0.5 The proposed development will utilise existing town centre car parks and appropriate on-street parking arrangements.

4.0.6 The proposal will result in the creation of 1 no. full time and 4 no. part time jobs and will operate within the following time frames:-

- Monday – Friday 10:00 – 21:00
- Saturday – Sunday 10:00 – 18:00

4.0.7 The nature of the business can best be described as passive – there is no activity that would give rise to noise or late night activity. Customers are looking for a service that is discrete and readily accessible.

4.0.8 It is evident that the proposed change of use will make a positive contribution to the locality's vitality and vibrancy and will facilitate the expansion of a successful business.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.0.1 The proposed development is fully compliant with both national and local planning policy.
- 5.0.2 The proposed change of use will make efficient and positive use of an existing vacant commercial unit and will assist the expansion ambitions of a successful company.
- 5.0.3 It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the submitted scheme.